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Project coordinator:

Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Austria

Partners:

Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Austria

Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA), K.U. Leuven, Belgium

Centre for Alternative Social Analysis (CASA), Denmark

Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE), France

Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften, Abteilung Politikwissenschaft, Universität zu Köln, Germany

Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA PTI), Hungary

Laboratorio di Psicologia Sociale Applicata, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Institut de Sociologie et de Science Politique (ISSP), Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE, INDIVIDUAL REACTIONS AND THE APPEAL OF THE EXTREME RIGHT

FINAL REPORT

Jörg Flecker, Sabine Kirschenhofer
Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Vienna

Gabrielle Balazs
Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE), Noisy le Grand

Yves De Weerdt, Hans De Witte
Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA) & Departement Psychologie, K.U. Leuven

Patrizia Catellani, Patrizia Milesi
Laboratorio di Psicologia Sociale Applicata, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan

Gudrun Hentges, Malte Meyer
Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften, Abteilung für Politikwissenschaft, Universität zu Köln

Francesca Poglia Mileti, Fabrice Plomb
Institut de Sociologie, Université de Neuchâtel

Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt
Aspernbrückengasse 4/5
A-1020 WIEN
Austria
Tel: +431 21 24 700
Fax: +431 21 24 700-77
office@forba.at
http://www.forba.at

THE SIREN PROJECT PARTNERS AND SUBCONTRACTORS

Project Coordinator:

Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA),Vienna, Austria

Partners:

Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA), K.U. Leuven, Belgium

Centre for Alternative Social Analysis (CASA), Denmark

Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE), France

Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften, Abteilung Politikwissenschaft, Universität zu Köln, Germany

Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA PTI), Hungary

Laboratorio di Psicologia Sociale Applicata, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Institut de Sociologie et de Science Politique (ISSP), Université de Neuchâtel, Switzerland

Subcontractor:

Euroquest MRB, represented by EURISKO, Italy

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the SIREN project was to analyse subjective perceptions of and individual reactions to recent socio-economic change and, in particular, changes in working life, and to establish how experiences in working life influence political orientations. The research covered eight countries (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Switzerland) and combined qualitative and quantitative research methodology.

The findings indicate that socio-economic change is, in fact, an important factor in explaining the rise of right-wing populism and extremism in various European countries. In this respect, the following main patterns of individual reactions emerged from the interpretation of the in-depth interviews:

The *first* pattern involves strong feelings of injustice and the view that the "decent and hard working" people are being betrayed. Consequently, political messages that address the double demarcation of "the people" from the elites on the top and from the outcasts at the bottom of society quite easily find a resonance. A *second* pattern has at its core the fear of *déclassement*, the insecurities and the feelings of political powerlessness. The experience of being a plaything of economic developments can be clearly linked with right-wing populists' addressing the population as a passive victim of overpowering opponents. A *third* pattern could be found with people who experienced occupational or social advancement who tend to identify very strongly with the company and its goals and who consequently put high demands on their colleagues and subordinates. Intense competition seems to strengthen views such as authoritarianism, individualism or Social Darwinism.

The survey results indicate an increase in the amount of work and in job autonomy. Perceived job security has decreased in five out of eight countries. Work climate has also deteriorated on average. Older workers are particularly affected by negative changes in working life. The survey analysis also showed that the five receptiveness attitudes (prejudice against immigrants, nationalism, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and political powerlessness) are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party: Prejudice against immigrants clearly stands out as the most important factor, with authoritarian attitudes playing an additional moderate role. Interestingly, the results suggest that both positive and negative change at work may add to perceived uncertainty, prejudice against immigrants and thus receptiveness to right-wing populism and extremism.

In terms of policy implications, the research suggests a need for public recognition of problems caused by social inequality and socio-economic change. Such a debate should stress similarities, rather than differences, between the national population and "foreigners". Enabling refugees and asylum seekers to work would help to avoid "scapegoating". Competitiveness should be prevented from becoming a dominant value, which in turn might make it necessary to tame economic competition. The research points at the necessity to achieve equal pay for women and men, and it also suggests that the expansion of a low-wage sector as a means of fighting unemployment needs to be reconsidered. Similarly, policies to introduce disincentives to early retirement also should be reassessed as they aggravate frustrations and psychological injuries. For some groups of workers it seems premature to try to keep people in employment longer while working conditions are still deteriorating and health conditions are worsening.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SIREN project brings together two fields of research that have hardly been related up to now: research on changes in working life, labour market developments and social security on the one hand and, on the other, analyses of political orientations and right-wing populism and extremism.

The aim of the SIREN project was to analyse subjective perceptions of and individual reactions to recent socio-economic change and, in particular, changes in working life. The research also aimed to establish how experiences in working life influence political orientations and to what extent the threat of social decline and precarious living conditions contribute to the rise of right-wing populism and extremism in many European countries. Thus one of the main objectives was to assess whether, and to what extent, particular conditions and changes in the employment system and in working life make people receptive to xenophobia, nationalism and racism; thereby the project intended to contribute to an understanding of subjective views on, and the political reverberations of, recent transformations of the labour market and work organisation.

Focussing on the political subjectivity of people, the project is concerned with the "demand side" of right-wing populism and extremism. In the project, the term right-wing populism and extremism is used to cover a wide variety of parties, movements and ideologies that have in common a restrictive notion of citizenship, anti-immigration rhetoric, anti-political system positions and often nationalism and authorianism. The use of the term is based on the view that right-wing extremism and right-wing or radical populism are not distinct phenomena but rather that the difference is one of degree.

1.1. Research methodology

The research covered eight countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and Switzerland. It was carried out in four phases: a literature review, qualitative interviews, a quantitative survey as well as an analysis of policy implications and dissemination activities.

National *literature reviews* and a European synthesis report examined the available literature on changes in working life, right-wing populism and extremism as well as the interrelations between these two areas of research.

In the *qualitative research phase*, the eight teams, between them, conducted a total of 313 and analysed 279 qualitative interviews on the basis of common interview guidelines. The samples in all countries encompassed different socio-economic situations and different political orientations, i.e. both people "receptive" to and "non-receptive" to right-wing populism and extremism.

For the selection of interviewees three categories of how people are affected by socio-economic change (objective situations) were constructed:

- *Advancement:* self-employed people and employees who have experienced an improvement in terms of occupational situation, income and labour market prospects.
- *(Threat of) decline:* people who are (still) in (long-term) employment but who are affected by worsening working conditions and/or increasing insecurity, such as company restructuring.
- *(Increasing) precariousness:* people working freelance who are unable to earn a secure long-term income on this basis; people in short-term employment with a high level of insecurity; and people in early retirement and unemployment.

The interviews were tape-recorded. An average interview lasted an hour and a half; a few lasted beyond two-and-a-half hours. The interpretation and analysis was conducted on the basis of common procedures and resulted in interview reports, country reports and a European synthesis report.

For the *quantitative phase of the research*, a structured questionnaire was developed on the basis of the literature review and the results of the qualitative research which aimed at interviewing a representative sample of workers in the eight different European countries. The questionnaire consisted of 71 questions, covering seven different areas. When available, reliable questions and scales developed in previous cross-national surveys were used. Data collection was executed by private survey institutes in each country, co-ordinated by the Eurisko agency in Milan. The telephone survey was carried out between mid May and early July 2003. The duration of an average interview was 15 minutes. A total sample of 5,812 workers were interviewed. Except for the Swiss sample, which included 893 respondents, the other country samples each consisted of about 700 respondents. In each country, samples closely matched the working population, even though a slight under-representation of blue-collar workers, poorly educated respondents and extreme right-wing voters was noted, as is often the case in survey research. The country samples were weighted in terms of key demographics (regions, size of town, age and gender) in order to increase representativeness.

The *policy recommendations* phase, finally included four workshops with policymakers at both national and EU level, including representatives from governmental institutions, trade unions, EU-level organisations and NGOs, held in Paris, Germany, Budapest and Brussels in Spring 2004, as well as a policy recommendations report.

1.2.   *Main findings of the qualitative research*

The analysis of changes in working life and of politics from the vantage point of workers and citizens gave rise to conclusions on how experiences in the world of work may be transformed into potentials of political subjectivity. What can be inferred from our sample of more than 300 in-depth interviews is that socio-economic change is in fact an important factor in explaining the rise of right-wing populism and extremism in various European countries. Only rarely in the interpretation of interviews focusing on

how people are affected by socio-economic change was this not a decisive contribution to the understanding of the attraction of the extreme right. There are, however, also other issues, such as, for example, discontent with mainstream political parties, the crisis of political representation, especially of the working class, and family socialisation.

In the literature, the interrelation between changes in working life and support for right-wing populism and extremism is theorised in different ways (see also Flecker 2002): The erosion of norms and values leaves people with outdated normative orientation and tensions between their values and their actions. The dissolution of traditional social milieus and the recourse to allegedly natural categories such as race, gender and age form the prerequisites for a resurgence of right-wing extremism (Heitmeyer 2002). Focusing on the problem of increasing complexity and intensified contradictions of social life, populist messages and, in particular, scapegoat theories and authoritarian views can help individuals to create a subjective sense of consistency in their apprehension of social reality (cf. Zoll 1984). In a world where traditional institutions no longer provide orientation, views and concepts based on ethnicity, anti-elite sentiments or in-group/out-group distinctions may fill the gap. A related theoretical argument points out the damage to social and personal identity caused in periods of accelerated socio-economic change. In addressing imaginary ethnic or national communities, right-wing populism serves the need to compensate for lost certainties and offers opportunities for identification that may help to stabilise the self (Ottomeyer 2000; Dörre 2001).

According to the findings of the qualitative research within the SIREN project, providing orientation and stabilising identities do of course play a certain role, but they are not the only and not even the prevailing factors. Within the main patterns that emerged, other theoretical considerations seemed to be more helpful for the understanding of people's receptiveness to extreme-right ideologies. More indications were found for theoretical views arguing that the individuals affected by far-reaching socio-economic change need to reconsider their position in the social world. In this respect the following main patterns emerged from the interpretation of interviews in all countries under investigation.

The first pattern involves strong feelings of injustice stemming from frustrations of legitimate expectations relating to various aspects of work, employment, social status or standard of living. Company restructuring, redundancies, early retirement, new management styles or intensified competition on the labour and housing markets devalue qualifications, acquired experience, previous hard work and sacrifices and may bring to nothing the expected rewards expected in return for the subordination to the demands of a pitiless world of work. Individual experiences differ widely, ranging from layoffs out of the blue and involuntary early retirement to the lack of recognition of professional experience and contributions. Such frustrations are often expressed as feelings of injustice: people refer to other social groups that do not subordinate themselves to the hardships of work to the same extent, who are taken much better care of by the state or who are able to arrange things for themselves illegally. These are, on the one hand, managers and politicians with high incomes, "golden handshakes" and

generous pensions and, on the other hand, people living on welfare or refugees supported by the state. The core theme is that the "decent and hard working" and therefore morally superior people are being betrayed and that they have to realise that they were ill-advised to remain honest and loyal and to subordinate themselves to the exacting demands of an increasingly cruel world of work. It is for this reason that the political messages and ideologies of right-wing populism and extremism addressing the double demarcation of "the people" from the elites on the top and from the outcasts at the bottom of society have found a resonance.

A second clear pattern in the mental processing of changes in working life has at its core the fear of *déclassement*, the insecurities and the feelings of powerlessness that are associated with industrial decline, precarious employment or the devaluation of skills and qualifications. The experience of being a plaything of economic developments or anonymous powers can be clearly linked to right-wing populists' addressing the population as a passive victim of overpowering opponents. The same goes for people's nostalgic accounts of the good old (working) times and populists' glorification of traditional communities. In some cases, authoritarian reactions to insecurity and powerlessness could be observed, while others made clear that a lack of political representation contributes to the feeling of not being protected as workers. People attracted to the extreme right seem to be convinced that they can only count on themselves. Since social-democratic parties have shown less and less interest in the workers' world, the public recognition of the problems of social decline and precariousness seems to have become one of the competitive advantages of populist parties.

A third pattern could be found with people who experienced occupational advancement, e.g. through promotion within the company. As a consequence, some tend to identify very strongly with the company and its goals. In terms of work ethics, these people are highly performance orientated, leading them to place increasingly higher demands on their colleagues and subordinates. They tend to believe in the powers of the individual's abilities, internalise the rules of a neoliberal capitalist system and often even seem to share an ideology of Social Darwinism, i.e. the "survival of the fittest" on the (labour) market. Intense competition, which leads to long working hours, high workloads and an increase in the often repressed pains of work, seems to strengthen such views. It became obvious in the interpretation that the dominant ideologies of neoliberalism and competitive nationalism in combination with the experience of ubiquitous and enforced competition, both between companies and between people, may make people receptive to modern forms of right-wing extremism.

Although our research was primarily focused on extreme right-wing ideologies, it is important to stress that the negative consequences of socio-economic change, or the way they are perceived, do by no means necessarily result in higher levels of receptiveness to right-wing populism and extremism. Much rather, the study found a wide variety of interpretations of and political reactions to the changing world of work, which also included a strengthening of socialist, social-democratic or conservative worldviews and convictions. At the same time, people are attracted to the extreme right

for many different reasons, and we do not suggest that changes in working life is the main one.

