Abstract. Welfare chauvinism has become an important element in the agenda of the populist radical right. This paper proposes a novel argument to explain variation in the strength of welfare chauvinist appeals across social policy programs. It theorizes that the redistributive justice principles (equity, equality, and need) that underpin a social program matter. Equality- and need-based programs are more likely to contradict a nativist worldview in principle or practice, whereas equity-based schemes are less vulnerable to welfare chauvinistic appeals. As a consequence, welfare chauvinism should be targeted at social policies that provide universal or means-tested benefits. Insurance-based systems are more likely to be immune. This argument is tested through a qualitative content analysis of populist radical right election manifestos in four West European democracies. The results show that insurance-based systems (pensions, unemployment) are less likely to attract welfare chauvinism, whereas universal health care and means-tested social assistance programs are more prone to draw nativist appeals. Universal family allowances, however, are less likely to attract welfare chauvinism than predicted by the theory.

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Introduction

European welfare states were first established and further grown during an era of relatively high cultural and ethnic homogeneity. Large-scale immigration into Western Europe during the past decades has created greater diversity among European populations, thus putting a strain on the willingness of many voters to assent to redistributive policies (Alesina & Glaeser 2004; van Oorschot 2006). One possible policy response to this development is across-the-board retrenchment. Yet, as recent research has shown, the idea that higher levels of immigration lead to overall cuts in welfare spending has little empirical support (Gaston & Rajaguru 2013).

By contrast, the response that many political actors, especially populist radical right parties (PRRPs), have embraced is not to advocate for overall retrenchment, but for a selective provision of welfare benefits. The full generosity of the welfare state should be retained for the native population, while benefits should be cut for the immigrant population. This ideological position has been labelled welfare chauvinism in the literatures on party competition and social policy preferences.

While recent research on party policy has begun to examine welfare chauvinism more comprehensively (Lefkofridi & Michel 2014; Norocel 2016; Jungar & Jupskås 2014; Careja et al. 2016), we still lack a theoretical framework to derive expectations about the use of welfare chauvinist rhetoric by political parties. The most notable exception is Schumacher & van Kersbergen’s (2016) study which theorizes and examines the conditions under which diffusion of welfare chauvinism from populist radical right to mainstream parties takes place.

The present paper proposes a theoretical argument that generates expectations about the strength of welfare chauvinistic appeals by nativist political actors (or those seeking to appeal to nativist voters). It argues that different types of social programs, because they are organized according to different redistributive justice principles (equity, equality, or need), vary in their degree of vulnerability to welfare chauvinistic appeals. Those social programs that are at odds with a nativist worldview (either based on underlying principles or outcomes produced) should be more likely to become targets of PRRPs’ welfare chauvinism. Importantly, this theoretical argument helps us explain variation in welfare chauvinism across policy areas – something that is impossible to do when looking only at country- or party-level determinants.
The theoretical section will outline the argument in more detail. The analytical section presents results from a qualitative content analysis of election manifestos issued by anti-immigrant parties in four countries (the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom) during the past 15 years. In line with the theory, welfare chauvinism is found to be lower for insurance-based programs and higher for universal health care and means-tested social assistance programs. Yet, counter to expectations, only weak nativist appeals are found for family allowances. The implications of these findings for our understanding of party competition on social policy and the resilience of welfare programs to the challenge posed by immigration are discussed.

Theoretical framework

_Welfare chauvinism_

Welfare chauvinism is a political view that promotes nativism as the main organizing principle of social policy.\(^1\) Welfare benefits should be directed primarily towards members of the native in-group, as delineated by citizenship, ethnicity, race, or religion. By contrast, members of the nonnative out-group should receive limited social support, if any. Welfare chauvinism thus cuts across the left–right dimension by combining a leftist welfare stance towards natives with a rightist position as far as nonnatives are concerned.

The term welfare chauvinism was coined by Andersen and Bjørklund in their discussion of the Norwegian and Danish Progress Parties (1990: 212),\(^2\) but has not always been used to denote exactly the same phenomenon. In particular, research on party competition and spatial models of politics has employed it to denote a combination of anti-immigrant views and pro-welfare stances (e.g. Kitschelt & McGann 1995). Taking such an ideological position is certainly a necessary condition for applying nativist principles to social policy – yet it is not the same thing. Throughout this paper, however, welfare chauvinism is meant to denote giving preference to natives over nonnatives in the design of social policy programs.

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\(^1\) Which is why the term ‘welfare nativism’ may, in fact, be more accurate.

\(^2\) The precise term used by the authors was actually ‘welfare state chauvinism’.
Broadly speaking, research on welfare chauvinism has evolved in two different strands of literature. One line of research has addressed the political supply side and analyzed welfare chauvinism as a plank in the platforms of populist radical right (and other) parties in Northern and Western Europe (Mudde 2000, 2007; Schumacher & van Kersbergen 2016; Ennser-Jedenastik 2016; Jungar & Jupskås 2014; Lefkofridi & Michel 2014; Careja et al. 2016). This represents a change on the earlier view that identified PRRPs as holding neoliberal economic views (Betz 1994; Kitschelt & McGann 1995; Ignazi 1992) – a view that was soon challenged by other researchers (Mudde 1999, 2000; de Lange 2007) and quickly found acceptance among its original proponents (McGann & Kitschelt 2005).

