

## Half a loaf is (not) better than none: how austerity-related grievances and emotions triggered protests in Spain

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### Abstract

Demonstrations have become more visible across Europe since the Great Recession. To clarify the connection between crisis and protest, we open the black box of crisis-related grievances, suggesting a typology for this subjective phenomenon and addressing the mediating role of emotions on protest. Using panel data, we explore the dimensionality of thirty different items that Spanish citizens have claimed to endure as a consequence of the crisis, and then we test their potential of these grievances as triggers of protest. Results show that both financial deprivation and grievances related to worker-citizens' status and rights encourage protest activity. Crisis-related grievances trigger negative emotions, and curiously enough, both anger and anxiety boost protest. Our findings hold, regardless of political ideology, previous participation, or perceptions of self-efficacy.

### Reference

GALAIS, Carol, LORENZINI, Jasmine. Half a loaf is (not) better than none: how austerity-related grievances and emotions triggered protests in Spain. *Mobilization*, 2017, vol. 22, no. 1, p. 77-95

DOI : 10.17813/1086-671X-22-1-77

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## HALF A LOAF IS (NOT) BETTER THAN NONE: HOW AUSTERITY-RELATED GRIEVANCES AND EMOTIONS TRIGGERED PROTESTS IN SPAIN\*

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*Demonstrations have become more visible across Europe since the Great Recession. To clarify the connection between crisis and protest, we open the black box of crisis-related grievances, suggesting a typology for this subjective phenomenon and addressing the mediating role of emotions on protest. Using panel data, we explore the dimensionality of thirty different items that Spanish citizens have claimed to endure as a consequence of the crisis, and then we test their potential of these grievances as triggers of protest. Results show that both financial deprivation and grievances related to worker-citizens' status and rights encourage protest activity. Crisis-related grievances trigger negative emotions, and curiously enough, both anger and anxiety boost protest. Our findings hold, regardless of political ideology, previous participation, or perceptions of self-efficacy.*

As the worst economic crisis since the 1930s, the Great Recession has evolved from a financial to a political crisis, as evidenced by widespread protests and new political parties challenging those in power, particularly in southern Europe. Theories on participation that emphasize the role of resources, motivation, and opportunity (Curtis 2014; Kern, Marien, and Hooghe 2015; Rüdig and Karyotis 2014; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) have proven unsatisfactory for understanding protests in a time of economic hardship, leading some scholars to resort to arguments based on grievances, giving a second youth to these arguments after years of being considered trivial (Buechler 2004; Useem 1998).

Among the new studies addressing “indignation about the way authorities are treating a social or political problem” (Klandermans, van der Toorn, and van Stekelenburg 2008: 993), some show how grievances explain immigrants’ protests (Klandermans et al. 2008) and group-based or collective disadvantages (van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, and Leach 2004). However, research focusing on the role of grievances during the Great Recession finds inconclusive effects on political participation (Kern et al. 2015; Rüdig and Karyotis 2014). Besides, these works do not tap the subjective aspect of grievances. Instead, most infer individuals’ feelings of unfairness from the macro or the personal economic situation. As a consequence, the role of grievances in this wave of protest remains virtually unexplored. Thus, we ask: has the Great Recession triggered specific socioeconomic grievances that foster protest? What are the pathways that connect grievances to protest?

Our work emphasizes the importance of empirically addressing the role of grievances in protests for several reasons. First, the role of grievances might be greater in “crisis movements” than in movements of affluence (Kerbo 1982). Second, crisis movements might highlight the role of emotions. Crisis-related grievances are suddenly imposed (Opp 1988; Snow, Cress, Downey, and Jones 1998) and incidental (van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears 2008), hence triggering stronger emotional reactions than structural grievances. Thus, we

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\* We want to thank Eva Anduiza and her research project, “Stability and Change in Political Attitudes” (Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, Grant CSO2010-18534) for the data used in this article. We also want to thank Marco Giugni and the reviewers involved in the editorial process for their valuable comments

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consider an indirect, emotional pathway from crisis-related grievances to protest, following the example of some studies that include a measure of anger (van Zomeren et al. 2008) and adding a measure of anxiety to allow for the presence of an inhibiting emotion (Öhman 2008).

In this work, we make two important methodological contributions that enable us to contest existing research on the role of grievances in explaining protest and noninstitutional participation during the Great Recession. First, unlike most works on the mobilizing role of grievances, we do not infer the subjective feelings of wrong from individuals' socioeconomic status. Instead, we directly ask citizens how the economic crisis has hurt them, allowing us to offer a more complex panorama of the crisis-related grievances. Second, we adopt a longitudinal perspective, which permits us to track the effect of grievances on the evolution of protest through the Great Recession in Spain, a country significantly damaged by the Great Recession. With our panel data we can show that grievances play a crucial role in participation, even after controlling for previous experiences, resources, motivations, behaviors, and attitudes, thus challenging recent research on the topic (Kern et al. 2015; Rüdig and Karyotis 2014). Finally, we empirically test whether the effects of these grievances are in some cases mediated by negative emotions.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CRISIS MOVEMENTS, GRIEVANCES, AND EMOTIONS AS MEDIATORS**

According to the political behavior and collective action literatures, the key factors that explain individuals' engagement in protest are resources, motivation, and mobilization (Curtis 2014; Kern et al. 2015; Rüdig and Karyotis 2014; Verba et al. 1995). However, this perspective struggles to explain how the sudden and serious worsening of many Europeans' living conditions since the start of the Great Recession could move people to protest, as economic hardship limits resources for participation (Verba et al. 1995) and boosts political disaffection (Sanz, Navarrete, and Montero 2015).

The protests hatched by the economic crisis can be better understood as "crisis movements" (Kerbo 1982) than as traditional "movements of affluence." Unlike the latter, the most recent protests focus on the defense of existing rights, which are not always economic or associated with traditional group identities (e.g., homeowners, youth, or beneficiaries of the welfare state). In this respect, the theory of the disruption of the quotidian (Snow et al. 1998) suggests that the crisis might have led citizens to take greater risks to defend what they have rather than to obtain additional assets. In other words, the potential losses of important elements of individuals' everyday lives may trigger protest activity. Therefore, the loss of not only income but also employment security, labor rights, and social benefits during the Great Recession might have forged new paths to protest.