Differences between countries result from different aspects of socio-economic change experienced at the time of the research, but also from the different agendas of the various right-wing populist or extremist parties. Regarding the competition on the labour market – but also in other fields such as housing – the consequences of the reunification and the immigration of ethnic Germans from central and eastern Europe played a major role in Germany, while in France it is the population, and, in particular, the youth, of north-African background and in Austria refugees from the Balkans that dominate the debates. In Hungary it is people's struggle with the consequences of transition combined with anti-Communist legacies and the condemnation of parliamentary democracy as a "puppet theatre", whereas in Switzerland economic difficulties coincide with the damage to the image of Switzerland and the vanishing of traditional Swiss particularities. While in Denmark and Belgium the deterioration of welfare provisions was strongly linked with the issue of immigration, the major issue in Italy seems to be the combination of high levels of insecurity and a deep distrust and disenchantment with politics. These differences in the ways in which right-wing extremists and populists take advantage of discontent are in fact variations on a common theme.

In addition to national variations, the forms of individual political conversions differed widely. There is, in our view, no such thing as one main path to right-wing populism and extremism. This reflects the programmatic and partly ideological openness and inconsistency of most right-wing populist and extremist parties and their forms of addressing widely varying population groups. As the presentation of the varieties of political conversions showed, people in different social positions who have experienced socio-economic change differently are attracted to the extreme right for completely different reasons. This may explain the large potential of sympathisers and voters these parties have, a potential that seems to be considerably larger than voting intentions and voting behaviour show.

1.3. Main findings of the quantitative SIREN survey

The survey results on socio-economic change in the eight European countries were rather mixed. On average, the amount of work performed by our respondents increased during the last five years, and their job security decreased somewhat. Feelings of deprivation seem to prevail among a (small) majority of our interviewees. These negative aspects are counterbalanced, however, by an increase in job autonomy and in the financial situation of the household. At the time of the survey, a large majority were not experiencing financial hardship, and only a minority felt insecure about their jobs. No clear trend was apparent regarding the social atmosphere at work.

Gender differences in socio-economic change were rather limited. Especially older workers reported negative changes (e.g. in job autonomy, job security, family income

and social atmosphere). The findings regarding occupational position and level of education suggest rather classic "social class" cleavages, with blue-collar workers occupying a less privileged position (e.g. lower income, less autonomy and more job insecurity), leading to higher levels of feelings of collective (relative) deprivation. Respondents from the public sector experienced the strongest increase in workload during the last five years, but reported the lowest level of job insecurity.

In terms of the description of *"receptiveness"* to right-wing populism and extremism, the literature had identified five relevant attitudes: prejudice against immigrants, nationalism, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and political powerlessness. The results of our survey show that these five attitudes are clearly present among our respondents, though in varying magnitude. Our results also showed that extreme right-wing parties do have a following: About 18.6% of the interviewees were in favour of the local extreme right-wing party (party *affinity*), whereas 47.4% of them were against. When comparing the current evaluation with the evaluation from five years ago, 18.2% said that they were more in favour nowadays than five years ago, whereas 18% indicated that they had become less in favour. The results of the development thus suggest that the adherence to an extreme right-wing party seems to be somewhat variable.

Gender, age and sector were not very important as determinants of receptiveness or affinity. The effects of educational level and occupational position were generally more pronounced. A higher level of education is associated with lower authoritarian attitudes, lower political powerlessness and less prejudice against immigrants and a less favourable evaluation of the local extreme right-wing party. Blue-collar workers (and to a lesser extent low ranking white-collar workers) are more authoritarian, more prejudiced and feel more politically powerless. A small effect on prejudice, authoritarianism and powerlessness is also noted for the entrepreneurs and the self-employed (traders, craftsmen, etc.).

A final analysis showed that all five receptiveness attitudes are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party. Prejudice against immigrants clearly stands out as the most important factor leading to a preference for an extreme right-wing party, and authoritarian attitudes played an additional moderate role. All other attitudes (such as chauvinism and political powerlessness) only played a small or minor role.

The link between changes in working life and the affinity to the extreme right: two psychological routes to extreme right-wing party affinity

Our research finally also identified two different psychological routes that may lead from a perceived change in job conditions to right-wing populism and extremism. In what we have called the "winners' route", people tend to believe that those who may be an obstacle to this process should be put aside. The same people are also likely to share the typical organisational goal of keeping competitive and defeating as many competitors as possible. In what we have defined as the "losers' route", people are deeply aware of their discomfort, due to negative change at work, but do not feel

competent or strong enough to cope with it. The outcome is an attraction towards the extreme right, very likely an attraction towards a strong leader, someone to whom individuals may delegate the solution of their own problems.

Thus, our results suggest that both positive and negative change at work may increase perceived uncertainty. Change and the necessity for all workers to adapt to the ever-changing requirements of working life are dominant principles in the current work environment. But to what extent can people cope with continuous change, which also implies strong uncertainty and lack of control on the world around them? Two opposite reactions seem likely to arise, and they both seem somewhat "pathological". The first is the one we found in the winners' group. It is a sort of *manic* reaction: Workers tend to feel that some categories of people, including themselves, are simply superior to others, more capable of dealing with the uncertainties but also with the challenges that characterise contemporary working life. The second reaction is the one we found in the losers' group. It is a sort of *depressive* reaction: People lose self-esteem, feel powerless faced with a work reality that appears completely out of control.

Prejudice against immigrants has been shown to play a highly significant role in both psychological routes from a perceived change at work to an affinity with right-wing populism and extremism, suggesting that uncertain workers may easily focus on a clear-cut and easy-to-identify out-group, e.g. immigrants, in order to reduce uncertainty. Foreigners may be taken as scapegoats, held responsible for what is wrong in the work environment, and the process of uncertainty ends up leading to misplaced aggressiveness.

Even if our research was mainly focused on highlighting conditions that may favour an attraction towards the extreme right, our data offer some insights into the conditions under which people may cope with positive or negative changes at work without developing extreme right-wing attitudes. For example, we have observed that a strong identification with the work group may be positively related to a perception of change at work without leading to extreme right-wing attitudes. An identification with a lower-order category, such as the work group, is the most likely to adequately fulfil people's basic need of belonging (Ashforth and Johnson 2001). In a context of change, such a need may become very urgent as people are looking for psychological protection as well as for models on how to think and behave under conditions they have never had to cope with before (Hogg 2000). It is hence conceivable that workers who may count on a strong identification with a lower-order group may be more psychologically equipped to face up to uncertainty that is related to change, and thus be less likely to develop ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes.

To conclude, the present research has demonstrated the presence of a meaningful link between psychological reactions to changes in job conditions and right-wing populism and extremism. Although the existence of such a link has been often hypothesised in the past, an empirical demonstration of this by a large-scale European survey had so far been lacking.

1.4. *Conclusions and policy implications*

The research findings have important implications for various policy areas and issues, mainly for work organisation, social protection, older workers, migration and political representation.

1.4.1. *Work organisation and working conditions*

The analysis of the interviews clearly showed that strainful working conditions and health and safety problems still very much part and parcel of modern workplaces. Often, blue collar workers reported that work has become more repetitious, and many interviewees pointed to increased workloads and pressures at work. In the private sector, but even more so in the public services, restructuring of companies and organisational change at workplace level have become continuous features of working life. One consequence of restructuring that was felt by many interviewees is the devaluation of qualifications and work-related values.

The quantitative results indicate an increase in the amount of work as well as an increase in job autonomy. Perceived job security has decreased in five out of eight countries. Work climate has also deteriorated on average: Only three countries have seen an improvement in social atmosphere; and, in all countries, older workers experienced a deterioration.

Regarding the relation between changes in work and political orientation no simple relation emerged from the survey data: No clear correlation could be found between negative changes and attraction to right-wing populism. Interestingly, both among the "winners" and "losers" of recent changes affinity to the extreme right could be found. The analysis shows two different psychological routes to extreme right-wing affinity: The "winners" turned out to be very competitive, to strongly identify with their company, to be attracted by individualistic views and hold the conviction that some social groups should dominate over others. The "losers" showed strong feelings of injustice and hold the conviction that people like themselves are not sufficiently rewarded for the work they do. This tended to foster a displaced aggressive reaction, leading to prejudice against immigrants and minorities and authoritarian attitudes.

The research findings on work organisation and working conditions lead to the following policy recommendations:

▪ What is needed are legitimate forms to express pains of work, public recognition of related problems and of course sincere efforts to improve working conditions.

▪ Effective regulations of working time and workloads need to be developed that are sensitive to the diversity of employment relations, vocational identities and living situations.

▪ Workplace development programmes need to be generalised, with the required adaptations to different societal conditions throughout the European Union and policies aimed at improving the work-life balance have to be implemented.

- Opening up, instead of narrowing, options for safeguarding material existence outside paid work, and giving workers a strong voice in restructuring and organisational change may be both a lever for improving working conditions and a measure against feelings of powerlessness.

- Regarding the "winners" from recent socio-economic changes who have become attracted to right-wing populism, further research is needed on how trade unions and companies can act against unitary organisational cultures fixated on competitiveness and denying a multiplicity of interests and organisational goals, because these nurture undemocratic and exclusionist stances. At the societal level this would mean preventing competitiveness from becoming a dominant value. This in turn might make it necessary to tame the ferocious economic competition between individuals, companies and countries.

1.4.2. Work and employment: Insecurity and inequality

Many of the perceived negative consequences of socio-economic change and, in particular, change in work can be subsumed under the headings of insecurity and inequality.

Relating to *job and employment insecurity*, corporate restructuring and continuous change at workplace level lead to a general feeling of insecurity which is aggravated by the fact that people have hardly any voice in the change processes. The spread of non-standard forms of employment strongly contributes to insecurity.

Income insecurity is on the increase due to the spread of precarious work, low wage jobs and non-standard employment as well as through continuous restructuring. The situation is exacerbated by reductions in, and limitations of access to social security benefits.

Skill-reproduction insecurity is particularly sharply felt by many blue- and white-collar workers. Some interviewees with low-level education complained that in working life more and more theoretical knowledge is needed and employers are looking for better-educated workers for almost every job. Others are concerned that the changes in work are devaluing their knowledge, skills and competencies or their cultural capital more widely.

The interpretation of the qualitative material also showed that growing *social inequality* is a key issue for many citizens and, in particular, for those in precarious living conditions and those threatened by social decline. Some expressed their anxiety regarding their social position through the observation that there is hardly any middle class in society any more and that the gap between rich and poor is widening. What is crucial in our context is that the inequality, in the view of many respondents, is no longer legitimate because it deviates too strongly from distributional patterns based on meritocracy.

Growing inequality in particular affects women. With regard to perceived insecurities and feelings of injustice most of the qualitative research showed that their perspectives

were decidedly different from men's: many of our female interviewees were deeply aware of the double disadvantage they suffer as (blue-collar) workers and as women.

The quantitative findings regarding insecurity and injustice in general indicate that the basic material dimensions of change (job security, income) seem less problematic than the psychological and symbolic ones (perceived insecurity, social atmosphere): While most people in work in the eight countries consider the chance of losing their jobs or having to close down their business rather small, a large minority (27%) have experienced a decrease of job security in recent years (compared to only 18% who have experienced an increase). On average an improvement in family income in seven out of eight countries (except Germany) was reported. Interviewees who have seen their family income decrease over the last five years show a stronger feeling of political powerlessness.

In view of our research findings, old-age pensions are of paramount importance in the area of social protection. Withholding the rewards for a long life of hard work and denying access to early retirement with an acceptable income for those who have sacrificed their health at work provokes particularly strong feelings of injustice.

The most important policy implication of these findings seem to be the following:

- The SIREN research once more points at the necessity to strengthen initiatives for equal pay for women and men at the level of legislation, collective agreements and companies' human resource management. The expansion of a low-wage sector as a means of fighting unemployment obviously entails high psychological, social and political costs.

- It seems to be crucial to restore security and calculability after a period of pension reforms and to reconsider the introduction of financial disincentives to early retirement as a means to raise the factual retirement age.

- The research findings once more underline the necessity to adapt social protection to the spread of flexible labour and to the increased female labour market participation.

1.4.3.   Older workers

The empirical results of the SIREN project point out that the far-reaching changes in working life experienced by many workers have a more severe impact on older workers. This relates in particular to the frequent experience of breaches of implicit contracts: workers have the impression that their performance orientation, actual performance and the fact that they have sacrificed their health go unrecognised or unrewarded. For older workers this obviously takes on more weight as they look back on a working lifetime or decades of hard work and loyalty to one (or several) companies. Aspects of such perceived breaches of implicit contracts include the exposure to increasing insecurities, the devaluation of qualifications and work-related values as well as layoffs and forced early retirement.

Age seems to be the most relevant variable with regard to perceived changes in job security: under 35-year-olds report no clear decrease in job security. Interestingly, it is not necessarily the over 55-year-olds who report the strongest decrease in job security, but the category of people aged between 45 and 54. This is alarming given the time period this age group still needs to stay in the employment system – and in view of the meagre chance to find a new job once becoming unemployed.

In the light of the SIREN results, age does not appear to be a significant factor influencing an affinity towards right-wing extremism in all countries except Hungary, where a significant effect of age on extreme right-wing party affinity can be found.

In terms of policy implications we can draw the following conclusions:

▪ The policy to introduce disincentives to early retirement may aggravate the situation because it increases the loss of income. A more sensitive approach seems to be needed to counter companies' strategies to externalise the cost of workforce reduction.

▪ It seems crucial to improve working conditions, to fight age discrimination and to provide employment for older workers and thus create the preconditions for raising the factual retirement age. For some groups of workers it seems premature to try to keep people in employment longer while working conditions are still deteriorating and health conditions are worsening.

These policy-oriented working conditions, employment, social security and older workers would be incomplete if they only related to labour market regulation without also addressing policies that deal with the formation and organisation of markets, e.g. for public services. "Liberalisation" policies, but of course also the single market and EMU, have triggered large parts of the current restructuring waves. The ensuing problems of the employment, in particular of older workers, therefore need to be addressed at this level and in these areas of policy making too.