A second strand of research has focused on the public’s attitudes towards welfare and immigration – the demand side of politics. Survey research has shown that voters prefer different levels of welfare going to different national or ethnic groups (van Oorschot 2006; van der Waal et al. 2010), and that these preferences are particularly pronounced in countries with liberal and conservative welfare regimes (van der Waal et al. 2013). Recently, survey experiments have provided more evidence for welfare chauvinistic attitudes. Cappelen & Midtbø (2016), for instance, finds strong welfare chauvinism in a sample of Norwegian respondents. Similarly, Hjorth (2016) demonstrates that Swedish voters display lower support for cross-border welfare rights for culturally distant migrants (Bulgarians) than for culturally similar ones (Dutch). Kootstra (2016) reports that ethnic minorities in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom are not viewed as less deserving per se, but that they are punished more severely for displaying ‘unfavorable’ characteristics along other dimensions.

**Principles of Redistributive Justice**

The question of what constitutes a just society has animated thinkers for as long as humans have existed. As argued by Rawls (1971: 4), the principles underlying our understanding of social justice should provide guidelines towards the ‘appropriate distribution of the benefits and burdens of social cooperation’. Research on welfare attitudes typically draws on three principles of redistributive justice: equity, equality, and need (Deutsch 1975). As the following discussion will show, these principles correspond to different ways of organizing social policy programs (insurance, universal benefits, and means-tested benefits), which are, in turn, characteristic of different welfare regime ideal-types (Esping-Andersen 1990).
The principle of *equity* (sometimes referred to as reciprocity, merit, or desert) holds that the benefit one receives from the community should be in proportion to one’s contribution. Those who contribute more should be given more in the event that they are no longer able to provide for themselves (e.g. due to job loss, sickness, old age, or disability). The equity principle is expected to be dominant when the primary goal in a group is productivity (Deutsch 1975: 143; Arts & Gelissen 2001: 286). In social policy terms, the equity principle is realized by organizing welfare programs as social insurance systems with earnings-related benefits (the Bismarckian model). Such systems are a core characteristic of Conservative welfare regimes.

The principle of *equality*, by contrast, posits that each member of a group should be treated equally and thus receive the same amount of support from the community, irrespective of social status, income, contribution, or need. The equality principle is said to be dominant when the maintenance of social harmony and good social relations between individuals is the primary goal of a group (Deutsch 1975: 146). In the realm of welfare policy, the principle of equality is realized by establishing universal benefit schemes that seek to provide a high standard of living to all citizens or even residents of a country. Such welfare policies are especially prevalent in the Social democratic welfare regimes of Northern Europe.

The principle of *need* implies that help should be extend primarily (if not exclusively) to the worst-off. Those with the greatest need should receive the largest amount of assistance. This principle is expected to be dominant in communities that prioritize individual development and welfare (Deutsch 1975: 146). In social policy terms, it is best embodied by the establishment of means-tested benefits that provide assistance only to those who fall below a certain level of income or wealth. Such benefit structures are often viewed as characteristic of liberal welfare regimes.

**Table 1: Principles of redistributive justice and corresponding social policy features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Type of program</th>
<th>Welfare regime</th>
<th>Benefits based on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Social insurance</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Universal benefit</td>
<td>Social democratic</td>
<td>Citizenship/Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Means-tested benefit</td>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>Income or wealth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adapted from Clasen & van Oorschot (2002: 94).
Table 1 presents an overview of the three redistributive justice principles, and their corresponding program types, welfare regimes, and logic of benefit structures. To be sure, such correspondences are necessarily crude, since they present categorizations of ideal types. For instance, a number of scholars have argued for an extension of Esping-Andersen’s (1990) welfare regime classification (e.g. Bonoli 1997). Others have shown that the empirical boundaries between the regime types are much blurrier than implied by the original work (Alan & Scruggs 2006).

Welfare Chauvinism, Redistributive Justice Principles, and Policy Outcomes

Welfare chauvinism posits that social benefits should go primarily to members of the native in-group, whereas the nonnative out-group should receive only limited support, if any. The premise of this paper is that welfare chauvinistic parties and politicians will voice greater opposition to social programs that are in conflict with this goal, or advocate changes to programs in order to make them conform to it. The more redistribution from natives to nonnatives a social policy implies, the more we should see welfare chauvinistic appeals to restrict access for immigrants or restructure the respective program in other ways. These appeals have their origins either in the principles underlying a specific policy or the outcomes it produces.

As regards the former, it may be that the organizing principle that underpins a social program contradicts the welfare chauvinistic position to a greater or lesser extent. For instance, a benefit may be designed based on the assumption that all residents of a country deserve equal provision, irrespective of citizenship or ethnicity. Such non-discrimination between natives and nonnatives should elicit criticism and call for change from welfare chauvinistic parties and politicians.