In the same vein, James Jasper and Jane Poulsen (1995) have advanced the idea that moral shocks, or contexts that stimulate outrage, are situations ripe for recruiting new participants. Newcomers to protest are more likely to be recruited via open channels, less likely to be embedded in networks that organize the events, and more likely to use protests to vent frustration (Rüdig and Karyotis 2013; Saunders, Grasso, Olcese, Rainsford, and Rootes 2012; Verhulst and Walgrave 2009). Hence, the usual triggers of participation in protest, such as resources, identities, and mobilization networks, are less important in times of crisis.

In response to the special character of crisis movements and the inability of widely accepted explanatory factors to explain these movements, recent works bring forth the classic idea of grievances, yet not without some inconsistencies. For example, Wolfgang Rüdig and Georgios Karyotis (2014) examined people's personal economic situations compared to the previous year and to their expectations for the next twelve months in order to examine relative deprivation during the Great Recession. They find that economic deprivation does not account for participation in protest, but they only consider individual economic hardship,

which is neither always associated with a feeling of unfairness nor clearly connected to political action (Geschwender 1968; Gurr 1970; Kinder and Kiewiet 1979).

Similarly, Anna Kern, Sofie Marien, and Marc Hooghe (2015) propose to analyze both collective and individual grievances. However, collective grievances are captured by changes in unemployment rates and changes in GDP, while individual grievances are equated to satisfaction with the economy. These measures are similar to the ones used in economic voting literature to connect poor economic performance to voters' punishment of incumbents, and they have been criticized for their omission of causal mechanisms between macro-economic indicators and voting (Anderson 2007).

Objective measures of economic stress and macroeconomic indicators of the crisis can hardly tap individuals' grievances. Grievances theory maintains that an objective situation per se is not a grievance, since the meanings associated with a situation, particularly the feeling of unfairness, are crucial in the formation of grievances (Geschwender 1968; Gurr 1970). Hence, we contend that scholars should improve how grievances are measured and analyzed. We propose widening the concept of such grievances beyond what is merely connected to individuals' economic hardships by using direct, subjective questions about the negative effects that the crisis may have had for the citizens and by shedding light on the causal mechanisms that connect grievances and protest.

#### *A Typology of Crisis-Related Grievances*

As for the measures and types of grievances, we consider three sets of grievances that might trigger individual protest participation. The first well-known set relates to financial deprivation (Kinder and Kiewiet 1979; Rosenstone 1982; Rüdig and Karyotis 2014); these grievances include concerns related to the loss of purchasing power and financial difficulty. Importantly, financial grievances (measured in terms of retrospective and prospective deprivation) have been found to contribute to sympathy for movements but not to protest activity itself or to new participant engagement (Rüdig and Karyotis 2013, 2014).

The second set of grievances captures worker-citizens' status and rights. Labor market reforms implemented as part of austerity measures might have contributed to greater perceived job insecurity and to workers' loss of rights, thereby resulting in an overall worsening of worker-citizens' working conditions and discontent. Austerity measures have reduced individuals' collective protection against major risks associated with labor market participation, namely accidents, old age, and unemployment (Streeck 2014). This latter downward trend might constitute a strong source of grievance, particularly considering both Snow et al.'s (1998) concept of the disruption of the quotidian and relative deprivation theory, which contends that unrest due to the unjust worsening of individuals' situations incites them to protest, even if it does not threaten their means of subsistence (Anderson and Hecht 2015). We thus anticipate that grievances related to the worsening of working conditions encourage workers' participation in protests.

We should also consider the specifics of unemployment-related grievances, which capture both the first and second set of grievances (financial deprivation and loss of status and rights, respectively). Unemployment denotes both a loss of income, as even people who receive unemployment benefits do not receive full loans, and a loss of social status. Unemployment marks a major disruption in individuals' lives that can trigger helplessness, disappointment, and social exclusion (Hammer 2000; Jahoda, Lazarsfeld, and Zeisel 2002 [1933]; Paugam 2006). However, empirical research has presented inconclusive evidence of unemployment's effects on participation in protests. On the one hand, unemployment has been shown to precipitate protests (Bagguley 1992; Clark 1985; Richards 2009); on the other, it can also induce political apathy (Gallego 2007; Kapikıran 2013). Among the possible reasons for these mixed results, two stand out: the lack of attention to the longitudinal aspect of unemployment (that is, the effects of becoming unemployed, rather than just being unemployed) and to the emotional reactions to this suddenly imposed condition.

The third set of grievances emphasizes the role of expectations, referring to prospects of future difficulties in terms of income, status, and rights. These grievances have less to do with individuals' current financial or status-related situations and more with what they anticipate for their future. This set of grievances develops the idea that structural-social transformations forged by the Great Recession are threats that have driven people to take political action in order to prevent further losses (van Dyke and Soule 2002), if not also to defend or regain specific social rights.

### *The Interplay of Grievances and Emotions*

Numerous scholars have argued that grievances are often not enough to incite protests (Scruggs and Allan 2006; van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, and van Dijk 2011). One possibility for the limited evidence on the role of grievances is that their effects would be indirect, via emotions (Buechler 2004). Pleasant or unpleasant feelings of avoidance or conflict (Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones 2004; Russell 2003) can condition an individual to engage in political participation, whereas positive emotions foster action, negative ones prepare individuals for unknown threats and hinder action (Steenbergen and Ellis 2006). Inconclusive findings concerning how some grievances, particularly those associated with unemployment, act as triggers of protest may thus derive from the fact that grievances are often associated with specific emotions.

Appraisal theories state that people's interpretations of situations influence their emotions, which can in turn urge people to participate in public protests (Frijda 1986). Although some studies have elucidated the impact of different framing elements on emotions related to protest, little research confirms their mediating effect between grievances and protests. In most research on collective action, particularly when affective injustice is involved, emotions are assumed to be present, yet they are not properly identified or measured (Smith and Ortiz 2002). In other cases, the connection between a grievance or characteristic of the group and the emotion in question is made clear, though its ultimate effect on participation in protests is not (Mackie, Devos, and Smith 2000).