1.4.4. Migration

Immigration is currently the most important political issue of the extreme right in nearly all countries under investigation. The qualitative research of the SIREN project showed that, in a process termed "double demarcation", some workers direct their frustrations and feelings of injustice against "those up there" (politicians, managers) or those "further down" (long-term unemployed, immigrants, asylum seekers). The emotions involved cannot be understood without reference to the pains of work, the physical and psychological strains that people have to accept while often living in rather precarious circumstances.

Resentment and prejudice against "foreigners" have different reasons: First, there are workers who, because of their position on the labour market, see "foreigners" as direct competitors for jobs. Second, intense feelings of injustice lead to aggression, which, under the influence of dominant ideologies and parts of the media, is directed at social groups that are perceived as benefiting from society without contributing to it, among

who asylum seekers are often referred to. These are seen as being taken care of while respondents themselves often feel neglected. Third, for some white-collar, middle-class workers immigrants in a symbolic way stand for societal change perceived negatively as threatening them with symbolic *déclassement* – "foreigners" in their neighbourhood or in their children's schools for them symbolise social decline.

In the quantitative results prejudice against immigrants, defined as a rejection of immigrants for economic and cultural reasons, turned out to be the strongest indicator of right-wing extremist affinity. Perceived positive change in job conditions seems to assuage prejudice against immigrants. People who saw their family income decrease in the last five years show higher levels of prejudice against immigrants, as compared to people who have experienced an improvement of their family's financial situation during the same period.

The SIREN research findings show that different social groups show similar levels of xenophobia and of attraction to right-wing populism. These are both blue-collar workers and the self-employed, in particular the category of "traders, farmers and craftspeople".

▪ The first conclusion to be drawn from the research is that there is a need for recognising problems caused by social inequality and socio-economic change. In doing so, trade unions and policy makers should stress similarities instead of differences between the various groups of workers and, in particular, between the national population and "foreigners".

▪ Granting migrants the same civic, social and economic rights as those enjoyed by Union citizens seems an important precondition for more solidarity with migrant workers. Enabling refugees and asylum seekers to work would help to avoid "scapegoating". The prescription of ethical codes for employers with regard to the employment of migrants and the enforcement of rules regarding terms and conditions of all workers could be effective measures.

▪ It seems important that trade unions are supported in their initiatives and mainly that other interest groups, such as chambers of commerce and farmers' associations, follow the example of the trade unions and start initiatives against racism and xenophobia.

▪ At a European level, politicians and journalists should be issued with guidelines and recommendations (like those from the German Press Council) on how to deal with the topic of migrants in a non-discriminatory way: measures such as self-obligations not to use discriminating stereotypes in words and deeds and not to mention the nationality of perpetrators when reporting crimes are substantial steps in the right direction.

1.4.5.   Politics and political representation

In general, the qualitative interviews identified a rather negative relationship of many interviewees with politics: experiences and disappointments include observations of, and conflicts with, undemocratic structures; the perception that politicians are unable or

unwilling to promote changes in favour of workers; or accusations against shop stewards and trade unions of having changed sides and playing the role of co-managers.

The SIREN research shows that the disqualification of the traditional "game" of politics, in the eyes of many interviewees, rests notably on the disappearance of the workers' world from the political scene and the national media. Workers' apparent lack of interest in politics can be put down to politicians' lack of interest in workers' problems.

Against this background, the public acknowledgement of people's problems and, in recent years, the political interest in the workers' world appear to be among the right-wing populists' strong points. Some working class interviewees showed themselves as pragmatic: they are convinced that the right-wing populist or extremist parties are on the side of the "bosses" and explain their voting for them as being the most powerful means they possess to annoy the political establishment.

Last but not least, anti-EU attitudes were very strong among many of those who showed strong affinity with right-wing populism and extremism. Partly, such orientations came up when people presented themselves and their country as the passive victims of overwhelming, anonymous powers, partly in the context of a loss of national identity, partly respondents accused the European Union of corruption and a lack of democracy. Some interviewees who were concerned about EU enlargement had especially virulent fears about the effects on their job opportunities.

While right-wing populists are rightly seen as a threat to representative democracy, the reasons for their success can partly be found in undemocratic conditions of contemporary European societies at local, regional and national levels, but also at the level of the European Union. With many interview partners the impression arises that they see themselves only as the powerless objects rather than the subjects of politics.

The survey findings indicate that feelings of political powerlessness are a relevant factor enforcing extreme-right party affinity in Austria, Belgium, France, and Switzerland, even though the effect of other receptiveness variables, e.g. prejudice against immigrants or authoritarian attitudes, is much stronger. The path analyses dealing with the links between the perception of changes within working life, social identity, and extreme right-wing party affinity, includes "political powerlessness" as one relevant factor on the "losers" pathway to right-wing extremist party affinity.

Making the various spheres of life, including companies, more democratic and actively searching for ways to enhance the control people have over their lives by empowering them to directly influence conditions that impact on their living situations seems to be crucial in this respect. Consequently, the impact assessment of European-level policies should include a consideration of their effect on the actual scope of policy-making at local, regional and national level.

2. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The magnitude and pace of social change, not least caused by globalisation, economic structural change and new technologies, has direct or indirect consequences for the lives of nearly all European citizens. In particular, the changes in working life that people are facing often contain threats and opportunities affecting not only economic standing and social status, but also personal and social identities of individuals. During the last decade, we have seen in the political sphere a strengthening of right-wing populism and extremism in several member states of the European Union. It is frequently assumed that people who have problems coping with the dynamics of social change show fundamentalist reactions and, therefore, are receptive to right-wing populism and extremism. In relation to racism and xenophobia this view is supported by survey evidence. However, it is quite obvious that some of the countries or regions with strong right-wing populist movements (e.g. Denmark, Flanders, Austria) are not among those with high levels of unemployment. Therefore the simple equation of economic disadvantages and political consequences is not valid. Research findings suggest that nationalism and racism can also be caused by "affluence chauvinism" or by fears of failure in very competitive social environments.

Empirical research on socio-economic changes and their consequences for working and living conditions has been carried out in different fields of research following different national scientific traditions. These have resulted in theoretical analyses and empirical data about socio-economic changes. Yet, at the level of individuals, to date little is known about the impact as well as the perceptions of current changes in working life (i.e. discontinuities, insecurities, fears of failure, hopes, etc.). Existing research in political science provides insights into political systems and their development or socio-psychological factors influencing political preferences.

The SIREN project provides important, novel insights in particular by bringing together two fields of research that have hardly been related up to now: research on changes in working life, labour market developments and social security on the one hand and, on the other, analyses of political orientations and right-wing populism and extremism. Starting from the perspective of employment and working conditions, the comparative, multi-level qualitative and quantitative research on a European level provides new knowledge and understanding of these changes on an individual level, about implications for social structures (families, relations between generations, women and men), and about the breeding ground for right-wing populism and extremism. In doing so, it focused on the interplay between, on the one hand, objective risks and opportunities as well as subjective aspirations and fears and, on the other, the appeal of right-wing populism and extremism.

The main objective was to assess whether, and to what extent, particular conditions and changes in the employment system and in working life make people receptive to xenophobia, nationalism and racism; thereby the project intended to contribute to an understanding of the political reverberations of recent transformations of the labour market and work organisation.

In detail the objectives of the project were the following:

1. To analyse how objective socio-economic changes are perceived subjectively and what frames of interpretation individuals apply; this also comprises the analysis of individual consequences of social changes including disappointments, "injuries" and uncertainties on the one hand and occupational aspirations and hopes on the other. Special attention was given to the interface between the employment and social security systems.

2. The assessment of the relation between objective socio-economic status and the perceived subjective insecurity as well as individual reactions to demands of occupational mobility and "lifelong learning".

3. To analyse how people attribute the causes of changes in working life and, in particular, the causes of detrimental consequences they suffer.

4. The interpretation of gender-specific differences in the consequences of social change, the subjective interpretation and in the individual reactions.

5. To assess to what extent, where and relating to which groups of citizens changes in working life can be said to make people receptive to right-wing populism and extremism and, in particular, to xenophobia, nationalism and racism.

6. To draw conclusions on policy recommendations that are appropriate to avoiding conditions that enhance the appeal of right-wing populism and extremism and, in particular, xenophobia, nationalism and racism.

Mutual understanding and equal opportunities are a keystone of the European Union, but right-wing extremism, which is strongly related to racism and nationalism, presents a serious threat to fundamental European values and to the process of European integration. Therefore knowledge about the receptiveness for right-wing populism and extremism is necessary in order to develop, implement and evaluate adequate measures against these phenomena.

The interdisciplinary and comparative nature of the research made it possible to create original knowledge for the debate on flexibility and security in the European social models by bringing together research findings as well as theoretical perspectives from eight European countries. The SIREN research approach makes it possible to discern the extent to which there are convergent Europe-wide tendencies and to what extent developments can only be explained with reference to the particular national background.

Grounded in a deeper understanding of the interconnections between socio-economic change and individual reactions, the project offers recommendations for the development of policies to counteract right-wing extremist political developments and their effects in areas such as employment, labour market, social security, migration, and political representation.

3. SCIENTIFIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Addressing the link between socio-economic change and right-wing populism and extremism: a critical review of the European literature

Francesca Poglia Mileti and Fabrice Plomb, Université de Neuchâtel

3.1.1. Introduction

Like most of the scientists studying the emergence and the success of right-wing populism and extremism, we are led to admit a plurality of causes to this phenomenon. The numerous and diverse interpretations are subordinated, in the first place, to the diversity of social and political realities itself, and, secondly, to the disciplinary, methodological or paradigmatic approaches used to grasp it. Among them, we also find ones focusing on socio-economic components as major explanation variables. Providing an extensive literature review on right-wing populism and extremism would go beyond the objectives of this chapter; we will instead be more specific and discuss the link between socio-economic change in Europe and the contemporary evolution of right-wing populism and extremism in the European national contexts. Thus, the purpose of this literature review will be mostly related to the way scholars address the question of a possible link between this political development and the socio-economic variables. The empirical results and interpretative suggestions presented in the further chapters of this report need to be read with a minimal knowledge of what has been written on this particular subject. Indeed, the central hypothesis addressed – the impact of changes in working life on the development of right-wing populism and extremism – cannot be seen in isolation from a larger research context, that is, firstly the evolution of right-wing populism and extremism in Europe in the last twenty years within an increasingly globalised economic and social environment and, secondly, the published literature in political science, sociology, socio-psychology, etc.

Not surprisingly one finds in the literature that socio-economic elements (of all kinds) are admitted to play a role in the emergence and the success of right-wing extremism or populism. The literature on the subject considers socio-economic variables in general as attributes of the voters or conditions of a larger context as having facilitated the success and/or the emergence of specific parties or movements. Numerous theories addressing the socio-economic conditions lack precision, do not define its components or do not even state precisely the status of these variables in the explanations of what some authors call the resurgence of populism. If, as we have already stated in a previous review, most of the authors assume the existence of a link between socio-economic variables and the development of right-wing populism and extremism (Poglia Mileti et al. 2002), they do not go much further than stating it without proposing convincing

arguments in terms of explanations and interpretations, as we will see later on. Indeed, the link made by a great number of authors associates statements related to the macro-sociological level (economic crises, individualisation processes, tightening of the market, etc.) and individual reactions expressed by a populist affinity or vote. Not much is said about the processes taking place in between. By the same token, we very rarely find empirical research trying to test this specific link (Poglia Mileti et al. 2002).

As an example of characterising social and economic elements, we can borrow the arguments of Mazzoleni, who distinguishes, from an analytical point of view, two types of factor. In his view, the first are to be considered "conditions of emergence" of right-wing populism and extremism and the second should be taken as "conditions of success". The socio-economic variables are part of the conditions of emergence – being related to what he considers to be the three major crises of these last decades (socio-economic, cultural and identity, politico-institutional). The second kind of factors are those constituting the conditions of success, such as changes in the political field (electoral and institutional context), the strategies of the political actors, their ideology or organisation (Mazzoleni 2003). In this view, parties appear as "political entrepreneurs" able to exploit, even capitalise on opportunities offered by the social and economic environment, such as preoccupations or states of frustration in the population. This perspective tends to interpret socio-economic variables as a general context.

Since we are interested in questioning the link between socio-economic change and political reverberations and developments, we will somehow reverse the perspective: we will consider with Mazzoleni the changes in the political field as necessary "conditions of success" of right-wing populism and extremism, but show that they are not sufficient to explain the actual phenomenon. Our aim is not to argue the relative importance of socio-economic variables in the explanations of the populist success of this last decade, but trying to understand how scholars deal with them in approaching this subject. Yet, in understanding the place scholars allocate to socio-economic variables, we cannot escape a larger perspective introducing other kinds of elements (related for example to the changing political field). Indeed, we will see how the different realities are interconnected and must be taken as such in order to understand the social, political and ideological emergence and success of right-wing populism and extremism. These will be discussed as far as they help to understand the link between socio-economic factors and the development of right-wing populism and extremism.

This chapter is structured as follows: we begin with a brief discussion of the numerous suggestions in the literature concerning definitions and terminology. We then continue by discussing the important factors related to political fields and actors that most scholars consider to be relevant for the development of right-wing populism and extremism. The core of this chapter will consist in discussing the ways scholars address the link between socio-economic factors and right-wing populism and extremism and in parallel proposing critical comments on the interpretations, the explanations and the conceptualisations.

