

**“The European Lavender Vote:
Sexuality, Ideology and Vote Choice in Western Europe.”**

Stuart J. Turnbull-Dugarte*
Department of Political Economy
King’s College London

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In many European democracies, political punditry has highlighted the attempts of political parties on the left to court the “lavender vote” of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals. This article examines the presence of a gay vote in Western Europe with a focus on assessing the role of sexuality in shaping individuals’ political preferences and voting behaviour. Empirically, the effect of sexuality on both ideological identification as well as party vote choice is analysed. Using a cumulative dataset of eight rounds of the European Social Survey between 2002-2017, this article demonstrates that partnered lesbians and gay men are more likely than comparable heterosexuals to identify with the left, support leftist policy objectives, and vote for left-of-centre political parties. The analysis represents the first empirical cross-national European study of the voting behaviour of homosexual individuals and sheds new light on the importance of sexuality as a predictor of political ideology and voting behaviour within the Western European context.

* stuart.turnbull_dugarte@kcl.ac.uk

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INTRODUCTION

The study of gay politics has recently established an observable voice in political science. Gay politics, questions of political science of interest to and motivated by individuals who are lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB)ⁱ, has entered the literature in the form of legislative (Cohan, 1982; Kollman, 2017; Reynolds, 2013) and judicial (Anderson, 2006; Klarman, 2012) decision-making studies; public policy analysis (Lewis & Oh, 2008; Portelli, 2004; Silberman, 2006); investigations tracing public opinion and electoral competition (Abou-Chadi & Finnigan, 2018; Adam, 2003; Haider-Markel, 2010; Magni & Reynolds, 2018) and research focusing on the impact of social and political movements (Ayoub & Paternotte, 2014; Bullert, 1987; Kollman & Paternotte 2013; Mucciaroni, 2008). Despite some notable exceptions (Bailey, 1999; Edelman, 1993; Egan, 2012; Hertzog, 1996; Schaffner & Senic, 2006), the role of homosexuality in explaining individual-level electoral behaviour remains quite under-assessed. This deficit is even more apparent outside of the US context.

What *is* known regarding the individual-level behaviour of homosexual individuals has evolved out of Hertzog's seminal work *The Lavender Vote* (1996). The LGB minority in the US consistently expresses a more liberal ideological preference, identifies more with the Democrats and subsequently tends to vote for Democratic candidates as opposed to the Republicans. We do not know, however, whether the explanatory power of sexuality extends to the Western European context. I offer the first empirical assessment of LGB electoral behaviour across Western Europe.

The study of sexuality and its effects on political behaviour is complex both theoretically (Cass, 1979; Cook, 1999; Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948) and methodologically (Black et al., 2000;

Harry, 1986; Martin & Dean, 1993; Martin & Knox, 2000; McClennen, 2003; Sullivan & Losberg, 2003). Theoretically, it is difficult to conceptualise what homosexuality is and who homosexuals areⁱⁱ. Methodologically, homosexuality is hard to observe, and this is the difficulty that has most-likely hindered the advancement of further work seeking to assess the effect of being LGB on different political variables. Whilst LGBs have become more visible within the public sphere, including within the political arena (Haider-Markel, 2010; Magni & Reynolds, 2018), their identification and visibility within the general electorate is still limited. Generally, LGBs look like non-LGBs, so identifying them requires these same LGB individuals to declare themselves as such: homosexuals are a selectively visible social group who elect when to unmask their sexuality which limits the ability of social scientists to study their attitudes and behaviours.

The American National Election Study (ANES), the most comprehensive and widely representative electoral study in the US, has included a direct question regarding respondents' sexual orientation since the late nineties. No domestic or cross-national electoral survey applying random sampling in any EU member state includes a question on sexual orientation however; greatly limiting an assessment of sexuality's shaping effect on voters' ideology or voting behaviour in Europe. This article uses data on the constitution of individual households from eight rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS) across twelve countries in Western Europe to identify LGB individuals and explore the effect of sexuality on individuals' i) ideological identification on the left-right axis, and ii) vote choice. I argue that the "sexuality gap" theorised by Hertzog and empirically observed in the US is transferable to the Western European context. I demonstrate that being LGB in Europe does have an effect on both outcome variables, with homosexuals displaying an increased likelihood of identifying on the left and of voting for left-of-centre political parties. The effect of sexuality is comparable to

traditional factors associated with ideology and vote choice, such as considerations of social class, cultural identity and valence politics.

This article continues as follows. Firstly, building on the US-based literature, I develop a theoretical explanation of why LGB voters in Europe are likely to behave electorally in a way that is distinct from their heterosexual peers and present the two main hypotheses regarding ideological identification and vote choice. Following this, I provide a description of the data and the operationalisation of the core variables incorporated in the statistical models and detail the adopted method for identifying LGB individuals. Subsequently, I discuss the estimation techniques applied and the results of the same, carrying out a number of robustness checks to ensure the validity of the main findings before providing concluding remarks.

The arguments presented in this paper make a number of contributions. Firstly, it aids the growing literature focusing on gay politics, providing the first individual-level gay vote analysis in a European context and empirically establishes the formation of a lavender vote in Western Europe. Secondly, it deepens the understanding of the determinants of electoral behaviour in Europe. The implications of the analysis suggest that scholars of European electoral politics would do well to include sexuality in their voting models as the results presented in the current analysis suggest that sexuality exhibits an effect on ideological preferences and vote choice that has substantive parity with some of the canonical explanatory factors.

THE EUROPEAN LAVENDER VOTE: EXPLAINING THE SEXUALITY GAP

The most comprehensive attempt at assessing the voting behaviour of LGB individuals was Hertzog's *The Lavender Vote* (1996). Hertzog relies predominantly on very localised polling data to demonstrate that LGB individuals i) tend to vote for Democratic candidates, ii) are more likely to identify as liberal, and iii) are more likely to support core leftist policy positions related to welfare and immigration. Hertzog empirically establishes a "sexuality gap" in political preferences and electoral behaviour that cannot be explained by a host of confounding socio-economic variables. *The Lavender Vote* laid the groundwork for future research assessing the voting behaviour of LGBs in future electoral contests in the US and its findings have found repeated empirical confirmation across successive elections at the local (Bailey, 1999) and presidential (Lewis, Rogers & Sherrill, 2011; McThomas & Buchanan, 2012) levels even when catering to the potential self-selection effects attributable to adopting the LGB identity (Egan, 2012).

Two theoretical arguments explain the sexuality gap in the political preferences between LGB and non-LGB individuals. Firstly, the experience of growing up as LGB will engender a shift in political inclinations as a result of the marginalisation and shared experience of institutional discrimination that LGBs are exposed to (Hertzog, 1996). This argument relies on the work of Campbell et al. (1960), who argue that social forces and personal experiences can alter individuals' political views against what might more commonly be predicted by their upbringing and socio-economic status. Social and institutional discrimination (Bronski, 2011; Faderman, 2016) make homosexuals acutely aware of the hardship experienced by those "othered" by the establishment, which drives them to identify more with ideals that promote political solidarity, egalitarianism and "fairness" (Hertzog, 1996). This, by extension, makes homosexual voters ideal coalition partners for both ethnic minorities and the poor and working classes (Bailey, 1999). Egan (2012: 614) demonstrates that LGB and non-LGB political

predispositions diverge even before opportunities for political or partisan mobilisation can take place and shows that LGBs are, “from the moment they come of age, from the moment they begin participating in electoral politics and regardless of where they live”, more likely to be on the left, meaning that the LGB experience influences the development of political predispositions (Bailey, 1999) that cannot be explained by their geographic or socio-economic circumstances.

Secondly, as a distinct social group with their own group-specific policy objectives sexual minorities will align themselves politically and express their vote choice as a means of maximising their shared policy benefits. In the case of LGB voters, the policy demands likely to fall at the heart of their LGB status are civil rights protection laws and anti-discrimination measures. The pursuit of these demands is aggregated via the group’s shared identity (Hertzog, 1996) and common grievances (Sherrill, 1996) leading to political activism and the emergence of gay rights movements – often concerted in urban settings where gay populations are geographically concentrated (Bailey, 1999) - that seek to mobilise policy-makers and political parties to fulfil the supply-side of their demands. In the US context the rising significance of the gay rights movement and their demands to legislators has launched gay rights issues into the mainstream political debate. Democratic candidates’ promotion of pro-gay stances in the face of Republican opposition over gay rights issues (Adam, 2003; Rimmerman, 1996; Button, Rienzo and Wald, 1996) itself shows that policy-makers are seeking to satisfy the electoral demand for these policies, and we can assume that mobilisation effects are taking place on the voters who would seek to benefit from these policies as has been the case with group-orientated voting (Huddy, 2013) based on race in the US (Campbell et al., 1960; Verba and Nie, 1972) and, historically, with class-based mobilisation amongst workers and employers in Europe (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Indeed, as Egan (2012: 612) argues in the case of homosexual

voters in the US, the updating of partisan preferences from gay individuals whose background would suggest a political identification with the right who shift their preferences towards the left is likely motivated by mobilisation of the group identity responding to parties' positions on gay rights issues.

