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# AUTHORITARIAN LEGACIES IN CONTEMPORARY RADICAL RIGHT VOTING IN SPAIN

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PRE-ANALYSIS PLAN

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## ABSTRACT

Most research on the growth of far-right parties in Europe deals with contemporary causes of the phenomenon. A great deal of attention has been placed on the economic roots of the political discontent that has fueled the growth of radical right voting. Labour market competition from immigration, the asymmetric effects of austerity or trade shocks are among the main causes identified by the literature. However there is increasing evidence that points to historical legacies as an important determinant of contemporary electoral behavior. In this project we aim at testing the effect of legacies from the Francoist dictatorship (1936-75) in the vote to the new radical right party in Spain, Vox. Moreover, we aim at uncovering the conditional effects of legacies: they shape latent preferences that might get activated following informational shocks, negative valence shocks on the existing parties or economic and immigration shocks.

**Keywords** Radical right voting · Historical Legacies · Spain

## 1 Introduction

While the academic debate on the rise of radical right parties is structured along the divide between proponents of the so-called 'cultural' hypothesis and those that argue for the economic roots of the political discontent that has fueled these parties, there is a potentially crucial element that has so far been neglected: the legacies from interwar fascism and postwar authoritarian regimes in the support for the contemporary radical right.

Scholars of radical right parties have, for a long time, rightfully pointed to the discontinuities in discourse and practice between traditional fascism and contemporary radical right. However, there is increasing evidence that historical legacies matter for contemporary political behavior. This might be a neglected component of the variation in support for these parties within European countries. Recent papers

In this study we want to trace the Francoist legacies in the vote for the emerging radical right party in Spain, Vox. We will use the April 29 2019 general election data at the local level, and we will assess to what extent the geography of support for Vox can be traced back to the geography of francoism in Spain.

## 2 Hypotheses

1. We expect latent Francoist preferences to have an unconditional positive effect on the percentage of votes obtained by VOX in the 2019 Spanish General Elections.
2. We also expect that that an informational shock (originated by the exposure of the electoral results in Andalusia after its regional elections) should activate the latent Francoist preferences. As such, we expect that the

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exposure of the results will moderate the effect of Francoist preferences and we plan to test this hypothesis with individual-level data from surveys.

3. We also expect what we define as a replacement mechanism. Specifically, we expect that negative valence shocks on the conservative party (due to corruption scandals) should favor the rise of the radical right (Vox), especially where the latent preferences are Francoist.
4. We also expect an unconditional effect of unemployment shocks (after the 2008 economic crisis) and immigration increases at the municipality-level on the electoral results obtained by VOX.
5. Finally, we expect a conditional effect of immigration growth and unemployment growth. Specifically, we expect that latent Francoist preferences will be moderated by both unemployment shocks and immigration increases.

### 3 Empirics

#### 4 Data and Measurement

##### 4.1 Study 1: Election results

- DV: Share of vote for VOX April 2019 at the municipality-level
- Latent Francoist preferences: Streets with Francoist names in municipality (1991, 2001)
- Latent Francoist preferences: Votes against the Spanish Constitution (1978), exc. Basque Country
- Legacies: Rightist violence war & post-war
- Legacies: Days in which municipality was under Republican control during the civil war (1936-39)
- Negative valence shock: corruption cases at the local or provincial level affecting the PP
- Immigration: Levels & change
- Unemployment: Levels & change

##### 4.2 Study 2: Survey evidence (pre-post)

- Data: CIS surveys 3231 (November 2018) and 3234 (December 2018), Pseudo-UESD design
- DV: Intention to vote for VOX at the individual level
- Treatment: Pre-post Andalusia election (2/12/2018)
- Latent preferences: Ideology, attitudes
- Negative valence shock: corruption cases at the provincial level affecting the PP
- Immigration: share of immigrants
- Unemployment: Levels & change

### 5 Data Analysis

#### 5.1 Estimation Procedure

In order to test our hypothesis we plan to estimate a set of models exploiting geographical variation in the electoral results obtained by a specific-party, VOX, in the General Spanish Elections to be held on Sunday 28th of April, 2019. More specifically, we plan to analyze the percentage of votes obtained by VOX at the municipality-level (in study 1), whereas in study 2 we will exploit two individual-level surveys (CIS Surveys 3231 and 3234) to estimate at the individual-level the effects of the release of the electoral results in a pseudo-UESD design.