3.1.2. Terminologies and definitions

In addition to the diversity of political realities and the variety of scientific approaches, we can count on a large range of definitions, classifications and terminologies used to describe the phenomenon we are interested in. Borrowing an expression from Cas Mudde, the attempt to define and classify the parties, the movements and the ideologies of the "extreme right family" (Mudde 1999) may easily lead to what he calls a "war of words" (Mudde 1996). Indeed, over the last ten years a great number of terms and numerous definitions have appeared.

The term *populism* and the adjective *populist* are increasingly used in the public and political spheres, which adds to the difficulty of finding a scientific agreement on the definition of right-wing populism. In the literature a variety of terms can be found that have no consensual definitions within the European scientific community, which vary from author to author and are not used in a systematic way. Hence we can find labels such as *right-wing extremism, radical right, national populism, libertarian populism, right-wing populism, radical right-wing populism, new populism, neo populism*, etc. This multitude of terms is symptomatic of the diversity of approaches and views in this research field and may also reveal the divergences of explanations.

Before entering the literature on the explanations of the phenomenon, we will discuss the concept of populism, and continue by presenting different ways of classifying it. As ironically suggested by Taggart, *populism* is a notoriously difficult concept. There is no need to say that populism is a polysemic term lacking a scientifically consensual definition (Canovan 1981; Ionescu and Gellner 1969). Until the 1980s, we can say that populism had a relatively precise usage: it was employed to designate historical situations or movements (such as the Russian elite at the end of the 19th century, farmer populism in the American Mid-West, Poudjadism in France, Peronism in South America, etc.). Now its use seems to flourish in very different fields and for designating a vast range of realities, at the same time blurring a possible consensual signification. If populism can be used to designate parties throughout the political continuum, we will here only take in account the ones that can be situated on the right and extreme right of it. However, despite the multi-purpose usage of the term, some common features can be found in almost all of the terms.

Almost all authors agree on what can be defined as the "populist style" or the "political spectacle" (Edelman 1988) that is present in the new kind of political play, but also the tendency to hierarchical organisation structures inside the parties and the presence of a charismatic leader (Haider, Bossi, Blocher, etc.) able to be the "voice of the people". Michael Kazin, author of *The Populist Persuasion* (1995), offers a more in-depth description of this concept. He describes populism as a steadfast yet inconsistent style of political rhetoric deeply rooted in the 19th century. He assesses populism as a movement that can swing to the left or the right, demonstrate tolerance or intolerance.

Assuming and stating that populist parties or movements are representatives of the "people", the term 'populist' is often used to characterise an ideological tendency, a movement or a party which explicitly refers to the people as an important entity. This

means a kind of political mobilisation based on discourses relaying the "popular aspirations" (Hermet et al. 1998) and appreciating the virtues associated with the common people. Summing up, we can say that one of the core elements of the populist structure of argumentation is a pronounced faith in the "common sense" of "ordinary people" and the belief that common people, despite possessing moral superiority and innate wisdom, have been denied the opportunity to make themselves heard.

For some authors, such as Annie Collovald, the focus on the term populist may be misleading and may bring a confusion between "populist" and "popular". According to Collovald there is a risk of putting the responsibility for developing racist and exclusive ideologies primarily on the lower societal strata. Her critique is of course addressed at politics and discourses in the media, but also concerns the scientific approach, which tends to focus on the "ordinary people" to explain right-wing populism and extremism, forgetting the role played by the media and the contents of political campaigns. This means, for example, that scholars tend to look closely at the votes of the lower social classes. Collovald shows how in France observers tend to forget to analyse statistics on the more educated voters, who – in a by no means so small proportion – also contributed to Le Pen's electoral successes in France. Moreover, in her view, this conflation of popular and populist tends to stress theories related to *déclassement* and the frustration of the lower layers of society and makes it possible to speak more easily about "authoritarianism in the popular classes". We will see in effect that these kinds of explanation are frequently sustained without there really being any study the socio-economic background of the voters.

One interesting aspect underlined by Silvia Kobi in describing populist ideology is the "over-promising" element in two domains – democratisation and safety (Kobi and Papadopoulos 1997). Again, over-promising in democratisation refers to the central role given to the people, and over-promising safety introduces the "law and order" orientation.

Opposition to the traditional political system, or at least to the anti-elitist position, is clearly one of the most important components of right-wing populism. Moreover, the populism to which "people's parties" refer invokes exclusionist identities based on a "politics of the 'heartland'" (Taggart 1995). The "heartland" is often the nation (or a region) and can explain the use of the term *national populism.* We also understand that the attempt to define *the* people in an exclusive way is correlated to the anti-immigration ideology, which is the second major constant in populist rhetoric. The SIREN analyses of the kind of exclusionism and nationalism of right-wing populist parties in Europe show that it is closely related to the kind of criteria on which each country constructs its vision of a national identity (Poglia Mileti et al. 2002).

Some authors have used the well-known concept of Kirchheimer's (1966) "catch-all" parties to characterise parties referring to the people and having no clear ideological profile. This designation can now be questioned, since most of the "catch-all parties" have in the meantime become "cartel parties" (Katz and Mair 1995), having consolidated electoral loyalties, being more moderate and having a wider electorate base than populist ones. Using the term "catch-all" parties may indicate that populist parties

are not founded on a programmatic or ideological basis. It is true that parties defined as being populist tend to adapt their agenda, but we can still trace some ideological features common to such parties.

Based on the literature, we can say that the populism under investigation here lies on the right of the left-right continuum and consists of the following common features:

- A more or less accentuated nationalist ideology;
- A more or less virulent anti-immigration rhetoric;
- A more or less liberal position and anti-state-intervention position on economy;
- More or less importance attached to individual and entrepreneurial ethos
- A more or less anti-system and anti-elite position;
- A more or less law-and-order attitude

If we have already given a few arguments scholars suggest for using the term populist, we will now discuss the reasons why some do not want to adopt *extremism*. Referring to the general political trends, the term "extremism" may touch a sensitive social and political sphere. Yet, as Altermatt and Kriesi suggest, the extremist thinking of the right is not characterised by a uniform concept of the world or a coherent political concept, supported only by specific movements. It can appear in any statement of one's opinion and on different topics. It can be expressed by people, in programmes, organisations or publications, hence covering a wide spectrum of political positions (Altermatt and Kriesi 1995: 4).

According to Cas Mudde, *right-wing radicalism* or *radical right* are terms that are in general more used than the term of *right-wing extremism*, except for some German scientists. For the German tradition, the use of extremism implies elements that refer to unconstitutional positions (e.g. the elimination of free democracy), whereas 'radical' only implies that there is an opposition to the principles of the constitution. Except for some Nazi or skinhead groups, the existing parties, groups or individuals are opposed in different ways to some principles of constitution or to the established elite but do not sustain unconstitutional positions.

Ignazi's categorisation (1992: 9ff), which is based on three criteria, offers a good starting point:

- the spatial dimension as a minimum criterion to identify parties located at the extreme right end on the right-left continuum;
- the ideology making it possible to separate parties with a clear fascist legacy from the others;
- the support for or rejection of the political system.

This classification leads to a clearer distinction of parties and movements with a fascist legacy. Building on this categorisation Paul Taggart (1995) offers an alternative set of explicit labels making it possible to differentiate between neo-fascist parties and new populist parties. And, as Cas Mudde might add, the term neo-fascist is nowadays used only for groups that explicitly want to restore the Third Reich (for the Italian case the

Italian Social Republic) or which hold to Nazism as an ideological reference point (Mudde 1996: 230). The *neo* label used by Taggart also indicates that even if neo-populist parties show similarities with others (well-known older populist movements (American, South American, Russian populist, Poujadism in France, etc.)), they have distinguishing idiosyncratic features, engendered by the post-war historical and political context and as some authors suggest by the collapse of major "meta-narratives" (Taggart 1995).

An alternative classification is proposed by Betz (1993), who distinguishes two categories based on the relative weight the party attributes to three important features of its program, which are anti-immigration, nationalism and economics:

- *neo-liberal* or *libertarian populism* tends to be more focused on the neo liberal economy;

- *authoritarian* or *national populism* puts forward a strong national exclusive and social-security programme.

The use of ideological criteria for classifying the different parties is common in the literature. Another example is given by Kitschelt (1995), who proposes a more detailed and nuanced vision of the parties and movements concerned along these criteria:

- *new radical* right is a combination between neo-liberal, xenophobic and socially conservative beliefs related to the advancement of left-libertarian movements and the more general questions related to multicultural societies;

- *anti-statist populism* supports a strong neo-liberal ideology but moderate xenophobia and does not present evident social conservative beliefs;

- *welfare chauvinist populism* is when xenophobia and conservatism are associated with a defence of the welfare state with national preference.

Within the SIREN project we operated with the terms *right-wing populism and right-wing extremism*: this decision was taken after looking at different definitions and terms used in the respective national contexts; the usage of both terms appeared necessary in order to fully cover the political and ideological phenomena in all eight countries under investigation (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland).

For the definition of *right-wing extremism* we took into consideration definitions by authors such as Betz, Heitmeyer, Holzer, Gärtner and Jaschke, who have put forward the following ideological elements of right-wing extremism:

- nationalism

- militarism

- authoritarianism

- *"Führertum"* (leadership)

Following Steinert (1999), we defined *right-wing populism* as identity politics in contrast to interest-group politics, invoking common interests "of a category that in any case no longer have a common interest, but to whom a common identity is attached as

the basis for policy and political representation" (Steinert 1999: 6). Enemy images are particularly useful for populist agitation as they attract attention, passions and a common upsurge in feelings as well as creating a closing of ranks (ibid.). While populist strategies are characterised by not being restricted by a clear set of ideas or by the need to ground political propositions in an ideological framework, the right-wing populist parties in Europe nevertheless have a distinct ideological platform. This includes, among other things, a restrictive notion of citizenship, demands for a culturally homogeneous community, and the view that society's benefits should be restricted to those who have made a substantial contribution to society (Betz 2002). What follows from this is that right-wing extremism and right-wing populism are not distinct phenomena, rather the difference is one of degree. Therefore, right-wing populism should not be seen as a new phenomenon contrasting or competing with right-wing extremism (Butterwegge 1996: 28). Consequently, in this report we use the term right-wing populism and extremism to designate the various extreme right parties, movements and ideologies to be found in the countries under investigation.

3.1.3. The political realities

In order to be able to discuss the different explanations scholars give for the differing political and social situations, it is useful to provide a brief description of the relevant right-wing populist and extremist parties.

Austria

The *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ – Freedom Party of Austria)* was founded as early as 1956 and has a long but not unbroken right-wing extremist record. Today the FPÖ considers itself to be part of the "New Right" and bases its ideology on an ethno-nationalist conception of "Volk" – understood as an organic and intrinsically unequal community. Austrian patriotism and the anti-pluralism of the FPÖ is coupled with a strong anti-immigrant attitude and sexist vision of society. Immigrants are seen as social scroungers and criminals. The FPÖ also adopts an anti-European posture fighting the cultural levelling supposedly stemming from it. The populist nature of the FPÖ appears clearly in the anti-elitism stressed in the party's discourse that contrasts the "industrious and hard-working Austrians" and the big interest groups or the opportunist political elite.

Belgium (Flanders)

The *Vlaams Blok* (*V-B, Flemish Block)* originates in the Flemish Movement. The party split away from the more moderate *Volksunie,* which joined federal government in 1977. The main reason for its electoral success during the nineties is not Flemish regionalism but the party's overtly racist propaganda against immigrants and its campaign for an "ethnically purified" national community (Fisher 2001). As a consequence, all internationalisms such as Marxism and "savage" liberalism are strongly opposed.

Denmark

The Fremskridtspartiet (Progressive Party) troubled the post-war political system as early as the 1970s with a middle-class revolt against the welfare state. Together with the second populist party, *Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's Party)*, they defend an anti-elitism and anti-immigration, law and order ideology stressing the importance of traditions and moral values and condemning deviance from the norm. While the *Fremskridtspartiet* can be regarded as a party of pure-and-simple neo-liberalism, the *Dansk Folkeparti* has a somewhat more social and welfare chauvinist profile. Both Danish parties took a clear position against European integration.

France

The electoral success of the *Front National (National Front)* in 1984 marked the onset of the tidal "third wave" of right-wing extremism in western Europe. The *National Front* is a law-and-order party that opts for military authority to fight the decadence of civilisation. In opposition to the other parties and political elites, which it regards as lazy and corrupt (especially the Left), the *National Front* shows an anti-parlamentarist position. It stresses the national preference of French people over immigrants or strangers and legitimates latent racist and anti-immigration discourses. Immigrants are seen as invading France and being responsible for unemployment, criminality and are a threat to public safety.

Germany

Die Republikaner (REP – The Republicans) are a product of the mid-1980s when the major conservative parties finally seemed to accept the heritage of social-democrat *Ostpolitik*. Its major arguments are based on a revanchist and revisionist politics and racist slogans.

Hungary

The Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (MIÉP – Hungarian Justice and Life Party) is a party by-product of the struggle between the moderate and radical factions of the then governing Christian conservative party (MDF – Magyar Demokrata Fórum). The radical wing of the party rejected the liberal economic policies of the government. The special feature of the ethnocentric nationalism of the *Hungarian Justice and Life Party* is that it targets the alleged conspiracy between the former communist elite, Hungarian left-wing liberals and the international capital of Jewish origin to exploit Hungarians and to destroy their national culture and identity. The *Hungarian Justice and Life Party* calls for a reconstruction of the democratic state, which would lead to the completion of the transition through the uprooting of the former communist elite and their influential liberal allies and the dominance of family-centred Christian-nationalistic values across the nation.