LGBs in Europe have also been subjected to discriminatory policies imposed upon them by the heterosexual majority and we can expect a similar alteration in political orientations to occur as a result of the LGB experience. Homosexuals represent a marginalised and discriminated social group within Western European society (Adam, Duyvendak and Krouwel, 1999; Altman, 2012; Martels, 2000; Trappolin, Gaspirini, and Wintemute, 2012)ⁱⁱⁱ. Taking the UK as an illustrative example, homosexual acts between consenting males were not legalised in the whole of the UK until 1981, and gay males were prohibited from engaging in sexual activity in hotels until 2001. It was also not until 2001 that the age of sexual consent between two men was lowered to gain parity with that of opposite-sex couples. Homosexuals were also prohibited from enlisting in the UK military until 2000, and state schools were prohibited from discussing homosexuality in a positive way, deemed under Section 28 as promoting homosexuality, until the removal of Section 28 from that statute books in 2003 (Sommerlad, 2018). Employers could legally dismiss employees because of their sexual orientation until 2003 and the UK did not recognize same-sex domestic partnerships until 2004 preventing same-sex partners from qualifying for the fiscal benefits that being in a legally-recognised relationship would provide.

Processes of social, economic and cultural ostracization and, at times, violence also victimize LGB individuals. The number hate crimes against gay people is on the rise (Bulman, 2017) despite evidence of underreporting of the same (Government Equalities Office, 2018) and gay

people also suffer from a higher probability of experiencing mental illnesses such as depression and suicide rates are higher vis-à-vis heterosexuals (Government Equalities Office, 2018). Homosexual males in Europe also earn less than comparable heterosexual males (Ahmed and Hammerstedt, 2010). Similar patterns of institutional and personal discrimination exist across much of Western Europe (Adam, Duyvendak & Krouwel, 1999; Martels, 2000; Tappolin, Gasparini & Wintemute, 2012). These experiences may engender a certain set of ideological preferences that would likely not have occurred had they been heterosexual. As observed in the US case, we might then expect these ideological preferences to reflect support for political policies focused on empowering those most socially and politically disadvantaged in society, making European homosexuals the ideal coalition partners of left-leaning political parties whose core voter pool has historically centred on the disadvantaged and working classes (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Moreover, the natural political coalitions between LGB and non-LGB interest groups on the left such as those of the poor and working class observed in the states (Bailey, 1999) have also been observed in Europe (for example: the *Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners* movement during the 1984-85 miner's strike in the UK). Since the experiences of being gay may radicalise homosexuals to make them more supportive of leftist ideals based on improving socio-economic conditions (Bailey, 1999; Hertzog, 1996; Schaffner & Senic, 2006) this may also contribute to support for leftist political parties.

In addition, political party mobilisation will incentivise support for the left amongst LGBs. Liberal left-leaning parties in Western Europe have been paying more attention to the electoral potential of homosexual voters and have sought to take advantage of this prospective revenue of votes. Journalistic commentary highlights the shifts in party platforms and policy in efforts to capture the “pink vote” (Corujiera and Martín, 2007; Economist, 2015) and indeed the advances of gay rights legislation across the continent are all signals of political parties catering

a supply to the political demands of LGB voters. Taking same-sex marriage legislation as an example of a core gay-rights issue, the provision of marriage to individuals of the same-sex has observed a marked growth across Europe in the last decade (Kollman & Paternotte, 2013). Since the introduction of gay marriage in the Netherlands in 2001, there are an additional fifteen countries in Europe that have legalised same-sex marriage.

In all of the European states where same-sex marriage was legalised via legislative reforms, with the exception of Sweden and the UK^{iv}, the legislation was introduced by either a social democratic party or a coalition government with leftist coalition partners. Moreover, the active role of left-leaning parties in promoting gay rights issues to appeal to homosexual voters, has often been accompanied by an active opposition to these issues amongst Christian democratic and conservative parties. That is not to say that centre-right parties are necessarily anti-gay (e.g. UK Conservative party under David Cameron). It is true, however, that parties on the right have launched quite aggressive political and, in some cases judicial, campaigns in opposition to gay rights issues particularly regarding the issue of same-sex marriage, and right-leaning parties have traditionally been the entrepreneurs of discriminatory policies against homosexuals.^v Moreover, given the political right's position as the guardian of religious interests across most western European states (Broughton & ten Napel, 2000), opposition to gay rights issues is a natural electoral position for them to take in light of this key religious constituency. Since voters' associations between parties and certain ideological positions are "sticky" (Walgrave, Lefevere & Tresch, 2012), the connection between right-leaning parties with an anti-gay stance will likely prove hard to shake off. In terms of issue-ownership, it is clear that the left's historical record of catering the policy output to match LGB policy interests and the right's opposition to these same issues means that the left and right serve as ideological

cues for pro-gay and anti-gay stances respectively. As such, gay voters seeking to maximise their legal rights and civil protections should support parties on the left.

The left-right dimension is not the only axis of conflict that structures political space within the European context. The European political space is also structured by the green/alternative/libertarian vs. traditional/authoritarian/nationalist (GAL-TAN) cultural cleavage (Hooghe et al, 2002) over post-materialist issues, as well as divisions over European integration (Hix, 1999). Whilst this paper does not test LGB divergence on the EU-based dimension, it focuses on the traditional left-right axis whilst also testing for distinct behaviour between LGBs and comparable heterosexuals over the cultural GAL-TAN axis^{vi}. The theoretical assumptions explaining the “sexuality gap” highlight that the experience of being LGB will likely engender a shift in policy preferences that are actually more in line with leftist policy objectives such as greater social welfare provisions, given that being discriminated against drives support for ideas of social solidarity and “fairness” (Hertzog, 1996). While LGBs might be pulled towards the left as a means of maximizing their own gay-specific welfare, the theoretical expectations equally anticipate homosexuals to be attracted to leftist parties since the economic proposals these parties’ campaign for are in line with their own socio-economic views (Bailey, 1999; Schaffner & Senic, 2006) and conditions (Egan, 2012).

In light of the above, I present the following two hypotheses for submission to empirical testing:

H1: LGB individuals identify with a left-leaning ideology in comparison to heterosexual individuals.

H2: LGB individuals will be more likely to vote for left-of-centre political parties than heterosexual individuals.

Here I hypothesise that despite the traditional explanations of electoral behaviour, sexuality will still display an independent effect on ideological identity and vote choice. Specifically, LGB voters are distinct from heterosexual voters after controlling for demographic characteristics as well as core predictors of ideology and vote choice, including that of: i) class-based ii) cultural, and iii) valence politics voting models.

DATA AND OPERATIONALISATION

Data was obtained from the eight rounds of the ESS which includes biennial cross-country survey responses from 2002 to 2017. The countries in the analysis include ten European Union (EU) member states - Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Finland, France, Netherlands, the UK, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden – with the addition of Norway and Switzerland and represent the countries from Western Europe with full and uninterrupted participation in the ESS.

The ESS allows one to infer the sexuality of respondents by taking advantage of the household composition data provided in the survey. The survey asks respondents to identify the additional individual(s) within the household as well as their relationship to them.^{vii} When respondents identified a member of their household as their “Husband/wife/partner” and the gender of the respondent matched the gender of this same household member, respondents were identified as being in a same-sex relationship, i.e. homosexual or bisexual. Respondents living with a spouse or partner whose gender did not match were identified as being in a different-sex relationship, i.e. heterosexual.^{viii} This approach of identifying homosexual individuals from the ESS is described and applied by Fischer (2016). The external validity of the approach is confirmed by Fischer, Kalmijn and Steinmetz (2016) who find a comparable proportion of

homosexuals are identified using the same identification method utilising data from the Generations and Gender Program, and there is also parity with the numbers identified in other European (Ahmed and Hammarstedt, 2010) and US studies adopting a similar method (Black et al., 2000; Carpenter 2005). Applying the method of identifying homosexuals described to the twelve countries included in the analysis, of the total number of respondents (N=114, 512), I identify 1.4% of the respondents as being LGB (N=1,609)^{ix}.