Some studies have indeed tested the mediating role of emotions by conceiving of social identity not only as a precondition but also as the primary explanation for a person's participation in protests (Yzerbyt, Dumont, Wigboldus, and Gordijn 2003). This approach overstates the participant's need for previous identification with a social group in order to feel any action-spurring emotion and, ultimately, to take to the streets. By contrast, we argue that rapid economic downturns disrupt the quotidian routines, creating uncertainties about taken-for-granted aspects of someone's life (Snow et al. 1998). In so doing, they trigger emotions, which in turn lead people to protest. Although we acknowledge that far-reaching threats to daily structures can affect personal and social identities resulting in identity crisis (Dubar 2007), studying the potential impact of such events on identities lies beyond the scope of our paper. Our claim aligns more with an individual-level and longitudinal perspective of protest, which is consistent with recent developments describing increasing individualism in the nature of engagement among young Western citizens, both on- and off-line (Dauvergne and LeBaron 2014; O'Neill 2007). Young people are distrustful of political actors and cynical about conventional forms of participation, and they prefer engaging in everyday political activism embedded in the local community (Harris, Wyn, and Younes 2010) or in individualized collective actions that allow them to act when and where they want in more creative ways (see Micheletti 2003 for a discussion of these individualized forms of participation; van Deth 2012).

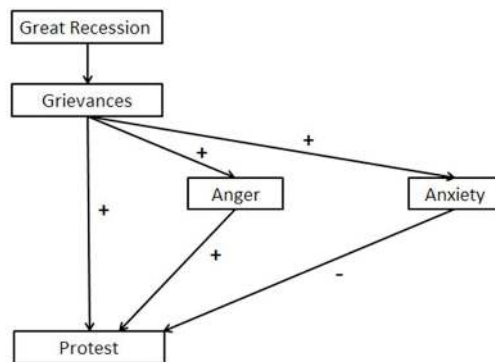
Crisis-related grievances can trigger either anger or anxiety. More specifically, when individuals identify actors responsible for the situation that they face, and when those actors are considered responsible for their well-being, then citizens are more likely to feel anger (Wagner 2014). Scholars characterize anger as a group-based (Frijda 1986), negative emotion that manifests when people are confronted with obstacles that impede their attainment of

rewards (Brader and Marcus 2013). The emotion has previously been found to amplify grievances (Klandermans et al. 2008) and foster participation (for literature reviews see Jasper 2014; van Doorn, Zeelenberg, and Breugelmans 2014), because anger, along with enthusiasm, belongs to disposition system-related emotions that drive action (Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones 2004).

By contrast, when the responsibilities for grievances are perceived to be more diffused, then the more likely resulting emotion is anxiety. Importantly for our concerns here, anxiety hinders participation, as it reduces an individual's capacity to cope with a situation (Öhman 2008). At the same time, anger and anxiety both tend to appear as contemporaneous reactions to given situations (Brader and Marcus 2013). We therefore argue that anxiety might mediate how grievances affect protests, insofar that they suppress their effect of engagement. The mediator effect of anger, on the contrary, will be a positive one, amplifying the engaging effects of grievances.

In figure 1, we summarize the overall theoretical framework constructed to explain increased protest activity related to the Great Recession. Though grievances can directly fuel protests, they may not be enough to encourage participation; in response, we also propose an indirect path to capture the mediating role of emotions. In short, we posit that grievances foster negative emotions and that anger turns these grievances into protests, whereas anxiety hinders protest activity.

**Figure 1.** Theoretical Expectations: Direct and Indirect Effects of Grievances on Protest



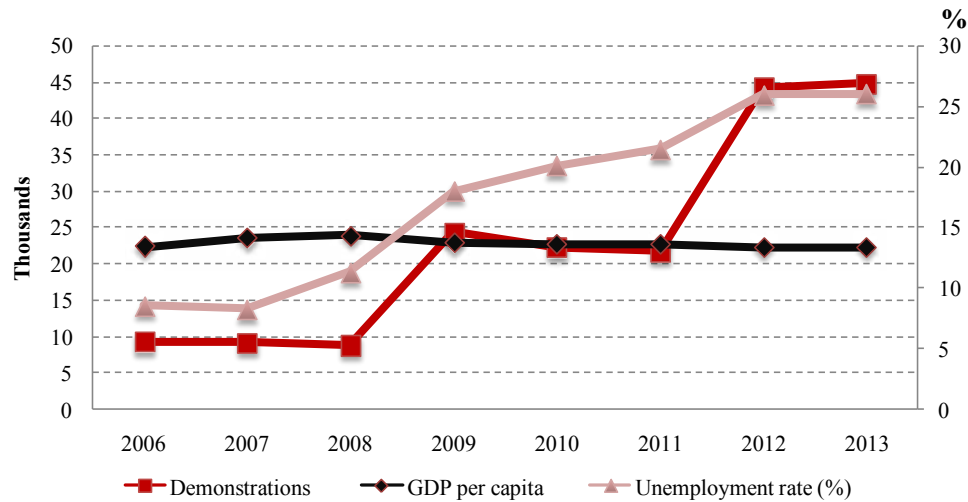
## DATA AND METHODS

Spain is an ideal case for studying the social and political consequences of economic recession. The country has been in the throes of severe economic crisis since 2008, and to express their dissatisfaction with the ongoing crisis, Spaniards have taken to the streets en masse. In 2008, the collapse of the real estate bubble spiked housing prices and halted the construction sector, which greatly contributed to the decline of the Spanish economy. In becoming unemployed, thousands of construction workers became unable to pay their mortgages, homeless, and in debt to their banks (Febrero and Bermejo 2013).

Two subsequent Spanish governments (the socialist-led one until November 2011 and the conservative-led one until December 2015) implemented austerity measures that cut public spending and further liberalized the labor market (Dellepiane and Hardiman 2012; Kennedy 2012; Martín and Urquizu-Sancho 2012). New policies have also drastically reduced protection for the elderly, families, and students, as well as for the unemployed, disabled, and otherwise disadvantaged citizens in general. Reforms to the labor market additionally diminished insiders' protection and worsened outsiders' living standards. In general, these austerity measures have been related to the 2012 bailout of Spanish banks by the European

Central Bank granted in exchange for Spain's commitment to trim its budget deficit to 3.6 percent of the GDP, which entailed severe welfare cutbacks. At the same time, unemployment rates have jumped, especially among young citizens, reaching fifty percent in 2012 and 57 percent in 2013 (figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Evolution Demonstrations and Economic Indicators in Spain 2006-2013



*Note:* Elaborated by the authors with official data on demonstrations, both legal and illegal, provided by Home Office (Ministerio del Interior) ([www.interior.gob.es](http://www.interior.gob.es)). Economic indicators provided by the INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadística) ([www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)). Demonstrations and GDP per capita are expressed in thousands (of Euros for GDP).