Italy

The resurgence of Italian right-wing extremism occurred after the breakdown of the First Republic in the early 1990s, when the MSI not only changed its name to *Alleanza Nazionale (AN – National Alliance)* but was also allowed to form governmental coalitions with other right-wing parties in the mid-1990s. The ideology of the *National Alliance* is based on a state nationalism stressing authority, hierarchy, meritocracy and inequality, privileging traditions and moral values, expressed by the motto "God, nation, family". *National Alliance* favours presidentialism and is opposed to the past and present political system, considering democracy as a means to an end rather than a basic value. Whereas the neo-fascist parties always adhered to an authoritarian central state, the *Lega Nord*, the other right-wing populist party, is regionalist, defends authoritarian values and presents xenophobic and anti-system attitudes.

Switzerland

The nationalist tendencies of the *Schweizerische Volkspartei (SVP – Swiss People's Party*) aims at protecting the independence, autonomy and neutrality of Switzerland, its identity and culture. Consequently, it is opposed to the participation or integration of the country to supranational organisations such as the NATO, the European Union, etc. The fear of losing one's identity to the outside echoes the fear of immigrants (especially refugees) and multiculturalism on the inside. Apart from the anti-immigration positions and its law and order ideology, it demands less state intervention and more individual responsibility. There are strong anti-elitist and anti-politician discourses without expressing anti-system positions.

3.1.4.   The conditions of success

This section is aimed at discussing briefly what Mazzoleni calls the "conditions of success" or what is sometimes called "offer theories" (as opposed to the demand theories related to the attraction/affinity of the voters), which are related to the political field, its structure, its changes, organisation and its actors. Our aim is here to give an idea of the "offer theories" and to show that they should not be opposed to the "demand theories" and can be related to socio-economic variables. We will not discuss specific case studies or present particular analysis that are the concern of political science, for example the idea that the convergence of dominant parties on a certain number of economic problems and neo-liberal discourses have allowed more a radical polarisation of positions. We know – as Koopmans and Kriesi observed for Switzerland – that different kinds of political parties emerge in relation to the constraints and opportunities defined by institutional structures, political cultures related to national identity (Koopmans and Kriesi 1997). They have contributed to the success of right-wing populism and extremism but do not constitute the centre of our investigation.

Spectacularisation, personalisation of politics and influential actors

As has already been said, right-wing populism is also related to other elements as a "structure of argumentation, a political style and strategy" (Betz and Immerfall 1998). Indeed, almost all authors recognise the importance of specific persons and leaders in the success of populist movements and parties. The authors who support this argument tend to insist on the importance of a leader whose charisma and personality become visible thanks to the media. The "political entrepreneurs" (who can be politicians, opinion leaders, extra-parliamentary groups) set the political agenda as well as the public conception and definition of "problems", such as, for example, the immigration issue and anti-Muslim sentiments (Gaasholt and Togeby 1995; Hussain et al. 1997; Hussain 2000; Karpantschof forthcoming). Related to these arguments, we often found the role played by influential actors, such as cultural and intellectual elites acting in extra-parliamentary groups (Karpantschof 1999, 2000 and forthcoming) or in more close-knit circles as has been noted in Hungary by Körössényi (1992). The "effet Le Pen" (Plenel and Rollat 1984) in France, Haider in Austria or Blocher in Switzerland seems then to be the result of the spectacularisation of politics, combining personalisation of political actors, planned political strategy and mediatisation of politic debates.

Strategies of the parties and the volatility of the electorate

Strategies of the parties are also considered as an element in the electoral success of right-wing populist and extremist movements and parties. Authors state that parties, traditionally more ideologically oriented, tend to modify their strategies in order to attract larger or specific strata of the population. This "strategic and programmatic shift" (Lipset, Childers, Falter, Betz) is of crucial importance in explaining the rise of right-wing populism in the context of social modernisation. For Ivaldi, the ideological shift towards social problems for example is part of the parties' strategies and can be seen as political opportunism (Ivaldi 2000). If these arguments implicitly refer to supposed socio-economic changes that have affected modern society, they are not seriously taken into account in these theories.

Changing party strategies also seems to have been successful, since the electorate has been affected by a structural change: we are speaking of a general breakdown of voter loyalties, and greater electoral volatility which observers have recently noted. So the concomitance of specific strategies adopted by right-wing populist and extremist parties and political volatility (Franklin 1992) has succeeded in mobilising "disenchanted voters". As Childers states, parties sought to gain from the "fundamental breakdown of voters' identification with the traditional parties of the bourgeois centre right" (Childers 1983: 127). We can relate this volatility in voting attitudes to more general individualisation processes leading to a diversification of biographies where a vote constitutes a choice at a moment and does not imply a strong identification. This may explain why people turn to right-wing populist and extremist parties but seems to be in contradiction with some arguments stating that the success of right-wing populism and extremism is related to the longing for a strong (for example national) identity. Indeed,

theories supporting the thesis of a radicalisation of the principle of cultural exclusion (Betz 2004) affirm that, in an increasingly pluri-cultural and ethnically mixed world, people need to have a sense of identity in order to be able to face changes.

Inadequate answers from the traditional parties and political powerlessness

A number of explanations for the success of right-wing populist and extremist parties are linked to the inadequate answers given by traditional parties to the needs of the population. This combines the feeling of disenchantment and resentment towards the political elites, the established parties or even the political system having been unable to manage the rapid change in the economic and cultural environment (see Betz 1994: 170). The arguments addressing the inadequacy of what the traditional parties' offer in response to voters' expectations are part of the theories of "political alienation", "political powerlessness", or the "protest vote" (Ptak and Schui 1998; Jaschke 2001 and Falkenberg 1997 for Austria; Mayer 1999 and Perrineau 1997 for France; Vecchi 1993 for Italy; Bozóki 1994 for Hungary; Kobi 1993 for Switzerland). If the first tend to stress feelings of powerlessness towards politics, the second interpret voting for a right-wing populist party as a protest. Authors interested in this approach assert that the traditional political parties no longer answer the expectations and the needs of the population or interest groups. They vote for right-wing populist or extremist parties not because they are strongly convinced by their ideological arguments or guided by interests but to protest against traditional parties, thereby also showing a lack of confidence in politics. Some authors argue that when there is nothing left to protest against, the votes for right-wing populist and extremist parties would sharply diminish, as e.g. Stouthuysen (1996) thinks is the case for the *Vlaams Blok*.

The success of right-wing populism and extremism then shows the helplessness of the political class in finding remedies for social problems related to unemployment, immigration, etc. Moreover, the growing distrust in the political establishment can be seen as a consequence of political affairs and scandals that have affected all of Europe in recent decades, as Perrineau shows for France (1997) or the Dutroux case in Belgium. In underlining the crisis of legitimacy of the existing political system, Ignazi (quoted by Karapin 1998) links it with the political and cultural changes that have induced a neo-conservative reaction, which comes down to less state and more market economy on the one hand and the re-activation of traditional values on the other – central issues within the ideologies of right-wing populism and extremism.

Here again, socio-economic changes are presented as one important element in the origin of specific expectations that traditional parties have been unable to answer. In the literature not much is said about individual psychological processes or the collective mechanisms implied in the different steps from structural change to individual votes. Nor can we find many empirical studies attempting to operationalise the concepts of resentment, powerlessness, etc. and trying to test these hypotheses.

Ideologies of the parties

What then are the answers right-wing populist and extremist parties offer to voters? What ideological shift guarantees their success? Since they are at the centre of the analysis of the phenomenon, we cannot ignore the importance of the ideological and programmatic propositions we have already presented. If we have to discuss the importance of ideologies in the comprehension of the phenomenon and its success, we actually have to be careful at this point not to confuse the reasons people may give for voting right-wing populist and extremist parties (or adhering to their ideologies) and the actual causes for this attraction. Saying that right-wing populist and extremist parties are successful thanks to their xenophobic background certainly gives indications on the profile of voters for right-wing populist or extremist parties. However, it provides no serious explanations as to why some people would be more attracted than others, for what reason and through which processes this may happen. To answer these questions we have to tackle other elements, the ones we have called conditions of emergence or existence of right-wing populism and extremism.

3.1.5. The complex link between socio-economic change and right-wing populism and extremism

It appears that authors or studies that explicitly reject a potential causal relation between socio-economic changes and right-wing populism and extremism are in a minority position. More numerous are studies or arguments that refer to such a link but state that a causal relation is not very plausible. The majority of the literature, however, remains rather general and vague in its explanations. Both in the Swiss and French literature, for example, we find that there are numerous publications that invoke the importance of socio-economic changes, but very few explain the nature of the connection. In the Austrian literature, at first sight the hypothesis of a causal link between socio-economic changes and right-wing populism and extremism seems to be supported by most authors literature. However, a closer look at the arguments reveals that this potential link is rarely argued for in any detail.

In the Hungarian literature, socio-economic changes are often seen as one cause among many others, such as the peculiarities of party formation, the nature of the transition to democracy and the widespread existence of xenophobic sentiments. In the Danish case, socio-economic change seems to be part of the explanation, and authors mention the influence of social actors such as the media, political parties, authorities, cultural elites and other opinion leaders that also seem to contribute significantly to the creation of widespread attitudes that are also offered by right-wing populism.

These few statements show the complexity of the link we are interested in. Right-wing populism and extremism not only comes in many different shapes, its emergence also has multiple reasons. Socio-economic changes are usually not seen as the only one, but as one of several factors, mainly in combination with what we have called the "conditions of success", which are the characteristics of the political system or the influence of the media. Besides, socio-economic variables are not precisely defined. It is

difficult to classify the different theories because they are founded on different explanation variables or causes, paradigms, levels of abstraction, disciplinary contexts, etc. We will nevertheless try to present different approaches and to distinguish the different ways socio-economic variables are integrated in the different theories.

Generally, the first inclination of social scientists in order to better understand a phenomenon is to proceed to a descriptive analysis to determine what kinds of individuals or groups are concerned by it. It almost seems that reviewing the European literature describing the social basis of right-wing voters adds to the confusion instead of helping to comprehend the phenomenon. However, the general picture of these voters still seems to be represented by the figure of the male blue-collar workers (or unemployed) with a low level of education (Lubbers 2001: 230). With reference to the Eurobarometer data it can be said that supporters of right-wing populist parties are somewhat less educated than the population as a whole, more frequently come from a declining middle class or the unskilled working class, are more often unemployed and more frequently anticipate a worsening of their situation (Kriesi 1999: 408). However, we will see that these results cannot be generalised and taken as a basis for further theorisation, since others studies contradict or at least call for the introduction of more differentiated nuances.

The difficulty of presenting a clear picture of the supporters of right-wing populist and extremist parties consists of two major elements. First, national realities are different and so the reason for being attracted by political programmes may be different in each country. Second, the approaches and methods (except for the European and standardised survey) do not measure and study the same aspects of the phenomenon.

3.1.6. General explanations linking socio-economic context and the emergence of right-wing populism and extremism

For Scheuch and Klingemann (1967) the potential for developing right-wing extremisms exist in all industrial societies and should be seen as a "normal pathological condition" of modern democracies. These assumptions are typical of a position integrating socio-economic elements as a vague and general context giving birth to populism. Indeed, the affirmation of extremism being a "functional disfunctioning" of modern societies provides no clue for understanding the complex processes related to this phenomenon. Even if they are more precise, the majority of authors consider socio-economic elements as a general context and relate it to the concept of globalisation, modernisation, etc. Ptak and Schui (1998) for example stress that through a turn to neoliberalism even right-wing populist parties have called into question the basic consensus of economic and social policy. Others, such as Enyedi and Körössényi (2001: 94) in Hungary, mention globalisation, the rise of inequality and unemployment as causes for the radicalisation of right-wing movements. In France, some authors see the reason for supporting *Front National* in the economic and social crisis and its disintegrating consequences, such as unemployment, delinquency, precariousness and social insecurity (Bourdieu 1992).

Multi-causal interpretations

Another option is to integrate socio-economic variables (often without defining them) to a set of causes that have produced what is called the new populism. More often, we find a combination of cultural, historical and political factors (Rémond 1982; Taguieff 1986). In France, for example, historians have highlighted that ideological affiliations of *Front National* voters follow the periodic resurgence of a protest vote. Within this perspective, "national populism" would constitute the popular version of an identity reaction specific to the 1980s, provoked by cultural and economic globalisation, European integration and the collapse of communism.

As an example of multicausal explanations we can cite Neugebauer (1998), who gives the following list of reasons for the rise of the FPÖ in Austria: public disenchantment with politics and traditional political parties (caused by political scandals, party patronage and privilege); the role of parts of the media and politicians (in stirring up resentment against foreigners, in particular after the dismantling of the "iron curtain"; debates focusing on "welfare scroungers" and criminality, fuelled by the same players); rapid changes in the traditional economic and social structures leading to insecurity, fear, frustrations and aggression within the affected groups (e.g. the decline of the nationalised industries, technological change, the rise in unemployment and international competition). Indeed, arguments related to socio-economic questions are most often combined with political explanations. In Hungary, for example, Bozóki focuses on the transitional crisis, the opening up and restructuring of the economy, the neoliberal economic policies, growing insecurity and frustration, the difficulties of younger people in adapting to the new economy (Bozöki 1994).