With regard to outcomes, opposition from welfare chauvinists may also arise when a social program produces results that are at odds with a nativist view of the welfare state. For example, in many countries means-tested programs will disproportionately benefit immigrants, since they are overrepresented among the poor.

Let us first examine the equity principle, and its empirical materialization, social insurance schemes. As a principle, equity is orthogonal to nativism, not least since it applies at the individual rather than the group level. ‘To each according to his contribution’ does not promote the welfare chauvinist differentiation between natives and nonnatives, yet neither
does it actively contradict it. Or, as Reeskens and van Oorschot (2012: 124) have put it, ‘merit’s underlying importance of economic duties towards society makes no appeal to in-out group conflict.’ Thus, anyone – nonnatives included – can earn the right to support by other members of society, simply by contributing. In terms of outcomes, however, social insurance schemes with earnings-related contributions and benefits tend to produce lower benefits for immigrants, quite simply because most immigrants in Western Europe have lower average incomes and shorter employment histories in their country of residence (Sainsbury 2012: 12). Under such schemes, redistribution from natives to nonnatives should therefore be limited. This is a welcome feature from a welfare chauvinist perspective. The overall expectation is therefore that welfare chauvinistic appeals will be low in social policy areas governed by the insurance principle – especially when benefits are proportional to contributions (such as in many pension and unemployment schemes).

Next, let us turn to the principle of equality and its practical realization, universal benefits. Here, the contradiction to welfare chauvinism is most evident. The idea that natives and nonnatives are not equal and thus do not deserve equal benefits is foundational to welfare chauvinism. A similar logic applies to outcomes. Social programs that provide the same level of support to natives and nonnatives are anathema to welfare chauvinists. Native-to-nonnative-redistribution is considerable, since immigrants typically have below-average incomes, lower levels of labor market integration, and therefore pay less in taxes (Nannestad 2007). Yet the fact that they are entitled to the same level of benefits provides an opportunity for political mobilization on nativist grounds. After all, universal benefits for immigrants are financed largely by the native population. Of course, this all changes if the inclusion criterion is not residence but citizenship (Reeskens & van Oorschot 2012: 123). Universal benefits for citizens (and no or lower provision for non-citizens) conform perfectly well to a welfare chauvinist policy agenda – at least as long as access to citizenship remains limited. We can therefore expect that welfare chauvinistic appeals will be prevalent for welfare programs that guarantee equal benefits to all residents of a country. However, universal benefits that are limited to citizens only will see few such appeals.

Finally, we turn to the need principle. Similar to the equity principle, the need principle is orthogonal to the logic of nativism – as long as ‘need’ is defined economically, and not in ethnic or racial terms. However, in practice, need-based programs will generally produce high levels of redistribution from natives to nonnatives in most Western democracies, since, on average, immigrants are worse off in terms of income and wealth (OECD 2015). This feature
will make means-tested benefits unattractive to welfare chauvinistic parties. In addition, it allows for portraying immigrants as abusers of benefits that are financed through taxes raised (mostly) from the native population (or, as the Dutch Freedom Party put it in its 2010 manifesto, ‘Henk and Ingrid are paying for Ali and Fatima’). Means-tested programs should therefore be subject to a high level of welfare chauvinistic appeals.

Table 2 summarizes the expectations. While there is no empirical investigation to date of the link between social program type and party policy, Reeskens and van Oorschot (2012) have examined a similar question among European electorates. They find that respondents espousing the need principle display less generous attitudes on welfare access for immigrants than those favoring equity or equality (which conforms to the third expectation in Table 2). In addition, they find that societies with a higher proportion of immigrants are less generous – yet this effect is less pronounced for respondents favoring the equity principle. This finding would support the idea that, in ethnically diverse countries, social insurance programs are less vulnerable to welfare chauvinistic appeals than universal or means-tested benefits (see expectation 1 in Table 2).

Table 2: Expectations regarding welfare chauvinistic appeals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Type of program</th>
<th>Expected level of welfare chauvinism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Social insurance</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Universal benefit</td>
<td>High (if based on residence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low (if based on citizenship)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Means-tested benefit</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To be sure, the expectations in Table 2 are rather crude. Many social programs combine insurance elements with means-testing or universal benefits. For instance, pensions are paid out in proportion to earned income in many countries, yet a minimum subsistence pension is often guaranteed irrespective of prior contributions. Likewise, basic health care is typically awarded to those with no history of contributing. Another example of such combined systems are means-tested supplementary allowances for unemployed persons whose benefits are very low. In such cases, we would assume that welfare chauvinistic appeals are targeted at the means-tested or universal (if based on residence) elements of a social program.
Case selection and data

Countries and policy areas

The analysis covers five types of social programs in four West European countries. It examines policy claims by anti-immigration parties regarding old-age pensions, health care, unemployment benefits, family allowances as well as social assistance programs in Sweden, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The selection of countries followed two criteria: 1) the presence of an electorally relevant anti-immigration party, and (2) variation in welfare regimes. While the four cases selected for the analysis do not exhaust the set of West European democracies that fulfill these criteria (other possible cases would, for instance, be Austria, Belgium, Denmark, or France), they do cover a range of systems with policies that are fairly typical for Western Europe. However, it is clear that the results from analyzing a limited set of countries are not necessarily applicable to other cases. A discussion of how far the findings generalize to other, similar, systems is therefore provided in the conclusion to this paper. Table 3 presents an overview of the countries and policy areas included in the analysis.