The main explanatory variable of interest is the sexuality (*LGB*) of respondents and is captured as a simple binary variable. Using the method described above, individuals were coded as homosexual (1) and heterosexual (0). Single individuals were removed from the dataset to ensure like-for-like comparison. This is because there is no way to identify homosexuals who are unable to be identified as LGB without having a partner to do so and who likely also form a large minority of the single population. This method of selecting and identifying homosexuality based on household individuals has potential limitations in relation to the generalisability of the findings since the sample pool is limited to individuals who are living with each other and in a relationship.

In relation to the hypotheses stated above, there are two dependent variables. Firstly, *ideology* is reported via the self-declared ideological position of respondents. Individuals place themselves on an eleven-point ideological scale from 0 (left) to 10 (right). Individuals are identified as being left-wing if they identify with an ideological value less than five. The second dependent variable captures respondents' vote choice. The ESS records the retrospective vote choice of respondents in the most recent national election. The dichotomous variable (*votedleft*) indicates when an individual voted for a left-of-centre political party (1) or any other party (0). The categorisation of parties as being on the left (see Table A1 in appendix) relies on the party

categories from the Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP). Here I replicate the identification strategy for leftist parties utilised elsewhere in the literature (Haupt 2010; Lacewell 2017; Sen & Barry 2018; Turnbull-Dugarte 2019): operationalising left parties as those categorised in the CMP as green/ecological, communist/socialist or social democratic parties. Where parties included in the ESS were not included in the CMP list of parties, they were identified as such via their official party website.

A set of controls are included in an effort to isolate the independent effect of homosexuality on the dependent variables. These have been chosen to cater to prevalent understandings regarding the factors that shape ideological preferences and voting behaviour in Europe. Firstly, I include two general demographic variables: a dummy variable coded 1 for men and respondents' age in years in order to control for women and young voters being more likely to support leftist parties (DeVaus & McAllister, 1989; Inglehart & Norris, 2000).

Secondly, controls are added to cater to class-orientated cleavage structures (Dalton, 1996; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Commonplace in the literature exploring the role of class-based voting and its effect of vote choice is the role of both respondents' education and income. Education is recorded in the ESS using a five-point a categorical variable with respondents recording the highest level of education achieved. Income is measured using a ten-point indicator that signals the income percentile to which each respondent belongs from the population of each country in a particular year.

In addition to class-based explanations of ideology and vote-choice, are centre-periphery and religious-based (both read cultural) cleavages. The latter, arguably, has been somewhat in decline across European democracies (Best, 2011; Dalton, 1996; Inglehart, 1977) although

Bruce (2003) argues that religion's shaping role on preferences in Europe remains constant. The tendency of the religious has been to favour Christian democrat and conservative parties (Broughton & ten Napel, 2000; Dalton, 1996) given the strong attempts of the right to court the religious vote in Europe, with secular society tending to favour leftist parties. Seeking to control for the potential influential role of religion that may be observed, the *Religiosity* of individuals is included in the model and is operationalised here as the self-reported expression of how religious an individual considers themselves (0-10 scale) with higher values denoting greater levels of religiosity.

Rural-urban divisions appear to play an increasing role in political preferences in Europe, with rural voters expressing an increased preference for right-of-centre parties and policies in comparison to urban voters. Of recent note, for example, is the great divide between rural and urban voters in the UK in relation to the Brexit vote and views on immigration (Clarke et al., 2017), with the same too being noted as an explanatory factor in the success of Emmanuel Macron in France (Emanuele, 2018). I incorporate a categorical variable, *domicile*, to control for how urban or rural a respondent's location is.

Additionally, valence politics represents an important motivation for vote-choice (Clarke et al., 2017; Clarke et al., 2011; Stokes, 1992). The principal assumption of this model of electoral behaviour is that individuals' political preferences are driven by their appraisal of government performance. To control for the potential of valence politics, two additional indicators are included to capture respondents' feeling on the state of their country. Individuals report their current perception of the *state of the economy* as well as their level of *satisfaction with democracy*, both of which are scaled 0-10 with higher values representing a better evaluation of the economy and a higher level of satisfaction with democracy respectively. Voters with

negative assessments of the economy also tend to belong to those identified as the economically “left behind” who have been moving their electoral support away from the traditional social democratic parties (Ford and Goodwin, 2014). The impact of the financial crisis caused a collapse in satisfaction with democracy amongst the voters of those member states subjected to the EU’s financial bail-out conditions (Ruiz-Rufino and Alonso, 2017) which is also linked to a collapse in the electoral support for the mainstream left (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2018).

Finally, because the structure of the data represents a pooled collection of independent cross-sectional surveys across time, both country-level and year effects will be included in the models.^x Importantly, these dummies, in tandem with the valence politics indicators, will ensure that exogenous confounding forces, such as the arrival of the financial crisis in 2008 and the Eurozone crisis in 2010 which have shaped electoral outcomes and voting behaviour in many member states (Hernandez & Kriesi, 2016), will also be controlled for.

ANALYSIS

Table 1 tests the first hypothesis and presents the results of logistic regression models^{xi} estimating individuals’ identification with the left. The estimation output reports both the logistic coefficient as well as the average marginal effect (AME) for ease of interpretation. Average marginal effects – reported in the tables and figures as percentage-points - are useful for providing an intuitive depiction of the substantive impact of the explanatory variables whilst holding the effect of the other independent variables constant.

Table 1: Sexuality and ideology

	(Model 1)		(Model 2)	
	Coef.	AME	Coef.	AME
LGB	0.38*** (0.08)	8.3*** (1.8)	0.33*** (0.08)	7.1*** (1.8)
Gender (1 male)	0.01 (0.02)	0.3 (0.4)	-0.08*** (0.02)	-1.7*** (0.5)
Age	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.1*** (0.0)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.0 (0.0)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.3 (0.8)	-0.08* (0.04)	-1.6* (0.8)
High secondary	0.03 (0.04)	0.6 (0.8)	-0.06 (0.04)	-1.2 (0.8)
Post-secondary	0.27*** (0.06)	5.8*** (1.2)	0.20*** (0.06)	4.2*** (1.2)
Higher education	0.48*** (0.04)	10.6*** (0.8)	0.40*** (0.04)	8.7*** (0.9)
Income	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.0 (0.1)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.1 (0.1)
Religiosity			-0.11*** (0.00)	-2.3*** (0.1)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs			-0.19*** (0.04)	-4.1*** (0.9)
Town/small city			-0.26*** (0.03)	-5.7*** (0.7)
Village			-0.38*** (0.03)	-8.3*** (0.7)
Country/farm			-0.54*** (0.05)	-11.5*** (1.1)
View of economy			-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.9*** (0.1)
Sat. with democracy			0.00 (0.01)	.0 (0.1)
Country effects		✓		✓
Year effects		✓		✓
Constant	-0.92*** (0.07)		0.06 (0.08)	
Observations	93,044		90,747	

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Model 1 in Table 1 shows that LGBs are, on average, 8.3 percentage points more likely than heterosexuals to identify as left-of-centre after controlling for demographic and class-based characteristics. Being LGB reflects the expectations set out in H1 displaying a significantly positive effect identification with the left. Even after variables capturing cultural predictors of electoral behaviour and valence politics variables are controlled for, Model 2 shows that LGBs are still 7.1 percentage points more likely to identify on the left. Of note is that sexuality remains a powerful predictor of ideology, in terms of its substantive association compared to other variables.

LGB men and women not only possess political ideologies that are significantly more left-leaning than heterosexuals, they are also more likely to support leftist policy preferences. In order to test this, I replicate the specification described in Model 2 using support for economic redistribution – an economic policy position traditionally associated with the left – as a dichotomous dependent variable. Figure 1 (detailed regression output available in Table A4) compares the effect of being LGB on the probability of identifying with the left and the probability of supporting economic redistribution. As depicted, LGBs are more likely to be supportive of traditional left-wing economic policies, with gay voters observing an increase in the probability of supporting redistribution of five percentage points.