In this context, protests in Spain have grown tremendously, the most well-known of which is the *Indignados* movement. After May 2011 the movement seemed to have waned, but hundreds of food banks, grassroots development initiatives, and citizens' platforms have emerged since 2011. A case in point involves the so-called "tides," or platforms for social mobilization that organize demonstrations and other social protests against specific consequences of the above-mentioned austerity measures. These tides deal with the privatization of public education (the green tide), health care (the white tide), and water (the blue tide). As shown in figure 2, official data point to a spectacular increase in the number of demonstrations in Spain: from 8,760 in 2008 to 24,320 the following year and, in 2013, a remarkable 44,852. The graph shown suggests that protests in Spain have addressed not only the economic downturn but also political (mis)management, for the greatest bump noted between 2011 and 2012 paralleled a change in government and was apparently unrelated to the loss of purchasing power. Additionally, the evolution of the country's unemployment rate and that of demonstrations (in thousands) have run parallel since 2006. In this sense, we seek to elucidate the extent to which worsened working and living conditions have spurred Spaniards to protest and the means of that dynamic.

#### *Survey Data and Operationalization of Primary Variables*

To clarify the effects of crisis upon protest, we need to control for attendance at demonstrations prior to the crisis. In this study, we distinguish crisis-driven protests from more usual protests, thus differentiating protestors who took to the streets because of crisis-related grievances and those with an already high propensity to protest before the crisis occurred. To account for this preexisting propensity, we used a unique five-wave panel survey. CIS 2855 is a survey conducted during a period of twenty-eight months that allowed us to follow the evolution of Spaniards' protests during 2010-2013 (see Appendix A for

details). Respondents were selected from an online survey pool of potential respondents active in mainstream commercial websites in Spain, and the sample ultimately consisted of Spanish citizens aged sixteen to forty-five years old with Internet access. The survey was originally designed to examine attitudinal change among young people, who are theoretically open to social change. Since this subpopulation was the most severely affected by the economic consequences of the crisis, CIS 2855 represents an ideal database for testing how changes in economic and labor conditions affect protest behavior.

All five waves of the survey included a question related to the respondent's participation in demonstrations during the previous six months. Given the lack of more specific questions about marches, sit-ins, and building occupations, we accepted this question as a proxy for other forms of protest, making it our dependent variable. Panel waves occurred six months apart from each other, so each question concerning political activity referred to the time elapsed since the previous wave.

Regarding the primary independent variable (i.e., grievances), the fifth wave of the survey included a battery of thirty items addressing the negative effects of the economic crisis (see Appendix B for a complete list of all items). Among these items, eighteen were asked only of workers, whereas the remainder targeted the entire sample. The items presented to workers allow us to uncover lesser-known effects of the crisis, such as grievances concerning a loss of status and rights, without necessarily entailing a critical loss of purchasing power. The wording of these items for such indicators of crisis effects addressed whether the respondent had endured or suffered any of the mentioned effects in the course of the last two years, which referred to the period starting with the beginning of the study (wave 1). Crisis indicators included a reduction in pay, a worsening of working conditions, a loss of status (i.e., being overqualified for the work performed), a loss of purchasing power, a reduction in living quality (e.g., fewer holidays and less leisure time), and the need to ask for help from family members. With this list of thirty subjective crisis-related grievances, two exploratory factor analyses will be performed: one for the entire sample, another one with the battery addressed to workers only. This approach should allow us to understand the underpinnings of the economic crisis, as well as to identify a reasonable number of independent variables for the subsequent multivariate analyses.

As for mediating variables, the questionnaire inquired about the emotional effects of the crisis, including anger and anxiety. For each emotion, respondents could select whether they did not feel the emotion at all (1), felt it slightly (2), somewhat felt it (3), felt it greatly (4), or felt it extremely (5). These questions were posed after the aforementioned battery of items regarding the negative effects of the crisis. As such, they can be interpreted as emotional reactions that recall other (e.g., economic, social, work-related, and prejudicial) effects of the economic recession. Since any respondent could have felt the emotions simultaneously, it is important to account for both emotions in the explanatory models.

The survey contained several relevant controls included in our analyses, such as gender, age, education, and political interest (see Appendix C for descriptive statistics of all variables). More importantly, the longitudinal structure of the study allows us to include a lagged measure of protest: whether respondents had participated in demonstrations before time 1. This measure enabled us to control for respondents' initial propensity to take part in those protests, which is equivalent to estimating the impact of the Great Recession's consequences upon the evolution of protests between times 1 and 5 by controlling for all time-invariant individual variables. This set of variables includes individuals' previous social identification, reference groups, attitudes towards protest, feelings about group efficacy, personality, and any other psychological and social conditioning toward protests already present at the beginning of the study. In other words, only time-varying factors will be taken into account to address individual variations in protest behavior between times 1 and 5.

We nevertheless included additional controls to tap into efficacy and ideology, two possibly dynamic factors related to social identity whose effects on collective action have reached certain consensus in literature on the topic. Often, research focused on the organi-



zation and resources of political institutions refers to the concept of *group efficacy* as the belief that one's group can resolve its grievances by means of unified effort (Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, and Mielke 1999; van Zomeren et al. 2008). Given the lack of an appropriate question to gauge the communal aspect of such an orientation, we instead used an internal political efficacy question as a proxy. Indeed, internal political efficacy has been shown to play a positive role in protests (Gallego and Oberski 2012; Pollock III 1983) by increasing resilience to failure, providing political motivation, and reducing anxiety (Bandura 1995). In addition, we control for political ideology as a key explanation for protest behavior (Opp, Finkel, Muller, Wolfsfeld, Dietz, and Green 1995). Political ideology might have changed during the timespan covered by our study according to individuals' variations in their social positions therefore it might affect protest participation. Thus, we include self-placement on the left of the left-right political spectrum, a variable that successfully represents social cleavages and social identity in western Europe (i.e., see Freire 2006 for an analysis of how leftwing citizens are less religious, more likely to be non-manual workers, more prone to belong to trade unions and to trust such institutions). Leftwing citizens have been shown to demonstrate politically in public more than individuals who identify with other points on the left-right spectrum, with the exception of some rightwing-specific, less frequent mobilizations such as anti-drug and anti-abortion movements (Norris, Walgrave, and Van Aelst 2005). We therefore created a dummy variable where we coded respondents who placed themselves on the left-right scale at a value less than five (i.e., on the left range of the ideological scale) with 1 and coded everyone else with 0.