Table 3: Social program types in four selected countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy area</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Netherlands</th>
<th>Switzerland</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td>Insurance (NDC)</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Insurance (mandatory private)</td>
<td>Insurance (mandatory private)</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Employment-related basic + voluntary income-related benefit</td>
<td>Insurance &amp; means-tested benefit</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>Insurance &amp; means-tested benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family allowance</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Universal (with means test since 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social assistance</td>
<td>Means-tested</td>
<td>Means-tested</td>
<td>Means-tested</td>
<td>Means-tested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Coded from Social Security Administration (2014), except social assistance programs which are all means-tested. Pensions refers to old-age (rather than survivor or disability) benefits, health care refers to medical benefits only, family allowances do not include maternity and child care payments.

The old-age pension schemes in the five selected countries mainly operate based on the insurance principle, yet all provide a minimum benefit level for people with low incomes (e.g.
the Swedish guarantee pension or the pension credit in the United Kingdom). Still, due to the dominance of the insurance principle, we would expect low levels of welfare chauvinism in the discussion of old-age pensions. An additional factor here is that immigrants tend to be of younger age, which is why they are usually underrepresented among the beneficiaries.

Medical benefits are provided based on insurance in the Netherlands and Switzerland (both countries operate systems based on mandatory private insurance), whereas Sweden and the United Kingdom have universal systems. This would imply greater levels of welfare chauvinism in the latter two cases. Yet one important caveat is that, even in the two insurance systems, access to health services is de facto universal because of mandatory coverage. We may therefore see attacks on universal access to medical services also in Switzerland and the Netherlands.

Unemployment benefits are insurance-based in most countries, yet sometimes combined with means-tested supplements. Sweden provides a basic employment-related benefit that is topped up by income-related payments for workers who voluntarily pay into a trade union-run unemployment fund (the so-called Ghent system). The U.K. provides a means-tested scheme for those who do not qualify for contributory Job Seeker’s Allowance. Overall levels of welfare chauvinist claims should be relatively low in this policy area.

Family allowances are typically provided universally. However, the U.K. government eliminated child benefits for high earners in 2013, thus effectively introducing a means test. In Switzerland, family allowances vary across cantons, with a minimum of 200 francs set by the federal government. As a general expectation, the universality of these benefits should make them prone to attract welfare chauvinistic appeals.

Finally, social assistance programs are safety nets that provide a minimum income or in-kind benefits to people who are out of work, yet not eligible for unemployment benefits, pensions, or other benefits. The most important programs in the four selected countries are Income Support in the U.K., Bijstand in the Netherlands, Ekonomiska Biståndet in Sweden, and Sozialhilfe and Nothilfe in Switzerland. Such programs are by definition means-tested and usually have immigrants overrepresented among their recipients (Immervoll et al. 2015: 33). We should therefore expect high levels of welfare chauvinism here.
Parties and manifestos

To examine the presence of welfare chauvinist appeals the analysis examines all election manifestos issued between 2000 and 2015 by the Sweden Democrats (SvD), the Dutch Freedom Party (PVV), the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). Together, this amounts to around 650 pages of manifesto text.

The SVP and UKIP are sometimes categorized as borderline cases within the populist radical right party family (Mudde 2007), yet both have established themselves as strong anti-immigration advocates (Dennison & Goodwin 2015; Skenderovic 2007), which certainly justifies their inclusion as cases in a comparative study.

In terms of social policies, the SVP has traditionally taken an economically liberal position, advocating for spending cuts and less government intervention (even though the party found it more difficult to stick to this line on pensions, see Afonso & Papadopoulos 2015). UKIP has staked out a similar position, yet has repeatedly proposed to redirect funds that the U.K. pays into the European Union budget towards domestic social programs. The PVV and SvD have regularly called for high levels of welfare spending for the native population, while seeking to exclude nonnatives from benefits (Schumacher & van Kersbergen 2016; Norocel 2016, Nordensvard & Ketola 2015).

These parties’ election manifestos between 2000 and 2015 (14 in total) will be subject to a qualitative content analysis. While, for instance, Schumacher & van Kersbergen (2016) have employed manifesto-based quantitative measures of welfare chauvinism, these measures are not applicable to the task at hand. Their first measure is created by simply multiplying the manifesto project’s (Budge et al. 2001) categories for welfare state expansion (per504) and anti-multiculturalism (per608), yet this operationalization cannot detect whether a party applies nativist principles to social policy.

Their second measure is a simple proportion of all sentences in a manifesto that contain welfare chauvinist claims. While such an approach is closer to the requirements of this paper, it does not distinguish between different areas of social policy, and cannot capture the level of detail that is required to examine which elements of a welfare program are targeted with nativist appeals. Therefore, the analysis below will follow the example of Ennser-Jedenastik (2016) in taking a qualitative approach.