This provides support to the theoretical assumption that the experiences of being homosexual might also be reshaping individuals' preferences beyond those policies focused on the welfare of homosexuals themselves (Bailey, 1999). Whilst the evidence here might be limited in that the data only permits a test using one policy position, the evidence does support the conclusion that LGBs are more left-leaning both in the general spatial sense as well as in terms of concrete policy positions that imply state intervention with distributional consequences.

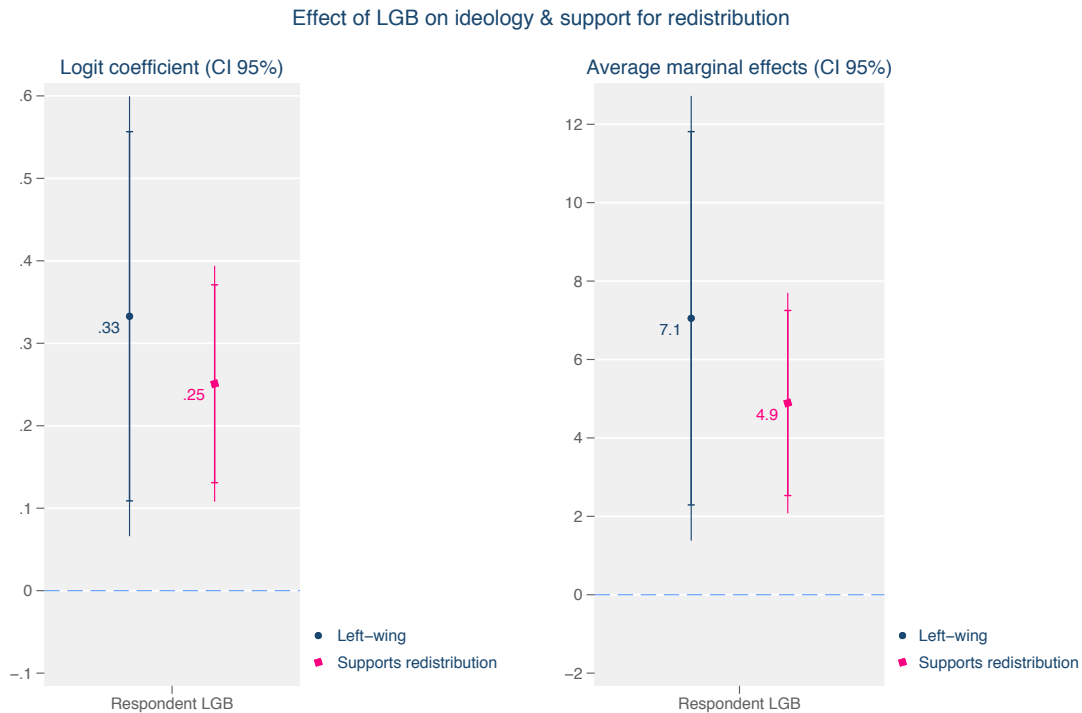


Figure 1: Sexuality and support for economic redistribution

Table 2 analyses the impact of sexuality on vote choice and provides empirical support for H2. Model 3 shows that LGBs are significantly more likely to support a leftist party than comparable heterosexuals when controlling for demographic and class-based elements, increasing the probability of voting for the left by a politically substantive nine percentage points. The positive effect of sexuality is underlined in Model 4 with the inclusion of the cultural and valence politics indicators, with LGBs being 7.2 percentage points more likely to vote for the left vis-à-vis comparable heterosexuals

The substantive role of sexuality remains noteworthy, surpassing the effects of religiosity, education and income. These findings support the argument that sexuality exhibits an independent and politically important effect on vote choice: namely that homosexuals exhibit

a higher probability of voting for leftist parties. The results are not only significant but also substantive in comparison to explanations of traditional importance in the literature.

Table 2: Sexuality and vote choice

	(Model 3)		(Model 4)	
	Coef.	AME	Coef.	AME
LGB	0.38*** (0.06)	9.0*** (1.5)	0.32*** (0.06)	7.3*** (1.4)
Gender (1 male)	-0.04 (0.03)	-1.0 (0.6)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-2.9*** (0.8)
Age	-0.01* (0.00)	-0.2* (0.1)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.1 (.1)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	-0.14 (0.14)	-3.4 (3.3)	-0.19* (0.11)	-4.4* (2.5)
High secondary	-0.25* (0.14)	-5.9* (3.3)	-0.32*** (0.11)	-7.3*** (2.7)
Post-secondary	-0.08 (0.18)	-1.9 (4.3)	-0.14 (0.15)	-3.3 (3.4)
Higher education	-0.04 (0.16)	-1.0 (3.9)	-0.14 (0.13)	-3.3 (3.1)
Income	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.8*** (0.3)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-1.0*** (0.3)
Religiosity			-0.09*** (0.02)	-2.2*** (0.4)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs			-0.15*** (0.05)	-3.7*** (1.3)
Town/small city			-0.29*** (0.09)	-7.0*** (2.2)
Village			-0.51*** (0.10)	-12.0*** (2.3)
Country/farm			-0.87*** (0.22)	-19.8*** (4.8)
View of economy			-0.02 (0.02)	-0.6 (0.4)
Sat. with democracy			0.03*** (0.01)	0.7*** (0.3)
Country effects		✓		✓
Year effects		✓		✓

Constant	-0.10 (0.40)	0.70** (0.33)
Observations	75,009	73,601

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

GAY VOTE IN A MULTIDIMENSIONAL SPACE

Whilst the main focus has been on assessing LGB behaviour on the left-right dimension given the correlated dimensional space with the GAL-TAN axis in the majority of Western European states (Adams et al., 2005; Bakker et al., 2012) and the spatial utility of the left-right axis for voters (Rovny and Whitefield, 2019), I also test the effect of being LGB on parties across the cultural dimension.

Data provided by the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) provides estimations of political parties' policy position on a number of different political issues and provides an overall score for parties on both the traditional left-right dimension as well as the GAL-TAN cultural axis (Polk et al., 2017; Bakker et al., 2015). The CHES dataset categorises parties on the GAL-TAN axis on a range from 0 (Libertarian/Postmaterialist) to 10 (Traditional/Authoritarian). Parties closer to 0 are more supportive of issues such as same-sex marriage and abortion whilst parties closer to values of 10 promote "traditional" moral positions. Identifying parties with a GAL-TAN value smaller than five (detailed list of parties in Table A10) I assess the effect of being LGB on support for these parties and summarise the findings in Table 3.

Table 3: Sexuality and vote choice in the GAL-TAN dimension

	(Model 5)		(Model 6)	
	Coef.	AME	Coef.	AME
LGB	0.34*** (0.07)	7.8*** (1.6)	0.31*** (0.07)	7.1*** (1.6)
Socio-economic controls		✓		✓
Cultural & valence controls		✗		✓
Country effects		✓		✓
Year effects		✓		✓
Observations		78,706		76,684

As in the case of leftist parties, LGBs observe a substantial increase in the probability of voting for a liberal-leaning party in Europe of around seven percentage points compared to their heterosexual peers. The consistency of this effect over the GAL-TAN dimension, however, is likely attributable to the coalesced nature of the economic and liberal dimensions in the countries under assessment here (Bakker et al., 2012). The majority of parties identified as being on the left were the same as those defined by CHES as being liberal with the latter group gaining a small number of notable liberal and centrist parties with pro-gay stances such as the Liberal Democrats in the UK or Ciudadanos in Spain. In the countries under assessment, a notable overlap exists across the two dimensions^{xii} and, with the few exceptions included in Table A10, most parties are spatially placed along a singular left-liberal vs right-conservative political space as described by Kitschelt (1994: 24-26).

ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

To ensure the validity of the results presented for ideology and vote-choice, two robustness checks are carried out. Firstly, I test that the results are not dependent on the operationalisation choices made in designing the models. The estimations included in Table 1 and Table 2 are repeated using different forms of operationalising the battery of controls; applying alternative

estimation techniques and; using gender-based subsamples, with the primary conclusions holding across these tests (see appendix). The findings are also robust with different compositions of countries and years (i.e. there is no country or ESS round that exhibits an influential effect over the model): the estimation of the full sample model is completed removing each of the twelve countries included in the estimation one-by-one with the main coefficient of LGB remaining significant throughout and I repeat the same process each ESS round (Figure A1 and A2).