The crisis of the "welfare state"

Another way to consider economic variables in the explanations is to consider them via the way states redistribute socio-economic resources by way of welfare policies. These theories emerged in the nineties and focus on the "crisis of the welfare state" (Betz 1994; Kitschelt 1995) and put forward general statements that show right-wing populist and extremist parties developing in countries where the welfare state is (or was) strong. The core of the argument consists in saying that where there is no welfare state, there has been no debate on the welfare state and no potential demand for neoliberalism and preference for nationals in the repartition of the resources from the state. For example, countries where a fully fledged welfare state does not exist, such as Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Ireland, right-wing populist or extremist parties have not been successful.

The crisis of modernity

Another major thesis putting the socio-economic variables at the centre of its analysis is the one related to what is called the "crisis of modernity". This term does not imply an economic crisis; for instance the most successful years of the *Danish People's Party* (1997-2001) including not least the historic right-wing electoral victory of 2001 coincided with a period of economic prosperity not seen in decades. Right-wing

populism and extremism is the consequence of a profound transformation of the socio-economic and socio-cultural structures of western democracies, or on a more structural and general level, the transition from industrial society to post-industrial society. The difficulty with this thesis is that a wide range of changes seem to intervene and authors do not agree on the relative weight to give to one or the other. Therefore we will not detail the specific arguments of authors but will summarise the ones authors most often suggest as being potential factors for the emergence of right-wing populism. These are:

- obsolescence of skills;
- spread of precarious situations;
- development of new technologies;
- flexible speculations;
- individualised careers;
- erosion of established subcultures, milieus and institutions;
- loss of traditional collective identities;
- emergence of contextualised identities;
- individualisation of risks;
- social fragmentation;
- questions of immigration

We can see that some arguments can be seen as part of the process of the so-called individualisation of society. Others are of a different nature. These changes are often cited as general context, but their influence on political opinions are rarely tested as such. In general, explanations referring to the "crisis of the modernity" consider socio-economic changes as a general context in which individuals have to move and find their place (Altermatt and Kriesi, Betz). This thesis was prominent in the 1980s-90s, defended (among others) by Betz, and conceived the evolution of right-wing extremism (the term of 'extremism' was more usual then) as the result of a transition from industrial capitalist society – and the welfare state – to a society organised by post-industrial capitalism. These analyses were oriented both on individual and structural levels, arguing the incapacity of the state to manage the process of globalisation. This means, in a way, that the post-industrial logic of individualisation (the confidence in the market) has been accepted as a fact and been profitable for right-wing populist and extremist parties which proposed neoliberal economic programmes diminishing state intervention and the welfare state, and pushing by the same token, deregulation, privatisation and self-enterprise in order to improve national competitiveness.

Insecurity, resentment and political opportunism

Well-known theories relate insecurity (understood as a consequence of the crisis of modernity), feelings of fear and resentment and being attracted by exclusive, political offers. The theories of resentment tend to address the question in focusing on a psychological malaise, on one hand, and on a political response, on the other. Right-wing populist and extremist parties would answer this resentment by the well-known

scapegoating mechanism and proposing simple solutions. These parties are presented as very conscious of these frustrations and ready to exploit them. Beck argues that traditional parties have not reacted to modernisation and, taking Austria as an example, sees the success of the FPÖ as "an expression of crisis phenomena associated with the modernisation of 'post-industrialist' societies; [and as] a consequence of the reduced room for manoeuvre in redistribution which has been noted in connection with modernisation: established parties and institutions are being 'punished'" (quoted in Falkenberg 1997: 187). Indeed, since the second half of the 1990s authors have observed a political opportunism (Ivaldi 2000), with extreme right-wing parties increasingly orienting their programmes on social questions and promising social protection to nationals rather than presenting liberal economic programmes.

Increasing insecurity is not only at the core of the individualisation thesis but also at the centre of studies on current developments in working life. Dörre (1997), for example, argues that the strengthening of the market principles in capitalist societies has reduced these societies' capacity for the social integration of wage labour. Even groups such as the core workforce and the ranks of skilled workers are today affected by social insecurity, which is felt particularly strongly given expectations of continuously improving living standards and reduced labour-market risks. This feeling of insecurity may lead to defensive attitudes, such as a "reactive nationalism", and to attempts to stabilise the "self" by way of accession to imaginary communities.

In his study on youth oriented towards right-wing extremism, Zilian (1998) argues that both the political climate and the situation on the labour market have changed: not only have resentments against "welfare scroungers" and foreigners increased, but immigrants actually do exert a certain pressure on labour supply that should not be ignored. Under the influence of the general political climate, right-wing extremist youth gangs interpret globalisation as favouring "cosmopolitans" and discriminating against "locals" and the members of the lower classes. Thus locals seek shelter within their community *(Gemeinschaft)* and put up resistance against its devaluation. For Zilian (2002) socio-economic and political reasons for the rise of right-wing populism are therefore closely linked: recent changes in working life have deepened the divisions within society (also stated by Enyedi and Körössényi (2001) in Hungary). The pressure on the labour market has been transformed into feelings of resentment against foreigners and "welfare scroungers", as Zilian observed for a specific section of young people attracted by right-wing populism and extremism. These feelings of resentment and the exclusionist reactions are not regarded as spontaneous emotional states. Authors who adhere to this hypothesis also take into account that these views are influenced by politics stressing the legitimacy of anti-egalitarian positions and by the media. In fact, people's resentment must find a correspondence in the parties' own explicit propositions (see the offer theories).

These theories clearly point to socio-economic changes (insecurity, precarisation, etc.) as the causes of the fear. The logic of explanation is similar to the one adopted in the "political powerlessness" theories: people are (economically, politically) frustrated and they turn to right-wing populist parties. Yet, the assumption that those who suffer the

negative effects of socio-economic change are the most likely to be attracted by right-wing populism and extremism are not often verified on the basis of empirical data about the effects of particular changes, on the effective perceptions of these changes and the psychological but also collective mechanisms leading to supporting right-wing populism and extremism.

The "losers" of modernisation

Another important explanation relating socio-economic changes and right-wing populism and extremism is mediated by the concept of the "modernisation losers", which claims that changes are increasingly challenging for the individuals who have to adapt to them. Individuals with more appropriate resources can be expected to be among the winners of post-industrial modernity; the others will belong to the "losers" group, unable to cope with changes. At a more psychological level we are talking about the anxiety and confusion, the feeling of insecurity caused by a lack of appropriate cultural, social and material resources, by a lack of self-confidence to face globalisation and the complexity of modern society (Gaasholt and Togeby 1995; Andersen 2000; Taguieff 1986).

The concept of the "loser" provides a nice metaphor to express difficulties of adapting and the suffering of the people, but it also seems to lead to more confusion. Indeed, we are confronted with the problem that there is no sociological definition or at least description that would be empirically informed of what a "loser" is. Most of the time, "losers" are considered to be the people from the lower strata of society, since they are supposed to possess fewer resources to face socio-economic change. This is also why some authors, such as Egger de Campo for instance, clearly reject the "modernisation losers" thesis, arguing that there are no data in Austria on how young blue-collar workers who have moved from the social-democratic SPÖ to the FPÖ were actually affected by these changes and on how they perceive them (Egger de Campo 2000: 99, 189ff).

In Germany, a few research projects, in particular on younger people have pointed out that it is not necessarily those suffering disadvantages through socio-economic change who are more likely to support right-wing extremist ideologies (see Heitmeyer 1992; Held et al. 1992; Leiprecht et al. 1991). These arguments can also be put forward with regard to Switzerland, where the heterogeneity of the right-wing populist voters and of the so-called "losers" of modernisation has been demonstrated through socio-demographic studies, (Kriesi 1999; Kriesi et al. 1998); they could be found in the labour sector of production (blue-collar, unskilled workers, unemployed) but also in the small-business sector (e.g. shop owners and farmers).

The fear of déclassement

The theory of *déclassement* also tends to show that it is not only the working class that may be interested in right-wing populist and extremist parties. For Seymour Lipset (1960), one of the most influential authors of this approach, fascism and post-modern

radicalism are responses of a middle class that sees its social position and status, if not very existence, threatened by the process of modernisation. From this point of view, right-wing populist and extremist movements and parties have been successful because they have managed to exploit the middle class's immediate fears triggered by the economic crisis. In this analysis the focus is put on the subjective perceptions of a downward social mobility of what Lipset named the "petty-bourgeois", related to the threat of a proletarian socialist revolution, as Betz (1994: 24) puts it.

The ideology of success

Interestingly, studies in Germany showed that it is not necessarily the socially and economically disadvantaged or those suffering through socio-economic change who may be more likely to support right-wing extremist ideologies (see Heitmeyer 1992; Leiprecht et al. 1991) The results of the empirical research project conducted by Held et al. (1992) point in the same direction and contradict the dominant assumption that young people in extremely uncertain positions are more susceptible to political right-wing orientations than young people in stable circumstances. It is important to note that, in most cases, racist or nationalist ideologies do not stand on their own but are combined with other ideologies: ideologies of success, adaptation, advancement and sexism. Moreover, the study by Leiprecht et al. showed that it was those considered by today's standards as being upwardly mobile or at low risk with regard to employment instability who demonstrated an affinity to right-wing extremist dogma and ideology.

In Hungary, another line of literature argued that the support for the MIÉP by successful young entrepreneurs and professionals was based on the hope to stabilise their position in a closed ethnocentric market economy (Tamás 2001). Political scientist László Kéri, in an interview of 2001, related the rising popularity of MIÉP among Hungarian university students to their uncertainty whether they will find an appropriate job after finishing their studies.[1] While socio-economic variables play an important role in this context, they do not refer to any lack of resources needed to face changes. In terms of explanation, it would be closer to the "fear of *déclassement*" than the "losers theory".

It can be understood that the projected fears of social and economic displacement are not only relevant for the less advantaged within and by processes of modernity but also to those with most to lose.

The culturally and socially deprived

As we have already stated, numerous approaches tend to focus on individuals and their reactions to changes (economic, cultural, identity) but very few explanations try to utilise the concept of milieu or social space to understand the phenomenon. This would present an alternative sociological approach because it has been seen that socio-economic status does not seem to be a clear predictor for voting for right-wing populist and extremist parties or sustaining their ideas, as Kriesi underlines in the Swiss case in

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[1]   Interview in *Népszabadság*, 2001-10-12.

1998 in analysing the profiles of voters (Kriesi et al. 1998). Also, according to Vester, a proclivity for authoritarianism can be found at all levels of society (Vester 2001: 299). He concludes that people of all social strata approach and deal with the phenomenon of modernisation and globalisation in various ways. These strategies primarily depend on mentality. Vester utilises the theory and methodology of "social space" along with empirical data to further substantiate his hypothesis. Nonetheless, with further investigation and the usage of his categorisation of four major social groups (cf. Vester 2001: 310f) as a basis for comparison, he ultimately concludes that the socially deprived (nearly 27%) are highly receptive to right-wing populism and extremism (Vester 2001: 329).

These results are close to the study that Hermann and Leuthold (1999, 2001) conducted in Switzerland, which took the concept of "milieu" as a mediator between social position and political expressions linking economic and cultural capital. Hermann and Leuthold's results show that education and income tend to determine the conservative (traditional) versus libertarian (modernist) dimensions. The lower the education and income, the more the tendency is to vote in a traditional way. Feelings of powerlessness with regard to one's own destiny and the world in general tend to reinforce the fear of change, and lead to personal withdrawal and, as a consequence, to a fear of the "other" and of the exterior (conservatism). The concept of "power" in the sense used by Anthony Giddens (as a possibility to act differently) may explain the relation between the possession of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu) and an orientation towards more liberal and modernist attitudes. The self-consciousness that one can have an impact on one's destiny increases the confidence in institutions and in a social change that can be influenced in a positive direction.

Other studies show that people with conservative views tend to be less open to new groups (De Witte and Billiet 1990). The theory of symbolic interests argues that right-wing populist and extremist parties attract less or not yet societally integrated people. Another explanation advanced by Billiet and De Witte observing the situation in Flanders is that for less societally integrated people, there are fewer barriers to negative attitudes and radical votes (De Witte and Billiet 1995).

The threatened economic interests theory

One assumption of the threatened interests theories is that people who feel their material resources are threatened tend to develop a preference for the in-group (most often this means the national group), whose access to resources should be extended and strengthened (Lipset 1960; Falter 1991). While these theories insist on the material and economic side of the question, other explanations keep the idea of a competition for the access to resources but are in favour of state responsibility and intervention in the provision of collective goods and the redistribution of resources. Indeed, the profound structural and economic transformations have increased social inequalities and affected the working classes who are living through a profound crisis, which for some authors, such as Immerfall (1998: 251), is "largely psychological". In a period characterised by social conflict, loss of traditional (identity) markers, and economic insecurity (real or

perceived), group relationships tend to be constructed on the lines of access to social and economic goods. Anyone who does not belong to the national majority group (immigrants or ethnic minorities) is perceived as a supplementary threat. In this sense, foreigners become the "others" because they endanger the imagined homogeneous community of nationals, but also because they incarnate all the insecurities of the future (Wimmer 2000). Xenophobia is seen as a response to perceived competition with immigrants over work and social benefits and is an appeal to a national unity in order to preserve the privileges for the nationals. Welfare chauvinism is another concept tackling this phenomenon. Some authors – taking the perspective of the rational choice paradigm – reject this thesis (Nannestad 1999).

These theses need to be qualified in two respects. First, evidence supporting the economic threat theory does not necessarily explain the influence of socio-economic change on political reactions. Although the theory assumes that negative attitudes towards immigrants are the consequence of feelings of economic threat, this has never been tested as such. Rather, research only finds that blue-collar workers and the low-skilled are more receptive to these attitudes or shows that right-wing populist and extremist attitudes are closely linked to unemployment, i.e. economic issues. Second, findings suggest that cultural differences may also lead to the development of negative attitudes towards immigrants, translating into a vote for the extreme right. This implies that the theory of "threatened economic interests" should be widened to incorporate diverse attitudes towards immigrants in a more differentiated way, based on economic, cultural or other factors.