One caveat with using manifestos is that they are typically produced ahead of election campaigns and cannot, therefore, anticipate all issues that may arise in the public debate.
However, studies of pledge fulfillment show that, more often than not, parties implement the policies proposed in their manifestos (Thomson 2001; Schermann & Ennser-Jedenastik 2014; Naurin 2014; Royed 1996). It is therefore safe to assume that the content of these documents has real implications for policy-making.

In a first step, all sentences in a manifesto that contain welfare chauvinist claims are identified. The overwhelming majority of these sentences advocate for cuts in benefits for immigrants, while only a few promote new or extended benefits for natives (e.g. UKIP in 2010 calling for the reintroduction of free eye tests and dental check-ups for U.K. citizens).

Next, these sentences are allocated to the policy area that they refer to. A substantial number of sentences contain generic welfare chauvinism that does not specify a welfare program. The most colorful examples can be found in the PVV’s manifestos, where the party not only demands that immigrants should be eligible for welfare provision only after ten years of residence and employment in the Netherlands (PVV 2010: 15), but also that women wearing a burka and migrants with bad Dutch language skills should be denied access to benefits (PVV 2012: 25).

Once all welfare chauvinist appeals have been allocated to a policy category (or labeled as ‘generic’), each claim is examined in relation to the type of social program that it refers to. That is, does the claim question the fundamental organizing principle of the policy? Only by directly relating welfare chauvinist policy demands to the structure of the welfare program can we examine the expectations outlined in the theoretical discussion.

Based on the statements found in the manifestos, the analysis classifies the level of welfare chauvinism for each party and policy area as either ‘low’ or ‘high’ – or as ‘no appeals’ when no welfare chauvinist statements regarding a specific social program are made. Importantly, these judgements do not reflect the salience of such appeals in the manifesto text, but rather attempt to capture the degree to which the policies proposed would actually result in different benefit levels for natives and nonnatives. For instance, directly excluding (certain groups of) non-citizens from receiving benefits will be coded as displaying a high level of welfare chauvinism, because of the explicit use of ‘nonnative status’ as an exclusion criterion (‘direct welfare chauvinism’ in the words of Careja et al. 2016).

Yet, parties may also attempt to produce welfare chauvinist policy outcomes without explicitly referring to nativist qualifying criteria. For instance, several parties in the analysis argue that certain benefits should no longer be payable to recipients abroad. Yet, since it
would not only hurt migrant families with dual residencies, but also expatriate nationals, such a measure will be coded as low-level welfare chauvinism. The same logic of ‘indirect welfare chauvinism’ (Careja et al. 2016) applies to the PVV’s proposal to pay family benefits only for the first two children. While not a nativist policy at first glance, this measure would, on average, hurt immigrant families (who tend to have higher fertility rates) more than native Dutch families. Again, such proposal will be classified as exhibiting low levels of welfare chauvinism.

Finally, parties may remain vague about parts of their policy agenda in specifying their proposals only for citizens, but not for non-citizens, thus making a judgement about the degree of nativist differentiation in the policy difficult. Such cases will be classified as exhibiting low levels of welfare chauvinism.

**Analysis**

The analysis proceeds by policy area rather than by country, since the theoretical expectations in any specific area are often similar across countries. As mentioned above, many nativist claims concerning welfare benefits are made generically. The PVV (2010: 15, 2012: 22), for instance, demands that immigrants live and work in the Netherlands for ten years before becoming eligible for any benefits. UKIP (2010: 9) demands residence for at least five years, whereas the SvD (2014: 7) simply call for limited access to the welfare system for newly arrived immigrants during their ‘first years in the country.’

At first glance, such generic statements do not provide much information to test the theoretical expectations outlined above. Yet the idea that benefits should only be available after several years of residence and employment in the country implies an equity-based logic – which is in line with theoretical expectations. Only after having contributed for a certain amount of time is it apt for nonnatives to have full access to the welfare state. The relative prominence of generic statements may also help explain why some parties do not consider it necessary to detail their nativist principles in all social policy areas.
Pensions

With regard to old-age pensions, there are relatively few welfare chauvinistic statements across the 13 manifestos. The PVV (2010: 22) even exempts pensions from its demand that no benefits should be paid to recipients abroad, possibly because Dutch expatriates would be hurt most by this measure. In a similar vein, UKIP in 2005 calls for restoring pension increases for expatriate pensioners (UKIP 2005: 9). By contrast, the SVP calls for pensions paid to recipients abroad to be adapted according to the local purchasing power – meaning a reduction in most cases (SVP 2007: 59). Yet even here, one could argue that this proposal is not merely targeted at foreign nationals who draw a Swiss pension abroad, but would also hit Swiss expats.

All these examples underscore that pensions, because they are typically earned through individual contributions, offer no easy way to exclude nonnatives while preserving full benefits for natives. The closest one gets to full-fledged welfare chauvinism with regard to pensions is UKIP’s proposal in 2010 to transform all pension payments into a universal flat-rate ‘Citizen’s Pension’, payable to all U.K. nationals, without curbing existing entitlements (UKIP 2010: 9). While not stated explicitly, the implication here may be that non-citizens will receive lower benefit levels, if any.