As a second robustness check, I design a way of providing a tougher test for the impact of sexuality by decreasing the spread of extreme views expressed in the sample. Because the ideological preferences of individuals may be vast, it could be argued that the effect of sexuality exhibited in the models is only significant because LGBs are being compared to a much larger group of individuals within which there will be many extreme views. As part of the ESS, respondents are typically asked their views on a number of social or political issues. Respondents are asked to what extent they believe that homosexual individuals should be allowed to live freely. Using the responses of individuals to this question I can identify those individuals who express homophobic tendencies.^{xiii} By limiting the sample of individuals and removing those with intolerant views towards homosexuality the effect of sexuality on both of the dependent variables is subjected to a tougher test. Effectively this means that individuals in same-sex relationships will only be compared with individuals in opposite-sex relationships who hold liberal or indifferent views towards homosexuality. In other words, socially liberal homosexuals will be compared with socially liberal heterosexuals. Figure 2 compares the coefficients of the regular models alongside those of the tough test with no homophobic respondents. As visualised, the associated impact of sexuality remains constant, reaffirming the positive confirmations of both H1 and H2.

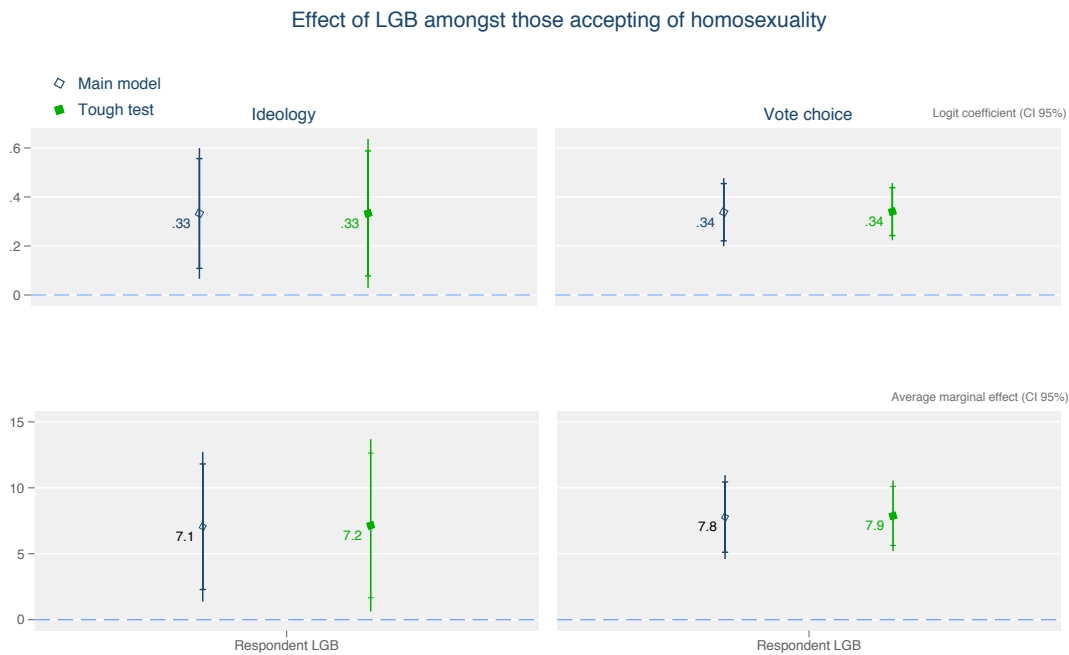


Figure 2: Robustness check

DISCUSSION

Sexuality matters in explaining the voting behaviour and ideological preferences of LGB voters in Europe. Building on the literature exploring the impact of sexuality on voting in the US, I hypothesised that i) LGBs would identify themselves more on the ideological left than non-LGBs, and ii) homosexuality would be associated with an increased probability of voting for a left-of-centre political party. I tested these hypotheses using cumulative data from the ESS between 2002 and 2017 for twelve Western European countries. The results of the analysis deliver support for these hypotheses and demonstrate that, as hypothesised, those in same-sex relationships were more likely to identify with the left and vote for leftist parties even after controlling for core determinants of vote choice in Western Europe. Homosexual individuals are more likely to vote for left-of-centre political parties and those with liberal stances on the

GAL-TAN dimension. The findings for both hypotheses remain robust when catering for opposing arguments such as class-based cleavages, cultural and urban divides as well as valence politics. There is thus a clear independent “sexuality gap” (Hertzog, 1996) that shapes a voter’s ideological preferences and electoral behaviour.

There are two potential mechanisms that can explain the distinct ideological preferences between LGB and non-LGB individuals and I echo these here, arguing that LGBs have likely underwent a learning process via their LGB experience that has altered their ideological predispositions to make them more supportive of leftist ideals; secondly that they are likely to be mobilised towards those who seek to cater to their aggregate policy preferences as a means of advancing their own welfare. The evidence presented here does not contradict these expectations but identifying the exact mechanism that explains the variation in preferences and vote choice based on sexuality merits further investigation to test these assumptions, especially in the context of the multidimensional political space in European countries.

As noted in earlier discussions, there are potential limitations to this analysis. The comparison of LGB persons relies on the indirect self-identification of LGB respondents. This means that there is no way of identifying single gay individuals who may make up a larger group of the total population and who may also display different political attitudes and preferences. Comparing the main findings to those of the US (Egan, 2012; Hertzog, 1996), the effect of sexuality yields an effect of comparative parity (Table A13). The methodological heterogeneity between these studies, however, particularly in terms of operationalising and identifying homosexual individuals, renders a direct comparison of effect sizes inappropriate. Of note, though, is that the addition of this study to the existing US-based literature forms the

basis of a comparative and cross-national body of work that provides comparative evidentiary support for the existence of the sexuality gap in political behaviour.

For social scientists, this paper's findings demonstrate that sexuality is an explanatory variable of note that should be considered alongside traditional predictor variables of individual-level electoral outcomes. The results show that LGB men and women are more likely to i) be ideologically inclined towards the left and support typical leftist economic policies, and ii) vote for parties on the left that are presumed to cater to their policy objectives as well as socially liberal centrist parties. For parties on the right and authoritarian parties, this means that if they wish to secure the votes of these individuals, then they are tasked with ensuring that they are able to shake off sticky assumptions regarding traditional opposition to LGB rights issues. More research may seek to assess the efficacy of partisan attempts to promote LGB policies to their LGB audience, as this may allow one to better isolate the causal mechanism that drives LGB preferences for leftist parties and the ideological gap between LGBs and non-LGBs. It is still not clear whether LGBs prefer leftist parties because they cater to the policy needs directly related to their sexuality or because their sexuality has actually engendered preferences for traditionally leftist policy positions. To answer these questions and develop this line of research further, however, greater effort will need to be exerted to remedy the lack of data on these individuals in Europe in the first instance.

ⁱ I refer here to LGBs in reference to individuals who participate in homosexual activity, that is sexual activity with members of the same-sex. Whilst I refer to the individuals in the study as being LGB, this does not mean that these same individuals adopt such labels themselves, since identification with the LGB identity is likely a political decision - see Egan (2012) for a detailed discussion and examination of the self-selection process of the LGB identity.

ⁱⁱ Theoretically there is ambiguity regarding what classes an individual as homosexual. I define homosexuality as being in a same-sex relationship. Whilst conscious of the limitations of this conceptualization – individuals may engage in same-sex sexual activity without considering themselves homosexuals (Egan, 2012; Fay, Turner, Klassen & Gagnon, 1989; Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948) - I cannot distinguish between those who are in a same-sex (opposite-sex) relationship now and are perceived to be homosexual (heterosexual) but have

had or would be willing to have a relationship with a partner of a different gender, i.e. bisexuals and non-conformers.

ⁱⁱⁱ ILGA Europe's Annual Review provides by-country yearly reports on the state of LGB(T) rights laws across Europe : <https://www.ilga-europe.org/rainboweurope>

^{iv} Introduced by the Conservative party in England and Wales only, introduced in Scotland by the Scottish National Party. Ireland held a referendum on the issue in 2015, and Austria introduced same-sex marriage following a ruling by the country's constitutional court in December 2017.

^v For example: the main right-wing party in Spain (PP) filed a complaint with the country's Constitutional Court in response to the introduction of same-sex marriage by the governing socialist party (PSOE). The same PP also vowed to remove gay adoption rights from homosexuals if it won the 2008 general elections. The new right-wing challenger in Spain, Vox, also campaigned vehemently against the "gay agenda" in the 2019 general election (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). The outspokenly anti-gay position of far-right parties is echoed in Germany's Alternative for Germany (Arzheimer, 2015).