3.1.7. The focus on cultural and identity factors: an alternative explanation?

Attitudes towards migrants

It is common to underline the importance of immigration in the development of right-wing populism and extremism. Many authors demonstrate this by showing that the voters for right-wing populist parties are more xenophobic than average (Andersen 1999b: 203-210; Gaasholt and Togeby 1995: 140). In doing this, they try to describe the profile of the different categories and go back to voters' cultural but also socio-economic characteristics. Indeed, it has often been observed that low ethnic tolerance correlates with age and low education (Mikkelsen 2001: 144) and that it is the less educated, blue-collar workers and elderly people in particular who are relatively likely to vote for right-wing populist parties (Andersen 2000: 8f). Yet, it is difficult to tell precisely how these particular voters have been affected and threatened by socio-economic change and how this made them support right-wing populism and extremism. Gaasholt and Togeby (1995) identify the level of education as the true determinant of ethnic tolerance, related to psychological (cognitive) resources that depend on education. These statistical correlations again tend to provide a better idea of specific social categories concerned by these questions, but are not satisfying in their interpretations of the development of right-wing populism and extremism.

There are many explanations for the low tolerance towards immigrants, e.g. objective clashes or subjective dissatisfaction that influences ethnic tolerance, or even social marginalisation and cognitive resources can be connected to these anti-immigration attitudes. The link between anti-immigration attitudes or xenophobia and voting for right-wing populist and extremist parties is controversial. Some explanations focus on immigration as a factor triggering extremism, in particular in France, referring to voters who are forced to live in close proximity with communities that have different sets of values and ways of life. For some authors, such as Sayad, this thesis seems to be confirmed by correlations between the regional distribution of *Front National* votes and areas with a high density migrant population (Sayad 1999).

Kitschelt shows that there is little correlation between voting for right-wing populist or extremist parties, xenophobia, and migration (Kitschelt 1995: 60ff). Especially when xenophobia is high, the anti-immigration issue is not a reliable basis: right-wing populist and extremist parties have been more successful in countries with less foreign-born population (Karapin 1998: 224).

Yet questions related to immigration are cited among others as causes for the advancement of right-wing populism and extremism. Most of the time the theories related to immigration are close to those of fear or frustration. The (real or perceived) threats with regard to immigration are – according to the literature – as follows:

- threat to personal safety
- threat to the culture
- threat to the welfare state
- threat to the job security

In general, we could claim that migrants are the embodiment of a rapidly changing world and nation-state impotence. A kind of "moral panic" propagates the fear of seeing society descending into chaos because of an uncontrollable flow of immigrants (Pnina Werbner quoted by Wimmer 2000). Betz (2004), for instance, points at reactions related to the defence of one's identity and culture; the central idea is that ethno-pluralism tends to reinforce (through counter-reactions) xenophobia, reactive identities, national identities.

Identity reactions and the radicalisation of cultural exclusion

Some other researchers have pointed out an identity reaction to globalisation (Taguieff 1986). If socio-economic changes have affected the relationship between individuals and society, some authors – like Betz – tend to underline the importance of the socio-cultural sphere (Betz 2004). The radicalisation of the principle of cultural exclusion is presented as a strong motor for populist attitudes, votes and ideas. In a world that is becoming increasingly multicultural, right-wing populism and extremism rejects the pluralist model, putting forward an ethno-cultural, racist and nationalist doctrine. At the individual level, the psychological model seems the same; parties, if we follow Betz (2004), offer interesting propositions in terms of "fixed" identities to individuals, who

live in the context of the erosion of collective identities and are faced with a flux of contextualised identities.

"Identities theories" see right-wing populist and extremist propositions, such as nationalism and exclusive discourses, as a substitute identity for the loss of traditional and collective identities engendered by modernisation. The loss of traditional links, the erosion of collective identities and all the processes related to what is called fragmentation or individualisation are combined with an increasing insecurity, fear and isolation and impact on identities. They can be of the type of a need to identify with a strong community, a search for "imaginary communities" (Andersen), a protection of "natural" communities or be considered as such defensive attitudes as reactive nationalism (see among others Dörre 1997; Altermatt and Kriesi 1995).

Ignazi (2000) insists on the fragmentation of today's society as an element to understand post-industrial radicalism, which may lead to the subjective need to defend "natural" communities, qualifying these general reactions as a "silent counter-revolution" (Ignazi 1992). Secularisation and the emphasis on personal fulfilment is balanced by the search for clear hierarchies and well-defined and clear social, national and racial identities.

The focus is put here on the kind of substitute people are looking for when they are faced with changes. We have seen that the individualisation and the loss of social ties take place in the cultural, the social or the economic sphere. So if the reaction of looking for stronger identities is situated at a cultural level, the causes may also be connected to socio-economic variables. For instance, the erosion of the structure of work (Perrineau 1997) and the dissolution of traditional working-class culture (Svensson and Togeby 1991) may contribute to a form of identity crisis, which in turn might contribute to increasing patriotism and a growing identification with the national community, which has apparently taken place since 1981 (Gundelach 2001).

3.1.8.   Conclusions

The aim of this chapter was to discuss the link between socio-economic variables and right-wing populism and extremism, a complex undertaking because of

- the diversity of the political realities depending on the national context or specific parties involved;
- the diversity of the scientific approaches aiming at studying the phenomenon in terms of paradigms, explanations, interpretations;
- the diversity of the methodological tools used in empirical research;
- the level of reality covered by the explanations (structural, collective, individual);
- the multiplicity and polysemy of the terms used to define the phenomenon;
- the different ways criteria are adopted for classification from a theoretical standpoint but also a concrete one (which party in which category).

Having clarified this, the difficulty of connecting socio-economic variables and political developments is related to the lack of precision in defining socio-economic variables, their status in the theorisation and their role in the processes leading to the emergence and the success of right-wing populism and extremism. We can nevertheless underline a few points from our analyses of the European literature review.

A large part of the research concentrates on the socio-economic characteristics of voters. The general picture is that unemployed, blue-collar workers and people with low levels of education are more likely to vote for right-wing populist or extremist parties (Lubbers 2001). Yet socio-economic characteristics can only partly be understood as indicators for effects of socio-economic change. There may be blue-collar workers, for example, benefiting from such changes and highly educated people suffering adverse consequences.

The important role played by a changing socio-economic context in the rise of right-wing populist and extremist movements and parties is sustained in most of the literature. As we have seen, only a small minority of authors or studies explicitly reject this factor. It is interesting to note that authors not only point to growing insecurity but also to inequality and deepened divisions within European societies. The theories related to the crisis of modernity underline the multiple changes that have affected modern societies and present them as causes for the development of right-wing populism and extremism. With the "modernisation losers" concept, some authors try to show that individuals not sufficiently armed to face changes are at risk of being attracted by right-wing populism and extremism.

There is the danger of designating – a priori – who the "losers" (the economically disadvantaged people) are and then jumping to conclusions. Indeed, the review of the literature provided some indication that it is not, as is often assumed, only the so-called losers of modernisation who are likely to be attracted towards right-wing populism and extremism. While social and economic disadvantages and marginalisation can in general be seen as a breeding ground, the rise of right-wing populism and extremism does not seem to be a matter of economic or material disadvantages alone.

The literature reviewed points to a wide variety of elements of socio-economic change that might be worth taking into consideration. Some authors focus on long-term changes of basic principles of societal integration and argue that individualisation may lead to anomy and social pathologies. More often and more pertinent to our research, specific economic changes and their consequences for the employment system are addressed. This refers in particular to economic globalisation including the transition of state-socialist economies to capitalism, the tendency that workers are once again exposed to market risks to a larger extent – which leads to increasing insecurity and precariousness – or the growing complexity of society due to supranational integration and the spread of new information technology. However, it is clear that socio-economic changes are one among several reasons for the strengthening of right-wing populism and extremism. We have seen that the incapacity of the established parties to answer the new questions related to these changes may also have pushed some towards right-wing populism and extremism. When looking at theories considering cultural dimensions and related

identity processes as central, we found that nationalistic, exclusive positions are also reactions to the loss of social ties, and a "multi-culturalisation" of modern societies. We showed that arguments are not fundamentally different to the ones presented in theories invoking socio-economic variables.

To conclude, we would like to insist on the complexity of the question of the potential link between socio economic change and right-wing populism and extremism. In fact, there are no direct cause/effect processes through which certain socio-economic changes that trigger insecurity and fear automatically result in particular political reactions. Depending on the social milieu, their position within social space and their mental dispositions, individuals process similar experiences and interpret similar events in entirely different ways. Nevertheless, we found a recurrence in the argumentations, which does not depend on the national context, on the parties or on the social categories and which can be applied for all the different intervening causes. Indeed, the driving force of the support of right-wing populism and extremism always seems to be an individual reaction to a specific context; almost all approaches try to explain right-wing populism and extremism by describing general developments (social, economic and political), but in concentrating the explanations, interpretations and argumentations at the individual and psycho-social levels. We encountered numerous "concepts" at the centre of the argumentation that are not scientific (from the perspective of sociology, psycho-sociology, or political science), with no precise definitions and not operationalised for empirical research. These notions include, for example, "resentment", "frustration", "losers", "powerlessness", etc. This lack of an alternative understanding of the phenomenon leaves a great deal of room for future research in the domain. We think that the following chapters will begin to fill it.

3.2. Potentials of political subjectivity and the various approaches to the extreme right

Jörg Flecker, Gudrun Hentges, Gabrielle Balazs

3.2.1. Introduction

In the scientific debate on the success of right-wing populism and extremism in Europe there is widespread agreement on the importance of socio-economic change and processes of deprivation. At the same time, however, the limitations of explanations based on socio-structural characteristics of voters become obvious. Neither can the rise of the extreme right simply be attributed to a particular social category particularly affected by socio-economic change, such as the blue collar workers (Collovald 2002), nor do people in favourable social positions necessarily show lower levels of support for right-wing populism and extremism (Betz 1997). Detailed research into how people are actually affected by socio-economic change and whether this makes them susceptible to right-wing populist and extremist ideologies has so far, however, by and large been missing.

It is the objective of the qualitative research within the SIREN project to look at changes in working life from the vantage point of those affected and to understand the relative advantages and disadvantages involved. This is intended to take into account the world view of our interlocutors, their images of society and of their position within society, their aspirations and hopes related to work, employment and standard of living and related to concomitant social status and social integration. Research into the subjective perceptions of socio-economic change is also intended to analyse how experiences in working life interfere with people's constructions of identity. This was aimed to result, first, in a description of the actual meaning of current changes in work and employment for those concerned and, second, to provide a representation of its consequences for people's "political subjectivity" which, in turn, should make it possible to understand people's political reactions and hence the appeal of right-wing populism and extremism.

In empirically investigating experiences in working life and their consequences for political orientations we were sceptical about the hypothesis of the "losers" being drawn towards right-wing populism and extremism (e.g. Falter and Klein 1994) and therefore also wanted to deal with those benefiting from current socio-economic change. The foundation for this scepticism was twofold: first, we assumed that subjective perceptions and interpretations are decisive for understanding individual reactions, because these depend on whether people feel threatened or inspired by socio-economic changes; this means that objective socio-economic positions do not necessarily correlate with subjective perceptions of these positions, so that objective "winners" might perceive themselves as threatened by decline or having to fight hard to stay on the "winning" track. Second, we were interested in empirically following the theoretical hypothesis that the increasingly influential regime of neoliberalism inspires a new form

of right-wing extremism with "competitive nationalism", an ideology of success" (Schui et al. 1997; Butterwegge et al. 1998; Leiprecht et al. 1991; Held et al. 1992) and ultimately social Darwinism as core ideological elements. Should this hypothesis be valid, not only people in precarious or declining socio-economic positions but exactly those in positions of advancement might be susceptible to right-wing extremist ideologies.

In this report we in general use the term right-wing populism and extremism or, synonymously, the extreme right to designate the wide variety of political parties, movements, ideologies or programmes ranging from the xenophobic and welfarist Danish Peoples Party to the openly racist and anti-democratic MIÉP in Hungary (for definition see chapter 3.1.). In this chapter we will present the main findings of the qualitative research within the SIREN project on the basis of the individual country reports and the European synthesis report (Hentges et al. 2003). The first part of the chapter will explain the methodology in some detail because both the complexity of the research questions and the sensitivity of the topic make it particularly necessary to lay open the research design and procedures. In the second part we will describe how experiences in working life contribute to potentials of political subjectivity that can be targeted by the extreme right. While in this part we will present only the strongest interrelations between perceptions of socio-economic change and political orientations, in the third part of the chapter we will highlight the wide variety of modes of attractions or political conversions that were found in the qualitative research. The aim is to show that there is by no means just one major reason for the success of right-wing populism and extremism. Rather, people from various social categories, and who have been affected by socio-economic change quite differently, may use extreme right ideology or sympathise with right-wing populist or extremist parties and politicians in their interpretation of society and of their own quite different living situations.

3.2.2.   Understanding attractions – the qualitative research methodology

Between them, the eight teams conducted a total of 313 and analysed 279 qualitative interviews on the basis of common interview guidelines. The samples in all countries encompassed different socio-economic situations (advancement, threat of decline and precariousness) and different political orientations, i.e. both people "receptive" to and "non-receptive" to right-wing populism and extremism. The interpretation and analysis was conducted on the basis of common procedures and resulted in interview reports and country reports.