#### *Estimation Techniques*

The empirical evidence used to test our hypotheses relied on a series of estimations of respondents' propensity to demonstrate politically in public measured at time 5 (i.e., at the end of our study). Remarkably, indicators of the economic crisis were addressed only once (at the end of the panel study), which impedes any estimation concerning fixed effects, since our measures of grievances are constant in our dataset. However, the wording of questions aimed to tap into such grievances, namely those that explicitly ask the respondent to state the occurrence of those grievance-triggering events during the two previous years, equivalent to the period since the beginning of the study, coupled with the fact that the dependent variable was measured at each panel wave, allowed us to introduce a temporal dimension in our analyses. We considered two sets of estimations determined by the respondents of each set of crisis indicators: the entire sample and workers only. In each case, we introduced emotions after the grievance factors and always included a set of basic controls, primarily to test whether their presence lessened the effect of the crisis-related grievances. This strategy allows testing for mediation effects according to Reuben Baron and David Kenny's (1986) causal step approach. According to their work, mediation is detected when independent variable  $X$  significantly affects mediator  $M$ ;  $X$  significantly affects dependent variable  $Y$  when  $M$  is absent;  $M$  has a significant unique effect on  $Y$ ; and the effect of  $X$  upon  $Y$  diminishes (i.e., partial mediation) or disappears altogether (i.e., full mediation) when  $M$  is present (Baron and Kenny 1986).

Since our dependent variable is dichotomous, we use logistic regressions to estimate the effects of grievances and emotions on the propensity to protest. Note also that all the variables included as predictors in our models are normalized on a 0 to 1 scale so that all estimates show the effect of moving from the minimum to the maximum on a given independent variable. In order to facilitate the understanding of our results, we present average marginal effects (AME), or, changes in the propensity to participate in protest due to one predictor while keeping all the other variables included in the model at their observed values.

## RESULTS

We started with two factor analyses to unravel the nature and patterns of grievances that the citizens themselves attribute to the crisis. The first one concerns the whole sample ( $N = 1,757$ ), and therefore includes the unemployed, while the second concerns workers only ( $N = 1,042$ ). The rotated results for the principal component factor analyses are shown in tables 1 and 2. First, the factor matrix for the first set of grievances addressed to the entire sample identified three underlying dimensions of the crisis's detrimental effects. Table 1 unravels these dimensions, which we have named "Loss of purchasing power" (F1), "Unemployment" (F2), and "Geographic mobility" (F3).

The first dimension corresponds to our conceptualization of financial deprivation, while we argue that unemployment captures grievances associated with both financial deprivation and worker-citizens' status and rights. The final dimension might represent a mix of all three theorized groups of grievance (i.e., financial deprivation, loss of workers' status and rights, and threats to the future) or more particularly the ultimate consequences of all of them together. Unfortunately, we lack a unique measure of grievances associated with worker-citizens' status and rights, as well as with dire future prospects for the whole population.

The results for the second factor analysis performed only with workers' data are displayed in table 2. These results cover more specifically the three sets of grievances, as we distinguish five factors: "Dissatisfaction with working conditions" (F1); "Loss of status and rights" (F2); "Risk of losing one's job" (F3); "Workload" (F4); and "Loss of purchasing power" (F5). The results of these inductive analyses allow us to capture the three types of grievances described in the theoretical framework. F5 taps into financial deprivation, while F1, F2, and F4 measure different aspects of the loss of status and rights in the workplace. Lastly, F3 gauges the risk of unemployment by again combining financial and statutory losses while focusing more on the prospective aspect central to our third set of grievances: dire future prospects. We saved all of these factors to use them as predictors in subsequent estimations of protests. Notably, as with all the independent variables involved in the forthcoming analyses,

**Table 1.** Rotated Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances (Question on the Effects of the Crisis During the Last Two Years Asked to All Respondents)

	<b>Factor 1</b> <i>Loss of Purchasing Power</i>	<b>Factor 2</b> <i>Unemployment</i>	<b>Factor 3</b> <i>Geographic Mobility</i>	<i>Uniqueness</i>
Months unemployed in the last two years		.67		.48
Difficulty meeting mortgage/rent payment	.59			.51
Amount of acquaintances/relatives unemployed		.54		.62
Had reduced budget for: leisure	.82			.30
Had reduced budget for: food	.75			.41
Had reduced budget for: clothes	.82			.29
Had reduced budget for: holiday	.82			.27
Had reduced budget for: savings	.77			.39
Had needed help from my family	.50			.54
Had to move			.73	.42
Had to emigrate to a foreign country			.75	.42
Considered emigrating		.76		.38

*Note:* Loadings lower than 0.4 are left blank. Principal components method. Varimax rotation applied.

**Table 2.** Rotated Factor Loadings (Pattern Matrix) and Unique Variances (Question on the Effect of the Crisis During the Last Two Years Asked to Employed Respondents Only)

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
	<i>Dissatisfaction with Working Conditions</i>	<i>Loss of Status and Rights</i>	<i>Risk of Losing One's Job</i>	<i>Workload</i>	<i>Loss of Purchasing Power</i>
Pay drop					.76
Over qualification		.68			
Extra hours		.41		.56	
Fewer hours		.41			.46
Second job		.66			
Increase of work load				.75	
Worsening of Job environment			.46		
Unstable job			.66		
Worse schedules		.54			
Company has being firing			.69		
Pay in black		.68			
Company has experienced economic difficulties			.49		.53
Not likely to loss job in the 12 next months			-.62		
Satisfaction with: workload	.74				
Satisfaction with: working conditions	.81				
Satisfaction with: salary	.76				-.43
Satisfaction with: work tasks	.84				
Satisfaction with: perspectives for career advancement	.80				

Note: Loadings lower than 0.4 are left blank. Principal components method. Varimax rotation applied.

the factors have been recoded to range between 0 and 1. All regression coefficients, therefore, are comparable and interpretable in terms of the effect of moving from the minimum to the maximum value of the variable.