^{vi} Whilst there is debate regarding the multiplicity of political dimensions in the European political space, I follow the arguments presented by Adams et al. (2005), Bakker et al. (2012), Kitschelt (1994) and Marks et al. (2006) who view the bloc of Western Europe as being primarily structured by a single dimension of political competition where the left-right and GAL-TAN cleavages are neatly nested and coalesced with one another so that political competition occurs across a singular left-liberal vs right-conservative axis (Kitschelt, 1994: 24-26). Correlation between the two dimensions provided in Table A9.

^{vii} Questions: Looking at this card, what relationship is he/she to you? Answers (where applicable): a) Husband/wife/partner b) Son/daughter/adopted c) Parent/parent-in-law d) Other relative

e) Other non-relative.

^{viii} Such a strategy is at risk of error caused by misreporting of gender, although the effect of the same is likely to understate the effect of the LGB variable rather than increase it. Importantly, Black et al., (2000) find that the random error experienced using this method on data from the US was actually quite small. Carpenter (2005) warns against aggregating bisexuals alongside lesbians and gays given that they report significantly different responses across a catalogue of economic and demographic variables. Given the data, however, I am unable to disaggregate LG(+B).

^{ix} Cross-national comparisons presented in Table A2. Of the 1,609 LGB respondents identified, 1,248 made it into the final sample included in the main model (1.4% of N=90,747).

^x Sampling and population weights also applied. Using an election-specific indicator instead of country and year fixed effects does not alter the main conclusions (Table A14).

^{xi} The estimation is repeated using a non-dichotomised operationalisation of ideology (Table A6): the findings remain unchanged. Clustering at the country-level is advisable given the level of variation across many of the variables will be heterogeneous between countries. The estimation is repeated using non-clustered standard errors (Table A7): the findings remain unchanged.

^{xii} The correlation between votes for the different dimensional operationalisations is greater than 0.7.

^{xiii} Those who "strongly disagree" or "disagree" that homosexuals should be able to live freely. For a discussion of the potential bias in survey questions using different terms of "gays" vs. "homosexuals" see McCabe (2019).

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Appendix

Table A 1: List of Left-of-centre parties in Western Europe

Country	Parties
BE - Belgium	Groen(!) / AGALEV SPA Ecolo Parti Socialiste
CH - Switzerland	Social democrats Swiss Labour Party Socialist Party Green Party Green Liberal Party Alternative Left Left
DE - Germany	SPD PDS Bundnis 90 Die Grünen Die Linke
ES - Spain	PSOE Izquierda Unida Podemos (and local variants)
FI - Finland	The Green League Finish Social Democratic Party The Left Alliance Communist Party of Finland The Communist Workers' Party of Finland Workers Party
FR - France	Parti communiste Parti Socialiste Les Verts Parti Radical de Gauche Front de Gauche
GB – United Kingdom	Labour Party Green Party

IE - Ireland	Labour Party Green Party United Left Alliance People Before profit Anti-austerity Socialist Party Social Democrats
NL - Netherlands	Labour Party Democrats '66 Green Left Socialist Party
NO - Norway	RØDT / RV Sosialistisk Venstreparti Arbeiderpartiet Miljøpartiet de Grønne
PT - Portugal	Bloco de Esquerda Partido Comunista Português Partido Ecolo Partido Comunista dos Trabalhadores Portugueses Partido Operário de Unidade Socialista Partido Socialista Partido Social Democrata Coligação Democrática Unitária
SE - Sweden	Socialdemokraterna Vänsterpartiet Miljöpartiet de gröna

Table A 2: Identification of LGBs by country

Country	% of sample identified as LGB
BE- Belgium	2.1
CH- Switzerland	1.3
DE - Germany	1.7
ES- Spain	0.9
FI -Finland	0.9
FR - France	1.9
GB – United Kingdom	1.3
IE - Ireland	2.6
NL - Netherlands	1.5
NO - Norway	0.9
PT - Portugal	0.7
SE- Sweden	1.1
Total sample	1.4

Table A 3: Mean values of the dependent variable and controls by sexuality (standard deviation)

Variable	LGB respondents	Non-LGB respondents
L/R position	4.74 (2.09)	5.10 (2.04)
Gender	0.57 (0.50)	0.51 (0.5)
Age	46.89 (15.17)	50.73 (15.15)
Education	3.52 (1.37)	3.30 (1.42)
Income	6.61 (2.53)	6.62 (2.42)
Religiosity	4.07 (2.99)	4.56 (2.90)
Domicile	2.86 (1.26)	3.11 (1.18)
View of economy	4.86 (2.45)	5.07 (2.43)
Satisfaction with democracy	5.62 (2.35)	5.73 (2.31)

Table A 4: Logistic regression modelling support for redistribution

Support for distribution	
LGB	0.25*** (0.07)
Gender (1 male)	-0.23*** (0.02)
Age	0.00* (0.00)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>	
Low secondary	-0.03 (0.06)
High secondary	-0.11** (0.06)
Post-secondary	-0.17*** (0.05)
Higher education	-0.35*** (0.03)
Income	-0.13*** (0.01)
Religiosity	-0.03** (0.01)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>	
City suburbs	-0.06 (0.05)
Town/small city	-0.07 (0.07)
Village	-0.09 (0.07)
Country/farm	-0.11 (0.08)
View of economy	-0.02 (0.02)
Sat. with democracy	-0.06*** (0.01)
Country effects	✓
Year effects	✓
Constant	2.35*** (0.28)
Observations	90,747

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Tests of different operationalisations of control variables

Summary: The following re-operationalisation tests are carried out:

- a) Education is operationalised as a continuous variable measuring the total number of years in education;
- b) Income satisfaction is indicated as a substitute for self-reported income,
- c) Religiosity is operationalised as a categorical variable indicating church attendance.

Table A 5: Operationalisation sensitivity tests

	Vote choice			Ideology		
	Education	Income	Religiosity	Education	Income	Religiosity
LGB	0.32*** (0.06)	0.22*** (0.05)	0.32*** (0.06)	0.33** (0.14)	0.30*** (0.09)	0.33** (0.14)
Gender (1 male)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.12*** (0.03)	-0.09*** (0.03)	-0.08* (0.04)	-0.07 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.05)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Low secondary		-0.24** (0.10)	-0.19* (0.11)		-0.15** (0.06)	-0.07 (0.09)
High secondary		-0.38*** (0.09)	-0.30*** (0.11)		-0.13** (0.05)	-0.03 (0.07)
Post-secondary		-0.27* (0.15)	-0.14 (0.14)		0.13** (0.07)	0.21*** (0.07)
Higher education		-0.24** (0.12)	-0.11 (0.13)		0.32*** (0.07)	0.44*** (0.08)
Education (years)	0.01 (0.01)	-	-	0.05*** (0.02)	-	-
Income	-0.05*** (0.02)	-	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.00)	-	-0.00 (0.01)
Income sat.	-	-0.14*** (0.03)	-		-0.02 (0.03)	-
Religiosity	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.11*** (0.02)	-
Weekly church	-	-	-0.86*** (0.24)	-	-	-0.81*** (0.16)
Occasional church	-	-	-0.41*** (0.06)	-	-	-0.45*** (0.07)
City suburbs	-0.14*** (0.05)	-0.15*** (0.06)	-0.15*** (0.05)	-0.18*** (0.03)	-0.18*** (0.05)	-0.19*** (0.03)
Town/small city	-0.29*** (0.08)	-0.26*** (0.10)	-0.29*** (0.09)	-0.26*** (0.04)	-0.23*** (0.07)	-0.26*** (0.05)
Village	-0.50*** (0.09)	-0.47*** (0.11)	-0.50*** (0.10)	-0.38*** (0.07)	-0.35*** (0.09)	-0.38*** (0.07)
Country/farm	-0.86*** (0.23)	-0.87*** (0.23)	-0.86*** (0.22)	-0.53*** (0.05)	-0.50*** (0.06)	-0.54*** (0.05)
View of economy	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02* (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Sat. with democracy	0.03** (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Country effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.31 (0.36)	0.75** (0.31)	0.46 (0.37)	-0.60** (0.29)	0.10 (0.09)	-0.22** (0.09)
Observations	73,637	86,998	73,656	90,812	107,737	90,819

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 6: Modelling ideology as a continuous variable