With this one exception of low-level welfare chauvinism, it is difficult to make out any other clearly nativist statement on old-age pensions in the four parties’ manifestos. Overall, the expectation that welfare chauvinism is low in this policy area is therefore confirmed.

Health care

In the realm of health care, we should expect differences between the insurance-based Dutch and Swiss systems and the universal British and Swedish systems. Indeed, it is in the latter two cases where we find some of the strongest welfare chauvinist claims. The Sweden Democrats call for an end to free health and dental care for undocumented immigrants, promote mandatory health checks for newly arrived immigrants (SvD 2010: 5), and demand a stop to alleged discrimination of native patients (SvD 2014: 11).

Even broader demands are made by UKIP. The party advocates limiting access to the National Health Service (NHS) to U.K. citizens and those with permanent residence and a five-year history of paying taxes in the country (UKIP 2015: 16). Immigrants, including guest
workers and foreign students, would be required to take out private health insurance to cover their medical bills (UKIP 2015: 12). By contrast, UKIP (2010: 8) calls for the reintroduction of free eyes tests and dental check-ups for British nationals. These policy proposals clearly seek to curb the universal nature of the NHS, and draw a sharp distinction between natives and nonnatives in terms of access to medical care. As the party pointedly puts it in its 2015 manifesto, ‘[t]he NHS is the National Health Service, not the International Health Service’ (UKIP 2015: 16).

Strong welfare chauvinist claims related to health care can also be found in the PVV’s and SVP’s manifestos. The Dutch Freedom Party demands that undocumented immigrants and asylum seekers of full age receive only acute care (PVV 2006: IV). The SVP (2015: 61) promotes excluding undocumented immigrants, asylum seekers, and those with subsidiary protection status from mandatory health insurance.

While UKIP thus seeks to exclude immigrants more broadly, the other three parties target those immigrant groups that are highly unlikely to have a history of paying contributions. In other words, they attack elements of the health care system that do not conform to the equity principle, such as the provision of medical benefits to asylum seekers who have not (yet) paid into the system. This is a line of argument that conforms well to the expectation that contribution-based schemes should not elicit high levels of welfare chauvinism whereas universal systems should. The Dutch, Swiss, and British cases are thus well in line with expectations. In the Swedish case, however, the theory would lead us to expect exclusionary nativism to encompass immigrants more broadly. Yet, importantly, the appeals we do find in the SvD’s manifestos all conform to the expectation of strong welfare chauvinism.

Unemployment

There are hardly any statements about unemployment benefits across the 13 manifestos that qualify as unambiguously welfare chauvinist. The SVP (2011: 78) vaguely states that immigration-induced pressure on the unemployment insurance system will over the long term require benefit adjustments. However, it is not clear at all that such adjustments would differentiate between citizens and non-citizens. The party also argues for unemployment benefits to be conditional on two years of contributions (as opposed to one currently) as a means of deterring immigration (SVP 2015: 34), and demands that immigrants on unemployment benefits should be banned from becoming Swiss citizens (SVP 2007: 47).
None of this, however, represents a case of strong welfare chauvinism, since even the latter statement does not directly result in different benefit levels for natives and nonnatives. UKIP (2010: 9) proposes to combine a number of benefits, among them Job Seeker’s Allowance, into one flat-rate cash benefit. The party also argues that this benefit should be available to all U.K. citizens, yet does not explicitly state that non-citizens should be excluded – thus a case of low-level welfare chauvinism.

The low overall level of welfare chauvinism regarding unemployment benefits is in line with expectations, since all four countries have insurance-based systems. Yet the fit is not perfect, since one could have expected somewhat stronger appeals in the Dutch and British cases, where means-tested elements play a certain, albeit limited, role. In the Swiss case, immigration serves as an argument for the SVP to justify lower unemployment benefits across the board – a position that is very much in line with its economically liberal profile.

**Family allowances**

Family allowances are universal in all countries, except for the U.K. where a means test was introduced in 2013 to exclude high earners. We should therefore expect strong welfare chauvinist claims in all countries. Yet, quite to the contrary, there are no relevant claims at all by the SvD and the SVP.

UKIP (2015: 23) and the PVV (2010: 23; 2012: 25), to be sure, call for an outright ban on benefits being paid to parents or children abroad. This appears to be the easiest way to prioritize natives over nonnatives without abandoning the principle that family allowance is paid based on residence (of at least part of the family). Yet, surely this proposal would hurt expatriate citizens (who could receive family allowance in their country of residence, though), while not disadvantaging nonnatives within the country. It is therefore classified as low-level welfare chauvinism.

Indeed, no party dares to openly propose a simple native–nonnative distinction when it comes to family allowances. However, the PVV deploys a strategy of indirect welfare chauvinism (Careja et al. 2016) to arrive at a similar end. In its 2012 manifesto it argues that benefits should only be paid for the first two children (PVV 2012: 25). Given that the fertility rate of native Dutch women is below two, while that of Turkish and Moroccan immigrant women is clearly above two (Garssen & Nicolaas 2008), this measure would hurt the average immigrant
family while not damaging the average native Dutch family. Yet, as outlined above, this represents a weak case of welfare chauvinism, since the policy does not rely on an explicit nativist criterion for limiting benefits.