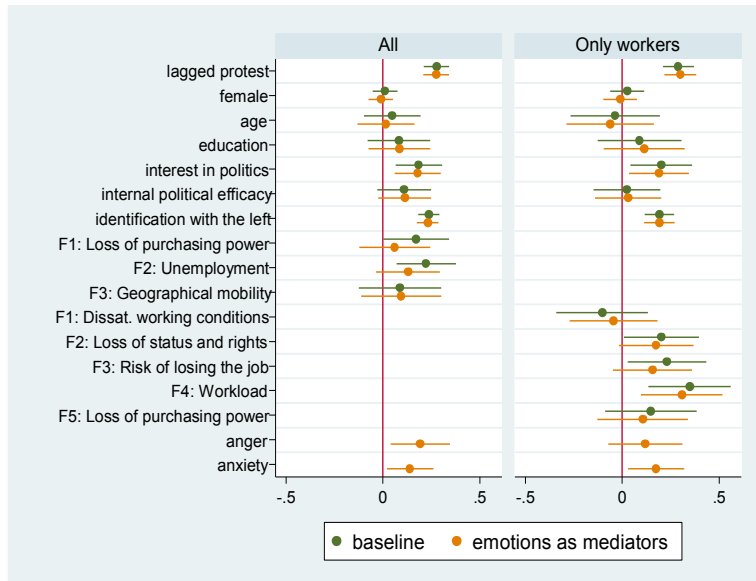
Most of these indicators are dichotomous, the value 1 signaling when the individual has experienced this adverse phenomenon in the last two years and the value 0 signaling when a person has not experienced it. Some items allow for gradation. For instance, the respondents could answer to what extent their companies have experienced economic difficulties, or to what extent they have had a hard time meeting their mortgage/rent payments. The answers range from 1 (no difficulties) to 4 (lots of difficulties). The likelihood of losing one's job answers rank from 1 (I will surely lose it) to 4 (I am sure I won't lose it). The set of questions on satisfaction with working conditions explicitly refers to the extent to which the respondent is more or less satisfied than two years ago. Lower values indicate less satisfaction than two years ago, higher values indicate more satisfaction. The question on the amount of time unemployed in the last two years indicates time being unemployed and is measured in months, meaning twenty-four is the maximum value. The last question on unemployment among acquaintances and relatives refers to the amount of people currently unemployed. The answer options are: 1 (none), 2 (a few), 3 (many), and 4 (all of them). With regards to the set of items tapping the reduction in budget, the response options rank from 1 (I haven't reduced my budget in this respect) to 6 (I have reduced my budget in this respect a great deal).

### *Predicting Protest*

Next, we test the effects of these grievances on a person's likelihood of demonstrating politically in public between 2010 and 2013. As we introduce a lagged measure of the depen-

dent variable, we reduce the sample to individuals who have stayed in the panel study from wave 1 to wave 5 (N = 912, see appendix 1). Since every one of the independent variables has its own missing values, the final N is 727 (whole sample) and 423 (only workers). Figure 3 presents the Average Marginal Effects (AME) based on our four logistic estimations of the probabilities of protesting in wave 5. The left part of the figure presents results for the whole sample, while the right part shows results for workers only. Furthermore, in both cases we include two sets of AME calculated based on the models without emotions (dark dots) and with emotions (lighter dots). Looking at the AME for all respondents and for workers only, we first see that after controlling for the lagged dependent variable, most control variables, including sex, age, education, and political efficacy, did not reveal any remarkable impact on the likelihood of demonstrating in 2013; these characteristics were stable within each subject, meaning that their effect had already been captured by the lagged protest measure. Nevertheless, interest in politics bore a positive, significant effect on protesting, as did self-placement in the left of the ideological spectrum. This result suggests that these variables also endured some variation during the timespan covered by the study that affected the likelihood of protesting in expected ways; for respondents whose interest in politics increased and/or who started identifying with the left in the ideological scale between 2010 and 2013, the probability of becoming engaged in protest activity was greater than for the rest.

**Figure 3.** Average Marginal Effects, Models 1 and 3 for Every Sample



Let us now turn to our main variables of interest, the factors capturing grievances. Unlike previous research on Greece (Rüdiger and Karyotis 2014), we have found that financial grievances foster protest. First, for all respondents, we see that going from the minimum to the maximum in loss of purchasing power boosted the likelihood of demonstrating by seventeen percent. Furthermore, respondents complaining about unemployment, either personally or in their close networks of relatives and friends, were also more prone to demonstrate; going from the minimum to maximum effects of unemployment increased the likelihood of protesting by twenty-two percent. Thus, we see that both loss of purchasing power and unemployment contribute greatly to protest. The effect of these two grievances is comparable to that of identifying with the left (with an increase of twenty-four percent) and political interest (with an in-

crease of nineteen percent), two important and well-known predictors of participation. However, grievances associated with the prospect of emigration have a more limited effect, and due to the lower number of respondents who suffered in this way, there is uncertainty around the estimate and it fails to reach statistical significance. Nevertheless, we tentatively interpret this result as an exit strategy, considering that emigration is the most desperate situation in which, barring other obstacles, one exits the economic and political situation.

By scrutinizing crisis-related grievances affecting workers only, we found that three of the five crisis factors positively impacted the propensity to demonstrate in all cases: ranked by importance and with all else being equal, experiencing an increased workload, feeling that one's job was at risk, and losing status and rights at one's job boosted the likelihood of demonstrating. Similar to the Greek study in this case (Rüdig and Karyotis 2014), we have found that, for workers, neither financial grievances nor dissatisfaction with working conditions foster protest; importantly, however, some other sets of grievances do. In particular, grievances associated with the loss of citizen-workers' rights boosted protest proclivity; the loss of status and rights increased the likelihood of demonstrating by twenty percent, while an increased workload increased the probability of demonstrating by thirty-five percent. The latter is the greatest effect observed for any of the independent variables involved in these analyses, both for the whole sample and for the sample of employed citizens. Lastly, grievances related to the risk of losing one's job increased protest by twenty-three percent. Again, the effects of these grievances on protest are as strong, or even stronger when it comes to an increase in the workload, as those of political interest (twenty percent) and identifying with the left (nineteen percent). As such, the study of grievances requires differentiating sets of grievances, which allows the observation that different types of grievance lead to participation in street demonstrations.

### *The Joint Role of Emotions*

In the second model for both samples, we introduce the emotion variables to test for mediation, and we see at the bottom of figure 3 that both emotions positively contribute to the participation of all citizens and to that of workers in protest. Thus, in times of crisis, citizens feel anger and anxiety about the situations they face, and both emotions contribute to their protest behavior. For the whole sample, we find that anger increases the likelihood of protesting by nineteen percent and anxiety by fourteen percent. This effect is similar to interest in politics (eighteen percent) or identification with the left (twenty-three percent), which are barely affected by the inclusion of the two emotions. In the case of workers only, the effect of anger carries some uncertainty around the estimate and fails to reach statistical significance. In additional analyses, we introduced both emotions separately and found that when introducing anxiety the positive and statistically significant effect of anger diminishes.