	Ideology [†] (0-10)		Ideology dummy	
	OLS		Logistic regression	
LGB	0.32*** (0.10)	0.26** (0.09)	0.38*** (0.08)	0.33*** (0.08)
Gender (1 male)	-0.14** (0.05)	-0.22*** (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.08*** (0.02)
Age	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.01*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	0.01 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.08* (0.04)
High secondary	-0.01 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.08)	0.03 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.04)
Post-secondary	0.08 (0.11)	0.04 (0.09)	0.27*** (0.06)	0.20*** (0.06)
Higher education	0.26** (0.11)	0.22** (0.09)	0.48*** (0.04)	0.40*** (0.04)
Income	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)
Religiosity		-0.12*** (0.02)		-0.11*** (0.00)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs		-0.16*** (0.04)		-0.19*** (0.04)
Town/small city		-0.22*** (0.06)		-0.26*** (0.03)
Village		-0.35*** (0.08)		-0.38*** (0.03)
Country/farm		-0.46*** (0.07)		-0.54*** (0.05)
View of economy		-0.06*** (0.01)		-0.04*** (0.01)
Sat. with democracy		-0.04*** (0.01)		0.00 (0.01)
Country effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	5.83*** (0.18)	6.97*** (0.24)	-0.92*** (0.07)	0.06 (0.08)
Observations	87,888	86,416	93,044	90,747

† 0=Right and 10=Left

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 7: Sensitivity test comparing clustering of standard errors

	Ideology		Vote choice	
	Clustered SEs	Non-clustered SEs	Clustered SEs	Non-clustered SEs
LGB	0.33** (0.14)	0.33*** (0.08)	0.32*** (0.06)	0.32*** (0.09)
Gender (1 male)	-0.08* (0.05)	-0.08*** (0.02)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.13*** (0.02)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.08* (0.04)	-0.19* (0.11)	-0.19*** (0.04)
Low secondary	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.04)	-0.32*** (0.11)	-0.32*** (0.04)
High secondary	0.20*** (0.07)	0.20*** (0.06)	-0.14 (0.15)	-0.14** (0.06)
Post-secondary	0.40*** (0.08)	0.40*** (0.04)	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.14*** (0.04)
Higher education	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Income	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.11*** (0.00)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.00)
Religiosity	-0.19*** (0.03)	-0.19*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.05)	-0.15*** (0.04)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>	-0.26*** (0.05)	-0.26*** (0.03)	-0.29*** (0.09)	-0.29*** (0.04)
City suburbs	-0.38*** (0.07)	-0.38*** (0.03)	-0.51*** (0.10)	-0.51*** (0.04)
Town/small city	-0.54*** (0.05)	-0.54*** (0.05)	-0.87*** (0.22)	-0.87*** (0.06)
Village	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02*** (0.01)
Country/farm	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)
View of economy	0.20*** (0.01)	0.20*** (0.04)	0.17*** (0.01)	0.17*** (0.05)
Sat. with democracy	0.06 (0.09)	0.06 (0.08)	0.70** (0.33)	0.70*** (0.09)
Constant				
Observations	90,747	90,747	73,601	73,601

Robust standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 8: Modelling effect of sexuality across gender subsamples

	Ideology		Vote choice	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
LGB	0.22*	0.51**	0.34***	0.31***
	(0.12)	(0.22)	(0.12)	(0.08)
Control variables	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	46,841	43,906	38,434	35,167

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 9: Correlation of political dimensions in countries included in analysis

Country	Correlation Coefficient (Left-right / GAL-TAN)
Belgium	0.55
Finland	0.17
France	0.69
Germany	-0.21
Ireland	0.49
Netherlands	0.30
Portugal	0.90
Spain	0.88
Sweden	0.50
UK	0.73

Note: Replication from Bakker et al. (2012). Norway and Switzerland not included

Table A 10: List of liberal parties and their GAL-TAN score†

Country	Party	GAL-TAN position
BE - Belgium	Groen(!) / AGALEV	1.23
	SPA	3.19
	Ecolo	1.54
	Mouvement Réformateur	4.13
	Parti Socialiste	3.19
	PVDA	2.53
	VLD	3.46
DE - Germany	SPD	4.25
	PDS	4.06
	Bundnis 90 / Die Grünen	1.72
	Die Linke	4.06
	FDP	3.39
	Piraten	1.91

ES - Spain	PSOE	2.86
	Izquierda Unida	1.73
	Podemos (and local variants)	1.75
	ERC	2.39
	ICV	2.01
	Eusko Alkartasuna	4.45
	Bloque Nacionalista Galego	2.46
	Partido Andalucista	4.43
	Chunta Argonesista	1.94
	UPyD	3.33
	Amaiur	2.14
Ciudadanos	3.22	
FI - Finland	Svenka folkpartiet	3.72
	Vihreä Liitto	2.18
	Suomen Sosialdemokraattinen	4.28
	Vasemmistoliitto	3.25
FR - France	Parti Communiste Français	4.41
	Parti Socialiste	3.06
	Les Verts	1.62
	Parti Radical de Gauche	3.78
	Front de Gauche	2.4
GB – United Kingdom	Labour Party	4.29
	Liberal Democrats	2.60
	Green Party	1.61
	Plaid Cymru	3.78
	SNP	4.06
IE - Ireland	Labour Party	3.46
	Green Party	2.18
	People Before profit	1.20
	Progressive Democrats	3.89
	Socialist Party	2.04
NL - Netherlands	PvdA	3.52
	Democraten '66	1.76
	GroenLinks	1.74
	Socialiste Partij	4.58
	50PLUS	4.33
	PvdD	3.07
PT - Portugal	Bloco de Esquerda	1.06
	Coligação Democrática Unitária (PCP/PEV)	2.75
	Partido Socialista	3.19
SE - Sweden	Arbetarpartiet-Socialdemokraterna	4.48
	Vänsterpartiet	2.71

	Miljöpartiet de Gröna	2.48
	Folkpartiet liberalerna	3.27
	Feministiskt initiative	0.81
	Piratpartiet	1.68

†Does not include data for Switzerland or Norway as these countries are not included in the CHES dataset.

Table A 11: Tough test regression models

	Ideology		Vote choice	
	Main model	Tough test	Main model	Tough test
LGB	0.33** (0.14)	0.33** (0.15)	0.32*** (0.06)	0.32*** (0.05)
Gender (1 male)	-0.08* (0.05)	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.12*** (0.03)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.08)	-0.19* (0.11)	-0.19* (0.11)
High secondary	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.32*** (0.11)	-0.32** (0.13)
Post-secondary	0.20*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.07)	-0.14 (0.15)	-0.15 (0.16)
Higher education	0.40*** (0.08)	0.41*** (0.07)	-0.14 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.15)
Income	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)
Religiosity	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.09*** (0.02)	-0.09*** (0.02)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs	-0.19*** (0.03)	-0.20*** (0.03)	-0.15*** (0.05)	-0.14*** (0.05)
Town/small city	-0.26*** (0.05)	-0.26*** (0.05)	-0.29*** (0.09)	-0.28*** (0.10)
Village	-0.38*** (0.07)	-0.39*** (0.06)	-0.51*** (0.10)	-0.50*** (0.11)
Country/farm	-0.54*** (0.05)	-0.54*** (0.05)	-0.87*** (0.22)	-0.83*** (0.22)
View of economy	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Sat. with democracy	0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)
Country effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Constant	0.06 (0.09)	0.02 (0.11)	0.70** (0.33)	0.62* (0.36)
Observations	90,747	82,668	73,601	67,573

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 12: Modelling LGB vote for liberal (GAL-TAN) parties

	(1)		(2)	
	Coef.	AME	Coef.	AME
LGB	0.34*** (0.07)	7.81*** (1.60)	0.31*** (0.07)	7.08*** (1.64)
Gender (1 male)	-0.05** (0.02)	-1.14** (0.53)	-0.13*** (0.02)	-2.92*** (0.52)
Age	0.01*** (0.00)	0.24*** (0.06)	0.01*** (0.00)	0.29*** (0.05)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	-0.02 (0.10)	-0.36 (2.17)	-0.05 (0.09)	-1.17 (1.89)
High secondary	0.07 (0.08)	1.53 (1.78)	0.02 (0.08)	0.39 (1.70)
Post-secondary	0.33*** (0.12)	7.50*** (2.74)	0.28** (0.11)	6.40** (2.51)
Higher education	0.38*** (0.09)	8.84*** (1.96)	0.32*** (0.09)	7.33*** (2.03)
Income	0.03*** (0.01)	0.76*** (0.23)	0.03** (0.01)	0.58** (0.29)
Religiosity			-0.08*** (0.02)	-1.90*** (0.37)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs			-0.08 (0.05)	-1.83 (1.27)
Town/small city			-0.18** (0.08)	-4.10** (1.88)
Village			-0.27*** (0.08)	-6.26*** (1.88)
Country/farm			-0.55*** (0.14)	-12.18*** (2.95)
View of economy			-0.02* (0.01)	-0.48* (0.29)
Sat. with democracy			0.03*** (0.01)	0.77*** (0.16)
Country effects		✓		✓
Year effects		✓		✓
Constant	-1.09*** (0.23)		-0.53*** (0.19)	
Observations	78,706		76,684	