Taken together, the theoretical expectations about family allowances did not materialize in the empirical material. Neither did nativist statements about other family-related benefits such as payments related to maternity or child care occur in the manifestos. Family allowances are therefore the policy area with the worst fit between theory and data.

Social assistance

Welfare chauvinistic claims targeting social assistance programs can be found in the SVP’s and PVV’s manifestos. The SVP (2007: 43) promotes the cancellation of emergency assistance (Nothilfe, a program that provides in-kind benefits to cover a person’s most essential needs) for denied asylum applicants. A few years prior to that, denied asylum seekers had already been excluded from social assistance (Sozialhilfe). This decision came shortly after a popular initiative launched by the SVP garnered 49.9 percent of the vote in a referendum in late 2002 (Volksinitiative gegen Asylmissbrauch). It is thus no surprise that the party claims credit for this policy change (SVP 2011: 47).

In addition, the SVP (2007: 47) wants to ban immigrants from claiming Sozialhilfe for three years after arrival, and argues that immigrants on social assistance should not be naturalized. Similar claims to those by the SVP can be found in the PVV’s manifestos. It wants to eliminate immigrants’ eligibility for social assistance (bijstand) during their first ten years in the country (PVV 2012: 22). People with a temporary residence permit would not be eligible at all (PVV 2010: 22).

The strong welfare chauvinist appeals made by the PVV and SVP are well in line with theoretical expectations. By contrast, the SvD and UKIP manifestos do not explicitly address social assistance programs. Yet both parties demand a generic waiting period of several years before immigrants can claim benefits – which is arguably meant to include social assistance programs.
Summary and discussion of results

Table 4 presents a summary of the results. The empirical findings conform reasonably well to the expectations, especially in the areas of old-age pensions, health care, and unemployment. Welfare chauvinistic appeals regarding old-age or unemployment benefits are few and far between – as one would expect for mostly insurance-based systems. Health care attracts higher levels of welfare chauvinism across the board. Yet with the exception of the British case (where UKIP’s reform proposals for the NHS arguably constitute the most comprehensive welfare chauvinistic critique in the empirical material) all these claims are directed at groups that have no contribution history, such as asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants. This finding conforms to the notion that the contribution-based elements of a program are less likely to draw nativist criticism.

Table 4: Summary of results: Social program types and welfare chauvinism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Found</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No appeals (NL, SE, CH) Low (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>High (UK, SE) Low (NL, CH)</td>
<td>High in all countries, yet limited to groups with no contribution history in NL, CH, SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>No appeals (SE, NL) Low (CH, UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family allowances</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low (NL, UK) No appeals (SE, CH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social assistance</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High (NL, CH) No appeals (SE, UK)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Underlined cases represent deviations from the theory.

The results conform somewhat less well to the expectations in the areas of family allowances and social assistance, where we would expect high levels of welfare chauvinism in all cases. Welfare chauvinistic appeals regarding social assistance programs are commonplace in the Dutch and Swiss cases, yet there are no such policy-specific statements in Sweden and the U.K. While one could assume that UKIP’s and the SvD’s generic welfare chauvinistic appeals should apply to those programs (indeed, in October 2016 the SvD submitted a parliamentary
motion seeking to abolish social assistance payments to EU migrants), the lack of nativist appeals may also be due to the nature of those benefits. The U.K.’s Income Support benefit, for instance, goes mostly to single parents and carers – not necessarily groups that any politician would select as a target. Moreover, individuals who require permission to enter the U.K. are not eligible for the benefit, which excludes many potential nonnative claimants.

The case of family allowances is more peculiar. We find welfare chauvinism only in UKIP and PVV manifestos, yet all of these demands are only weakly nativist (in that they also hurt expats, for example). No nativist appeals whatsoever are made by the SVP and SvD. One possible explanation for the relatively weak presence of welfare chauvinism in this area is that populist radical right parties typically promote the nuclear family as the foundation of human society (Mudde 2000: 175). They may therefore find it more difficult to take an anti-family position, even regarding nonnatives, than to advocate (nativist) retrenchment in health care or social assistance programs. Also, cutting family allowances may be perceived by voters as hurting children who are usually viewed as innocent and thus not responsible for their circumstances.

Conclusion

During the past two decades welfare chauvinism has emerged as a central element within the policy agenda of populist radical right parties. Rather than occupying a single coherent position on the socio-economic dimension, these parties generally favor generosity for natives while advocating cuts for nonnatives. This is arguably a quite popular stance. A large literature on welfare attitudes shows that many people view nonnatives as less deserving of benefits than natives (van Oorschot 2006; van der Waal et al. 2010, 2013; Cappelen & Midtbø 2016; Hjorth 2016). The influx of immigrants has thus made welfare states in Europe and elsewhere vulnerable to welfare chauvinistic arguments. All this supports the notion that high levels of redistribution are easier to maintain under conditions of ethnic and cultural homogeneity (Alesina & Glaeser 2004; Newton 2007; Banting 2005). Or, as the PVV (2010: 21) bluntly put it, ‘either a welfare state or a country of immigration.’