##### 5.1.1 Study 1: Cross-Sectional Study of the Vox Electoral Results across Spanish Municipalities

First, to uncover the unconditional effect of latent Francoist preferences on the vote for the radical-right wing party VOX in the 2019 Spanish General elections we will estimate the following equations with municipality-level data:

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \lambda Z_i + \delta CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN2001_i + \lambda Z_i + \delta CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (2)$$

Second, to uncover the conditional effects of latent Francoist preferences, we will estimate the following set of equations in which we interact our empirical proxy for latent preferences with various contemporaneous shocks:

Negative valence shocks:

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma CorruptDummy_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times CorruptDummy_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (3)$$

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma CorruptSize_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times CorruptSize_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (4)$$

Unemployment shocks:

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma UnemplShare_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times UnemplShare_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (5)$$

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma UnemplInc_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times UnemplInc_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (6)$$

Immigration shocks:

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma ImmigShare_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times ImmigShare_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (7)$$

$$VOX_i = \alpha + \beta SFN1991_i + \gamma ImmigInc_i + \delta SFN1991_i \times ImmigInc_i + \lambda Z_i + \mu CCAA_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (8)$$

In all such models  $VOX_i$  is the share of votes for VOX in a given municipality  $i$ , and  $SFN1991$  is our empirical proxy for latent Francoist preferences. This is a variable that measures the number of streets with Francoist names in a given municipality in 1991, whereas  $SFN2001$  is the same variable but measuring the number of streets with Francoist names in a given municipality in 2001.

On the other hand,  $Z_i$  represents a set of municipality-level covariates (including area, log population and a dummy for coastal municipalities),  $CCAA_j$  are regional fixed effects (FEs) for the Autonomous Communities in Spain and  $\epsilon_{ij}$  is an error term for municipality  $i$  in region  $j$ .

Note that for the variables measuring shares (immigration shares and unemployment shares) we will employ the level values for the most recent pre-treatment contemporaneous data available. Whereas for the variables measuring increments (immigration increment and unemployment increment) we will calculate the increments between the most recent contemporaneous pre-treatment level and the ex-ante level values when the economic crisis started in Spain.

Finally, we plan to estimate the exact same equations (equations (1) to (8)) but replacing the  $SFN1991$  variable with the variable  $VASC1978$ . This is a variable measuring the share of Votes Against the Spanish Constitution (1978) at the municipality level, an alternative empirical proxy for latent Francoist preferences.

### 5.1.2 Study 2: Informational Shocks and Intention to Vote for VOX with Individual-Level Data

In this study we will exploit two consecutive surveys (CIS Survey 3231 and CIS Survey 3234) in a pseudo-UESD design. Both surveys provide individual-level data. More specifically, we plan to estimate the following equation. First, we will estimate the unconditional effect of EXPOSURE of the electoral results of the Andalusian regional elections (held on Sunday, 2 December 2018) on the intention to vote for VOX at the individual-level:

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \lambda X_i + \epsilon_i \quad (9)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (10)$$

Afterwards, we will explore to what extent individual-level ideology conditions the effect of EXPOSURE on the individual-level propensity to vote for VOX. We will do so by estimating the following equations:

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma Ideology_i + \delta EXPOSED_i \times Ideology_i + \lambda X_i + \epsilon_i \quad (11)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma Ideology_i + \delta EXPOSED_i \times Ideology_i + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (12)$$

Finally, and following a similar strategy to the one developed in Study 1, we will investigate how contemporaneous shocks moderate the effects of EXPOSURE (of the Andalusian electoral results held on Sunday, 2 December 2018) on the individual propensity to vote for VOX:

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma CorruptDummy_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times CorruptDummy_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (13)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma CorruptSize_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times CorruptSize_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (14)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma UnemplShare_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times UnemplShare_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (15)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma UnemplIncr_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times UnemplIncr_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (16)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma ImmigShare_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times ImmigShare_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (17)$$

$$IntVOX_i = \alpha + \beta EXPOSED_i + \gamma ImmigIncr_j + \delta EXPOSED_i \times ImmigIncr_j + \lambda X_i + \mu Z_j + \epsilon_i \quad (18)$$

Note that in all such models  $IntVOX_i$  represents the individual-level intention to vote for VOX as reported by the Surveys. As such, here the sub-indices have changed and now  $i$  refers to an individual-voter living in a given municipality  $j$ .

On the other hand,  $EXPOSED_i$  is the main independent variable of interest and represents the individual-level exposure to the release of the electoral results of the Andalusian regional elections (held on Sunday, 2 December 2018).

Finally, as control variables,  $X_i$  represents a set of individual-level controls (including age, gender and education) and  $Z_j$  a set of municipality-level controls (including area, log population and a dummy for coastal municipalities).

## 5.2 Procedures for Data Issues

Following the work of Oto-Peralias (2018) we consider that the Streets with Francoist names provide a good empirical proxy for the latent Francoist preferences by individual voters. As such, we plan to employ the number of streets with Francoist names in a given municipality as our proxy for latent Francoist preferences.

More specifically, we will employ two different measurements (codifications that were done by the INE, the "Instituto Nacional de Estadística" in Spain and titled Callejero de Censo Electoral) of the number of streets with Francoist names: the one in 1991 ( $SFN1991$ ) and the one in 2001 ( $SFN2001$ ).

We will employ, however, as our most preferred measure for Streets with Francoist its codification in 1991:  $SFN1991$ . Although as of today, when we pre-register the study, we only have been able to process the measure of Streets with Francoist names in 2001 ( $SFN2001$ ).