Robust country clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 13: Effects comparison

Effect	Logit coefficient (including controls)
Effect on vote (Europe)	0.32*** (Present study)
Effect on vote in (US Presidential)	0.12 † (Egan 2012) – “Self-selection adj. estimate”
Effect on vote (US Presidential)	0.23 † (Egan 2012) – “Naïve estimate”
Effect on vote (US House)	0.69*** (Hertzog 1996)
Effect on vote (US Senate)	0.34 † (Hertzog 1996)
Effect on vote (US Gubernatorial)	0.47* (Hertzog 1996)
Effect on vote (US Presidential)	1.40*** (Hertzog 1996)

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1, † p>0.1

Table A 14: Variation in fixed effects controls

	Ideology		Vote choice	
	Country & Year FE	Election FE	Country & Year FE	Election FE
LGB	0.33** (0.14)	0.33** (0.14)	0.34*** (0.07)	0.34*** (0.07)
Gender (1 male)	-0.08* (0.05)	-0.08 (0.05)	-0.13*** (0.03)	-0.14*** (0.03)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
<i>Education (base: primary)</i>				
Low secondary	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.19* (0.11)
High secondary	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.07)	-0.33*** (0.12)	-0.30*** (0.11)
Post-secondary	0.20*** (0.07)	0.20*** (0.07)	-0.15 (0.15)	-0.11 (0.14)
Higher education	0.40*** (0.08)	0.41*** (0.07)	-0.15 (0.14)	-0.12 (0.14)
Income	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.02)
Religiosity	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.11*** (0.01)	-0.10*** (0.02)	-0.10*** (0.02)
<i>Domicile (base: City/urban)</i>				
City suburbs	-0.19*** (0.03)	-0.19*** (0.03)	-0.16*** (0.04)	-0.17*** (0.05)
Town/small city	-0.26*** (0.05)	-0.26*** (0.05)	-0.30*** (0.09)	-0.30*** (0.09)
Village	-0.38*** (0.07)	-0.39*** (0.07)	-0.50*** (0.10)	-0.51*** (0.10)
Country/farm	-0.54*** (0.05)	-0.55*** (0.05)	-0.88*** (0.22)	-0.89*** (0.22)

View of economy	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)
Sat. with democracy	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)
Country effects	✓	✗	✓	✗
Year effects	✓	✗	✓	✗
Election effects	✗	✓	✗	✓
Constant	0.06 (0.09)	0.16*** (0.06)	0.72** (0.32)	0.75*** (0.25)
Observations	90,747	90,747	73,601	73,601

Robust country-clustered standard errors (two-tailed) in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

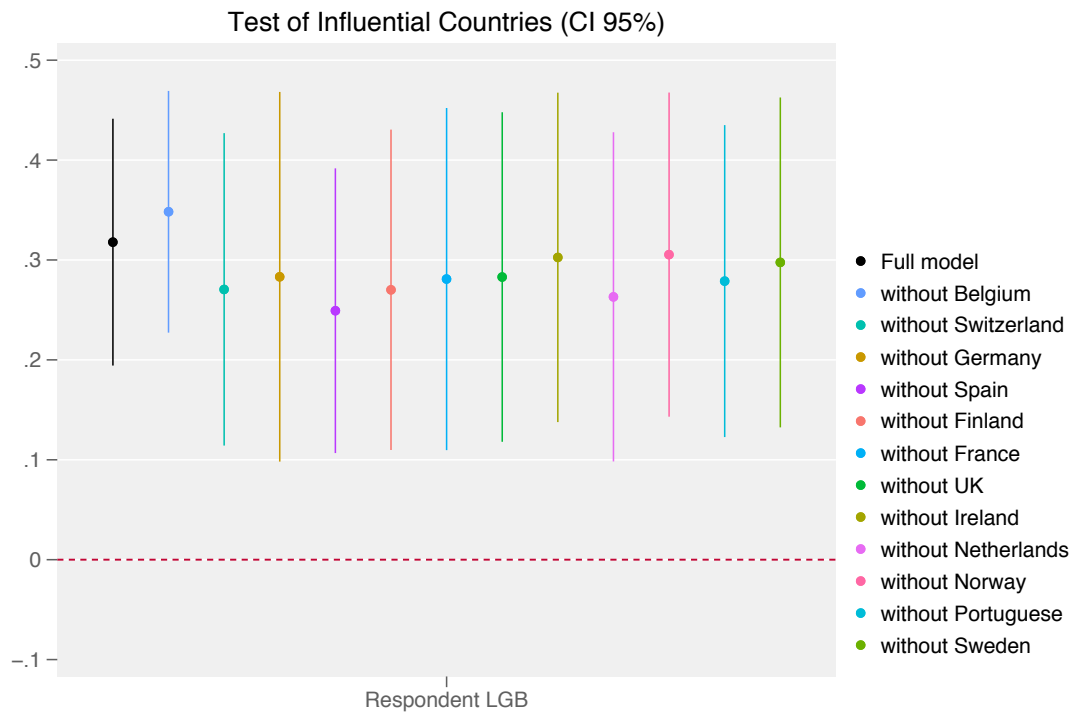


Figure A 1: Country-based sensitivity test

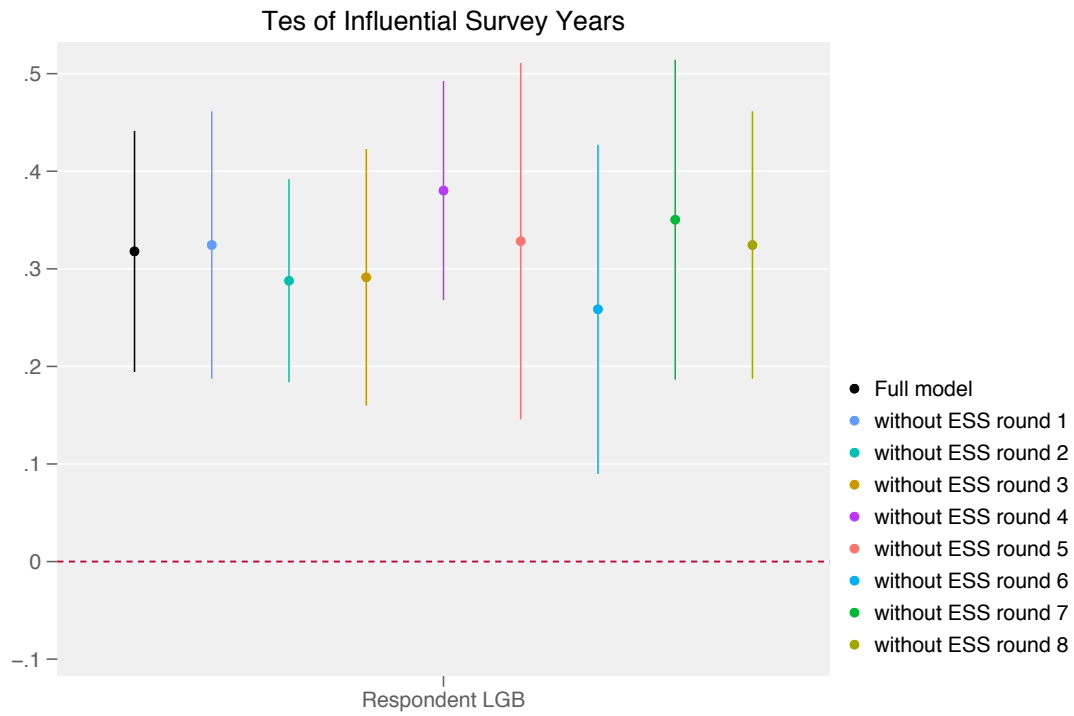


Figure A 2: Survey-based sensitivity test