Regarding mediation, as shown by the lighter dots in the graph presenting AME for both samples, we see that four factors lose statistical significance. For the whole sample, factors capturing a loss of purchasing power and unemployment were no longer statistically significant once we took emotions into account. As indicated by additional estimations, including one emotion at a time (not shown), anger seems to mediate most of the effect of financial strain, while unemployment seems to follow a double path, both via anger and anxiety. As such, these findings are consistent with total mediation. Second, for the workers' sample, we observe that the AME of the risk of losing a job and that of workload decreased when considering anger and anxiety. The joint effects of both emotions absorb the engaging effect of the loss of status and rights and the risk of losing the job. In one case (i.e., risk of losing one's job) the statistical significance completely disappears, which is consistent with total mediation. The mediating role of emotions appears more limited for workers, is concentrated in anxiety, and is especially strong in relation to subjective grievance, akin to affective injustices that often appear intertwined with emotional reactions. Interestingly, anxiety (which is often related to inaction) suggests here a positive effect on respondents' propensity to protest, though these models cannot quantify the mediating role of emotions.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the shadow of the Great Recession, southern European countries have experienced an increase in protest activities and citizens have held the mainstream political parties to blame at election times. Our analysis of the political response in Spain offers additional evidence and greater understanding for how an economic crisis may affect politics.

We have argued that protests during the Great Recession in countries most strongly hit by the economic downturn are best understood as movements of crisis and that, in these movements, grievances play an important role in explaining individual participation, regardless of prior propensity to participate in protests and otherwise relevant factors (e.g., self-placement on the left of the ideological scale, political interest, and political efficacy). We have also posited that in times of crisis, grievances are raised not only in terms of financial deprivation, but also in relation to worker-citizens' status and rights and to prospects of future employment and income. Lastly, we have analyzed emotions as mediators. We argued that the effect of grievances would boost the likelihood to protest if they coincided with anger, but also that grievances would hamper protests if accompanied by anxiety instead.

To test these expectations, we first constructed factors to measure sets of grievances that capture the different types of disruption in daily lives: financial deprivation, loss of status and rights as worker-citizens, and dire future prospects. We also adopted a longitudinal perspective that minimized the risk of finding plausible conclusions for the effect of crisis-related grievances on protest due to bias stemming from omitted variables. To avoid such bias, we included a lagged dependent variable that allowed us to observe how such grievances affected the evolution of protest activity during the two-year period covered by the survey. This strategy also allows us to discard the effect of any time-invariant factor on the evolution of individual protest behavior during the timespan covered by our study.

Our results confirm that there are at least three families of grievances expressed by citizens in relation to crisis: financial strain, loss of status and rights, and concerns about the future. Complaints about unemployment seem to overlap with the first two types of grievances, and loss of rights at the workplace implies an increase in the workload, which was found to have the greatest observed effect on protest. The identification of the different types of grievances which, in the eyes of the citizens, are directly a product of the crisis, allowed us to analyze their effects on individual participation in crisis movements.

Contrary to previous findings of how personal economic situations affect politics (Kinder and Kiewiet 1979; Rosenstone 1982; Rüdiger and Karyotis 2014), we show that a worsening of one's personal economic situation fosters protest likelihood. However, this effect is not found among workers, meaning workers' propensity to demonstrate is unrelated to financial deprivation. Instead, losing status and rights or facing the risk of unemployment are powerful drivers of protest. The loss of status and rights in the workplace, as well as increased workload, exhibit at least as much impact on an individual's propensity to protest as does unemployment for the entire population. Thus, keeping one's job but being otherwise affected by the economic recession and austerity measures does not spare individuals from taking to the streets. In this sense, half a loaf is clearly no better than no bread at all when it comes to protest. Lastly, grievances associated with dire future prospects as captured by the risk of losing one's job also stir protest.

Regarding the role of emotions, our empirical evidence shows that emotions mediate the effects of grievances on an individual's propensity to protest. The effect of anger on likelihood to protest corresponds to previous findings (see Brader and Marcus 2013 for a literature review; Jasper 2014) and complements them by offering some interesting insights. Not only does anger play the mediating role of fostering the engaging effects of crisis, but anxiety does as well. We did not find evidence for the suppressing role of anxiety between grievances and protest. Nevertheless, we saw that its presence reduces the engaging effect of anger and that the mediating role of anxiety is minor among the entire population and greater among workers. Arguably, being anxious does not necessarily hamper protest, and it may even successfully convey the engaging effects of some grievances that are mostly work related.

For further research, our findings suggest that not all grievances are mediated by emotions, which is the case for outrage against increased workloads. This finding relates to the well-known distinction between rational and instrumental participation explained by individuals' resources (Verba and Nie 1972) and disaffected participation focused upon expressing discontent (Gurr 1970). Whenever grievances are not mediated by emotions, reaching instrumental goals becomes closer inasmuch as protesters seek redress for concrete grievances. This dynamic is probably the case for increases in workload, which seems to be a more concrete grievance that people wish to address, whereas the risk of losing one's job presents a less clear situation in which citizens tend to express their concerns rather than to issue concrete demands.

Future studies of socioeconomic grievances arising from economic crises should overcome poor operationalization of grievances, avoiding rough measures of macro- and microeconomic situations that are unable to grasp the precise and multifaceted nature of grievances. By differentiating between grievances, we are able to include in our models predictors that boost protest as much as previous participation in protest. Unfortunately, these types of grievances are seldom analyzed, as few surveys include items other than assessment of one's economic situation. Future research might also consider alternative paths between these grievances and protest. Our findings suggest that a sense of outrage can appear not out of comparison with other social groups but with one's previous situation. We also found that variations in the self-placement on the ideological scale have implications for protest, as individuals that started identifying with the left during the timespan covered by the study are more prone to start demonstrating.

The major limitation of our research is the absence of a dynamic measure of collective identity. Hence, our results point to the importance of grievances in crisis-related protest while assuming that collective identification is stable and therefore taken into account by our longitudinal approach. However, social identity theory has stressed the role of politicized identity amid the emergence of protest (Simon and Klandermans 2001). Thus, a research design that captures changes in collective identities would enable researchers to test the joint effects of grievances and transformed collective identities amid events of quotidian disruption. Additionally, social movement organizations emphasize the central role of group efficacy (Mummendey et al. 1999), for which we had only a limited measure of internal political efficacy. Several efforts have brought together some (Klandermans 1984; Mackie et al. 2000) or all (van Zomeren et al. 2008) of these factors when explaining protests in non-crisis contexts; we have considered grievances alongside stable identities in the event of a great economic recession. Importantly, future research on protest in the realm of the Great Recession could bring together our findings on grievances with factors capturing changes in group identity; such an approach would account for the relative importance of explanations associated with grievances and compared with those pointing at the role of collective identity. Indeed, the recent economic crisis has negatively affected so many sections of the population so rapidly that it may be worth considering the emergence of crisis-related identities (e.g. those affected by a sudden eviction or bankruptcy) and new social groups in order to include them in the study of movements of crisis.