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3 Motion till riksdagen 2016/17:2426.
The main contribution that this paper makes to the scholarly debate is to offer one theoretical argument to understand why some welfare arrangements may be more likely than others to draw nativist criticism. It is argued that the different redistributive justice principles that underpin social programs are not equally prone to attracting welfare chauvinist claims. Those norms that contradict nativist logic in principle (e.g. universalism) and those that empirically produce redistribution from natives to nonnatives (e.g. need) are more likely to fuel nativist social policy appeals. Welfare chauvinism should therefore be higher for social programs that provide universal or means-tested benefits, whereas social insurance schemes should be less of a target.

The analysis of 13 election manifestos issued by four West European anti-immigrant parties between 2000 and 2015 bears out these expectations to a considerable degree. Insurance-based programs generally draw few welfare chauvinistic claims, whereas strong nativist rhetoric is found for universal health care systems and social assistance programs in some countries.

To be sure, the empirical relationship between social program type and nativist appeals is far from perfect. Most importantly, there are no or only weak welfare chauvinistic claims in some cases where the theory would have predicted otherwise (e.g. on family allowances). Yet it is worth noting that all instances of strong welfare chauvinism fit with the theory. The presence of universal or means-tested benefits thus resembles a necessary condition for welfare chauvinism more than a sufficient one.

As with any small-N study, the extent to which one can generalize from the findings is limited by the selection of cases. However, there are indications in the literature that welfare chauvinist appeals in other countries follow a logic similar to the one uncovered in this paper. As Careja et al. (2016) demonstrate for the case of Denmark, the Danish People’s Party between 2001 and 2011 successfully pushed the government to enact welfare cuts that fell disproportionately on immigrants. These reforms were primarily conducted in the areas of (means-tested) social assistance and (universal) family allowances, and have been instrumental in pushing the universalist Danish model towards a more multi-tiered system in which labor market participation becomes more important for determining benefit levels (Kvist and Greve 2011).

In Austria, an analysis of Freedom Party (FPÖ) election manifestos shows that the party demands nativist policies in the following areas: child care benefits, family allowances (both
universal), and social housing (means-tested). Furthermore, the party promotes the introduction of a guest worker tier in the existing social insurance schemes – with no compensation payments from the general budget going into this tier (Ennser-Jedenastik 2016: 419). Thus, the FPÖ effectively seeks to strengthen the insurance principle for nonnatives, while granting natives the benefit of tax-funded (i.e. non-insurance-based) compensation payments to maintain benefit levels.4

As for the French case, the most prominent examples of welfare chauvinism in Marine Le Pen’s manifesto for the 2017 presidential elections5 are calls for reestablishing the universality of family allowances for French families (a means-test had been introduced in 2014), and a proposal to condition the minimum pension on citizenship or 20 years of residence in France. As these examples demonstrate, the logic that means-tested and universal programs are more at odds with a welfare chauvinist agenda is not limited to the four cases under study here.

An implication of this result is that social insurance systems may be more resilient in the face of welfare chauvinistic rhetoric than universal or means-tested benefits. Because they award benefits based on an individual’s contribution, they cut against the impulse of pitting the native in-group against the nonnative out-group. As Reeskens & van Oorschot (2012: 126) have shown, a plurality of European voters favor granting immigrants access to welfare benefits conditional on having worked and paid taxes. It is therefore plausible to assume that employment- or income-based benefits are less likely to become targets of welfare chauvinism.

That said, certain types of social program are difficult to administer on an insurance basis. Social assistance, for instance, needs to be means-tested almost by definition (unless such benefits are rolled into a universal basic income). Similarly, family allowances are usually universal (or means-tested as in the U.K.), not least since they are supposed to cover some of the extra cost of bringing up a child, for which a contribution-based scheme would not make all that much sense.

This paper provides a first step in analyzing the opportunity structure for welfare chauvinist appeals by political parties. As with all small-N studies, there are limits to the generalizations

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4 As an example, the compensation payment from the general budget into the Austrian pay-as-you-go pension scheme is currently around € 10 billion, or 3 percent of GDP.
we can draw from the results. Aside from country- and party-specific idiosyncrasies, the shape of party competition and the salience of welfare and immigration at the national level are two major factors that will have an impact on the patterns of welfare chauvinism in party platforms. Importantly, the extent to which populist radical right parties will engage in welfare chauvinist discourse may depend on the policy positions of Social Democratic parties. For instance, if Social Democrats are perceived as strongly pro-immigration, welfare chauvinism provides a wedge issue to question their issue ownership on social policy.

Such assumptions could provide an interesting avenue for future research to refine the theoretical argument presented in this paper in order to better understand the variation in welfare chauvinism that is left unexplained in the above analysis. Why, for instance, do we not find more appeals concerning universal family benefits? Why do social assistance programs attract welfare chauvinism in some countries but not in others? Answering these questions will put scholars in a better position to understand the vulnerability as well as the resilience of welfare states in an age of immigration.
References


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