#### APPENDIX A: SURVEY SAMPLE

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5
Main sample	2100	1813	1514	1322	912
Refreshment wave, low studies	-	620	465	395	381
Recovery of participants who dropped in previous waves					464
Total N	2100	2433	1979	1717	1757
Fieldwork dates	Nov. 17 – Dec. 10, 2010	May 11 - 25, 2011	Nov. 9 -18, 2011	May 11 – May 30, 2012	May 17 – June 4, 2013*

Note: \* Refreshment and recovery, October 16 – 27, 2013

**APPENDIX B: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS IN  
THE LAST TWO YEARS (2010-2013)**

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std.Dev.	Min	Max
1. Pay drop	1042	.568	.496	0	1
2. Over qualification	1042	.223	.416	0	1
3. Extra hours	1042	.425	.495	0	1
4. Less hours	1042	.138	.345	0	1
5. Second job	1042	.200	.400	0	1
6. Increase of work load	1042	.639	.480	0	1
7. Worsening of Job environment	1042	.574	.495	0	1
8. Instable job	1042	.594	.491	0	1
9. Worse schedules	1042	.377	.485	0	1
10. Company has being firing	1042	.523	.500	0	1
11. Pay in black	1042	.155	.362	0	1
12. Company has experienced economic difficulties	1042	2.791	.940	1	4
13. Not likely to loss job in the 12 next months	1042	2.692	.741	1	4
14. Satisfaction with: work load	1042	3.642	2.400	0	10
15. Satisfaction with: working conditions	1042	3.515	2.480	0	10
16. Satisfaction with: salary	1042	3.295	2.614	0	10
17. Satisfaction with: work tasks	1042	4.349	2.420	0	10
18. Satisfaction with: perspectives for career advancement	1042	3.512	2.635	0	10
19. Months unemployed in the last 2 years	1757	6.428	9.143	0	24
20. Difficulty meeting mortgage/rent payment	1757	1.794	1.079	1	4
21. Amount of acquaintances/relatives unemployed	1757	2.496	.715	1	4
22. Had reduced budget for: leisure	1757	4.098	1.448	1	6
23. Had reduced budget for: food	1757	2.692	1.289	1	6
24. Had reduced budget for: clothes	1757	3.678	1.397	1	6
25. Had reduced budget for: holiday	1757	4.231	1.642	1	6
26. Had reduced budget for: savings	1757	4.053	1.714	1	6
27. Had needed help from my family	1757	.359	.480	0	1
28. Had to move	1757	.087	.282	0	1
29. Had to emigrate to a foreign country	1757	.031	.174	0	1
30. Considered emigrating	1757	.363	.481	0	1

*Note:* The first eighteen questions were asked only to those working in wave 5.

**APPENDIX C: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**

Variable	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Participation scale (w5)	1757	2	1.62	0	6
Participation scale (w1)	2100	1.79	1.52	0	6
Woman	1717	.48	.5	0	1
Age	1757	34.58	7.23	18	51
Education	1757	7.14	2.81	1	11
Anxiety	1757	3.41	1.18	1	5
Anger	1757	4.17	.97	1	5
Left	1452	.447	.497	0	1
Internal political efficacy	1757	5.67	2.94	0	10

*Notes:* All variables (except the lagged scale of participation, measured in wave 1) have been measured in wave 5. The numbers reflect the values before the variables were recoded so as to range from 0 to 1.



## APPENDIX D: LOGISTIC ESTIMATION OF PROBABILITIES OF DEMONSTRATING

	All		Workers only			Anger + Anxiety as moderator s
	Anger as moderator	Anger as moderator	Anger + Anxiety as moderators	Anger + Anxiety as moderators	Anger as moderator	
Demonstrations wave 1	1.59** (.22)	1.59** (.22)	1.61** (.23)	1.73** (.28)	1.73** (.29)	1.83** (.30)
Woman	.07 (.19)	-.02 (.19)	-.07 (.19)	.15 (.27)	.03 (.27)	-.07 (.27)
Age	.27 (.43)	.13 (.44)	.10 (.44)	-.22 (.70)	-.22 (.71)	-.38 (.70)
Education	.47 (.48)	.54 (.48)	.50 (.48)	.53 (.66)	.67 (.65)	.69 (.65)
Interest	1.07** (.36)	1.03** (.36)	1.05** (.36)	1.19* (.49)	1.14* (.50)	1.15* (.49)
Political efficacy	.63 (.41)	.65 (.41)	.66 (.41)	.14 (.52)	.14 (.52)	.18 (.53)
Identification: left.	1.35** (.18)	1.30** (.19)	1.36** (.19)	1.14** (.25)	1.10** (.25)	1.17** (.26)
F1: Loss of purch. power	.98* (.50)	.75 (.52)	.36 (.55)			
F2: Unemployment	1.28** (.45)	1.02* (.47)	.76 (.49)			
F3: Geographic mobility	.50 (.62)	.55 (.62)	.56 (.62)			
F1: Dissat. working conditions				-.62 (.72)	-.36 (.71)	-.27 (.71)
F2: Loss of status and rights				1.20* (.60)	1.20* (.60)	1.06* (.61)
F3: Risk of losing the job				1.37* (.63)	1.29* (.63)	.95 (.64)
F4: Workload				2.07** (.66)	1.90** (.66)	1.87** (.67)
F5: Loss of purchasing power				.88 (.72)	.79 (.73)	.64 (.73)
Anger		1.42** (.45)	1.13* (.46)		1.09* (.57)	.73 (.60)
Anxiety			.82* (.37)			1.06* (.47)
Constant	-4.27** (.63)	-5.09** (.69)	-5.01** (.70)	-5.02** (.96)	-5.81** (1.04)	-5.84** (1.06)
Pseudo R-Squared	.202	.214	.219	.228	.235	.244
Obs.	727	727	727	423	423	423

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; +  $p < .1$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

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