As a methodological instrument we chose the qualitative "problem-centred guided interview". Moreover, we referred to principles of interviewing that Pierre Bourdieu described in his chapter on "Understanding" in *La Misère du monde* (1992). The internationally standardised guidelines included the following subject areas: employment history, subjective perceptions, affectedness by and interpretation of socio-economic change, and political attitudes and orientation. This instrument requires an indicative and not coercive use: each research team had translated it into the national

context and proceeded according to its usual research methods. Moreover, the structure and the process of each interview was determined by the situation of the interviewee rather than by the specifications of the interview guidelines.

Table 3-1:   **Number of the interviews carried out in each country/total number of interviews**

Country	Total number of interviewees	Selected interviewees	Men	Women
Austria	32	32	20	12
Belgium	42	42	36	6
Denmark	36	31	18	13
France	40	32	20	12
Germany	52	52	42	10
Hungary	42	32	21	11
Italy	37	26	13	13
Switzerland	32	32	23	9
	313	279	193	86

The interviews were tape-recorded. An average interview lasted an hour and a half; a few lasted beyond two-and-a-half hours. The transcriptions of the interviews in a generally reader-friendly manner allowed us a detailed account of the content. While all interviews were at least briefly summarised, altogether 96 detailed and in-depth interview analyses with extensive quotations have been translated and provided by the eight research teams.

3.2.2.1.   Selection principles of the interviewees and description of the sample

Three categories of affectedness in socio-economic changes were constructed:

Advancement: people working as self-employed or employees who have experienced an improvement of their occupational situation, of their income and their current or future chances on the labour market. What counts here is not high income or security *per se* but the professional advancement made possible by socio-economic change in the chosen sectors.

(Threat of) decline: people who are (still) in (long-term) employment but who are affected by worsening conditions (e.g. wages, working conditions, type of work, flexibility/mobility demands, etc.) and/or increasing insecurity, such as company restructuring.

(Increasing) precariousness: people working freelance (e.g. on a contract-for-work basis or as freelance employees) and who are unable to earn a secure long-term income

on this basis; people in short-term employment with a high level of insecurity, people in early retirement and unemployment.

The construction of these three categories was based on objective situations or positions in the world of work (e.g. employment conditions, wages or known changes in the conditions in a previously nationalised company) and not on the subjective assessments of the interviewees regarding decline, precariousness or advancement.

Political attitudes of the interviewees – affinity to right-wing extremism

As already mentioned above, right-wing populism and extremism comprise a wide variety of ideologies, movements and parties with marked differences according to national political traditions. However, following the argument that there is a common ideological core and only a difference is of degree rather than kind between right-wing populism and right-wing extremism, we used a common definition of core ideological elements for the analysis of people's "receptiveness" to the extreme right. The following dimensions, "measured" with a categorisation "instrument" adapted for this particular purpose, were used to define the "high receptiveness" category:

Out-group rejection (e.g. xenophobia or rejection of minorities)

In-group favouritism (e.g. nationalism)

Right-wing authoritarianism (e.g. authoritarian attitudes)

Anti-system feelings (e.g. being disillusioned with politics plus rejection of democratic structures)

This tool allowed us on the one hand to address the particularities of each country and on the other hand to compare their common features. The aim of the overall sample was a well-balanced distribution of the interviews over the categories of *"low"* and *"high receptiveness for right-wing populism"*. The characteristic of "receptiveness" was the most difficult to establish in the selection of interviewees, as it could only be verified in the course of the interview analysis. This meant that in seeking interview partners, the research teams concentrated on those for whom a high receptivity to right-wing populism could be presupposed (on the basis of the opinions of intermediaries). If this was not confirmed in the course of the interview or in the assessment, then the person fell into the group of low or non-receptiveness.

Finally, the political orientation of interviewees turned out to be distributed as follows:

Table 3-2: **Number of interviewees according to political orientation**

Country/N. int.	Receptive	In-between	Non-receptive
Austria/32	17		15
Belgium/42	16		26
Denmark/31	15		16
France/32	11	9	12
Germany/52	19		33
Hungary/32	18	6	8
Italy/26	11		15
Switzerland/32	19		13
Total	120	19	140

Economic sectors

The first economic sectors chosen by all European partners were public sectors that had been privatised. This public ownership constituted the condition of a comparison between the different national qualitative surveys, in spite of the weight of national specificities. We also selected sectors that had undergone major changes in terms of industrial dynamic (decline or advancement). The choice of telecommunications facilitated the study of liberalisation policies: great waves of mergers involving public companies, restructuring, lay-offs and widespread competition.

Finally, the sectors chosen for this study have, as a rule, been subject to rapid change during the last ten to fifteen years. The issue of this *rapidity* was of crucial importance. It is in fact the one condition allowing the observation of the assumed link between socio-economic change and the attractiveness of ideas of parties of the extreme right. While it is difficult to perceive long-term tendencies of change, it is indeed possible to describe the manner of individual reaction to increasingly rapid changes of their professional life.

How did we make contact with the interviewees?

According to the principles of research stated above, we contacted the interview partners mainly through privileged informants, who at the same time enabled us to understand the impact of change on each working milieu and led us directly to the persons most affected by the changes. They improved our method of selecting from the working milieus that interested us and thus enabled us to base this study not on a mere collection of unrelated interviews but on milieus in which the people encountered share certain common conditions. The informants were trade unions officials, shop stewards and works-council representatives of various political fractions. In addition to trade

union sources, research teams in Italy, Belgium and France asked company human resource managers to make contact with interviewees. Some participants were contacted through the broader circle of acquaintances (e.g. friends or job colleagues of acquaintances previously unknown to the researchers), who were asked whether they knew people working in various socio-economic conditions who would be willing to give us an interview. This was especially helpful for the access to interview partners working as freelancers. After first contacts had been established, we proceeded to recruit participants through the snowball technique: interviewees were asked to introduce us to a person in their same working conditions, without mentioning their political orientation. Polling institutes specialising in voter surveys have also been used in some countries to get access to people with sympathy for the extreme right. Other methods of the recruitment process also included: candidates for local elections (Germany), newspaper advertisements (Germany), private internet websites with both work-related and right-wing populist content (Germany), work foundations and training schemes searching for former course participants (Austria), rural municipalities (Austria).

The main difficulty encountered is encapsulated in our hypothesis: If there were a link between socio-economic change and right-wing populism and extremism, how could population groups that have been hardest hit by socio-economic change be interviewed? How can an academic researcher establish a relationship of trust with the most anomic and/or dominated persons? All teams encountered difficulties in making contact with interviewees receptive to right-wing extremism. Attraction to right-wing populism and extremism as a selection criterion tends to ward off the most self-censored individuals, or to favour the most militant. It was also difficult getting into contact with lower-level employees, temporary workers, precarious employees and the unemployed. Temporary workers are hard to get hold of and very hard to motivate for an interview outside working hours. These problems explain the unbalanced aspect of some countries' samples, especially with regard to gender, age, and unemployment variables. Being aware of these biases and of their inevitability, we tried to control their effects rather than claiming they do not exist. We avoided the positivist illusion of a representative sample, and paid special attention to potential biases related to the mediation and arrangement process of the interviews. The problems and lessons of the selection of interviewees that the various teams might have encountered were discussed in depth. Getting into contact and building a relationship with the interviewees was a specific task in its own right. Contact with interviewees was aided by prior knowledge of the areas. Regular visits allowed us to build up a relationship of confidence with the providers of information, the purpose of which proved to be positive in neutralising the suspicions that are almost systematically aroused by the curious questioning of a "stranger".

3.2.3. Socio-economic change and political subjectivity – the formation of the "demand" for right-wing populism and extremism

In all the countries surveyed, the interpretation of the interviews revealed interesting interrelations between people's experiences at work or on the labour market and their

views on politics. To some extent it was even possible to account for recent changes in political orientation and party preferences with reference to such experiences. In the following we would like to summarise the main impact that changes in working life have had on receptiveness to right-wing populist or extremist ideologies, messages or politicians.

Our main concern in analysing political reactions to experiences of socio-economic change is not opinions, voting behaviour or party affiliation. We are interested in political orientations in a much wider sense: these include images of society and normative or moral ideas of social order, concepts of justice and feelings of injustice relating to social life, aspirations for happiness, the need for recognition and cultural identity, etc., which constitute "potentials of political subjectivity" (Dubiel 1994). Material and symbolic consequences of socio-economic change may result in a release of potentials of political subjectivity if, in a "populist moment" in history, "collective experiences of injury, fear of losing one's status and thwarted hopes for happiness of some groups of the population are dropped, as it were, from established discourse and become 'floating potentials', at odds with the traditional spectrum of political orientation" (Dubiel 1994: 203f). Consequently, the interpretation of subjective perceptions of changes in working life should help us to understand why particular ideological elements, political messages or styles of politics of right-wing populism and extremism may become attractive to particular groups of people.

The empirical research started from the hypotheses that people interpret increasing insecurity and other adverse changes in working life in different ways and that political reactions vary depending on social milieu, mentality, gender, biography, age, social status, geographical and cultural context, etc. We therefore neither assumed that there was a mechanistic relation between socio-economic change and political views, nor did we presuppose that socio-economic change was the main reason for the rise of right-wing populism and extremism. There was also agreement that there are several theoretical reasons for why changes in working life may increase the receptivity to the extreme right.

3.2.3.1.   Injured sense of justice[2]

A number of interviews in all the countries under investigation showed clear connections between the conditions and changes in the world of work and the receptiveness to right-wing populism and extremism. One such connection can be located in experiences that have injured people's sense of justice and in their experience or fear that, in spite of hard work and sacrifices, they are not able to maintain or attain the standard of living and social status they have previously enjoyed or which they aspire to. These interlocutors see themselves as not being rewarded for their subordination – in some cases even being punished. The feelings of disappointment and anger are directed against those who, in their eyes, have a "good life" without subjecting themselves to the impositions and risks of an increasingly pitiless world of work. These

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[2]   The names of interviewees mentioned in the following have been changed.

are the politicians on high and secure incomes, the refugees who are "looked after by the state" and the long-term unemployed, who allegedly do not want to work at all. A related aspect is growing competition or unfair competition on the labour market or in a particular field of economic activity. Understandably, illegal employment of (clandestine) immigrants in the tourist industry, for example, is a bone of contention for unemployed waiters. But in the construction industry, too, illegal employment and wage dumping have given rise to conflicts between local workers and immigrants from central and eastern Europe. In Germany, competition between eastern and western Germans following German reunification is also mentioned, as is competition from ethnic Germans who have immigrated from other countries.

The experiences people have suffered in the world of work are varied. They range from privatisation of companies and early retirement to the loss of jobs through plant closure, relocation or the threat to employment due to a crisis in the industry. This may lead to a frustration of expectations and hopes due to the loss of income and status, but it may also imply that people slowly realise the decreasing and the insecurity of rewards in terms of living standards and societal integration for hard work and subordination. Among the group of people in socio-economic situations that we classified as being under "threat of decline" or "precarious", there is a predominating impression of being patronised and betrayed: *"I feel betrayed, you know. Betrayed and patronised"* (Mr Oster, post office employee in early retirement, Germany); *"I worked properly and I feel I've been punished for it"* (Ms Frank, semi-skilled worker, electrical industry, currently unemployed, Austria); *"We're too decent, too bloody stupid, too honest"* (Mr Bouler, retired railwayman, France). The experience of not being honoured for having put up with the hardships of work *"without moaning"* leads to profound frustrations.

Often this feeling is accompanied by the perception that asylum seekers and the "work-shy" are systematically favoured. These other groups seem to attract aggression for obviously escaping the exacting demands of work – and *"still live well"*. The emotions involved often cannot be understood without reference to the pains of work, the physical and psychological strains that people have to accept, while living in a rather precarious situation. The immediate working conditions therefore seem to be crucial for the understanding of individual patterns of interpretations: First, in a situation of a breach of an implicit contract or, in other terms, the termination of reciprocity, feelings of injustice can be expected to be the stronger the higher one estimates one's contribution or costs, e.g. in terms of sacrifices or physical and psychological damage. Second, the pains of work need to be repressed and may thereby lead to aggression against others, mainly those who are perceived as being able to avoid such pains illegitimately. In some cases the problem is not the worsening of working conditions as such but rather the unchanged hardships of industrial work under conditions of increased employment insecurity and rising costs of living.

In the world of white-collar workers the threat of decline is sometimes less visible. As in the case of Mr Imhof, a Swiss IT specialist in the chemical industry, it may be confined to the perception that a new management does not recognise professional experience, engagement and achievement. The ensuing damage to the concept of social

justice, the perception of foreign managers and consultants as an intrusion and a threat makes it difficult to adapt. This is hard for a highly conformist person, and may lead to even stronger demands for adaptation and assimilation of others, which are emotionally articulated when discussing the issue of immigration.

It was not only those who have experienced adverse consequences of changes in working life who showed an aversion to weaker groups in society. Such a reaction can also be found among those who had been able to improve their position but still suffered an increased workload, unlimited working hours or high demands on flexibility. Mr Müller, for example, a relatively well-paid telecom-worker with civil-servant status in Germany who suffers from stress at work, projects his aversion onto all those who do not sacrifice and torture themselves in a similar way for the benefit of the company and the national economy. His call for forced labour for the unemployed – *"They should get a shovel in their hand and have to shovel a cubic meter every day"* – and his plea for the brutal destruction of municipal structures he suspects of being corrupt indicate that although his political affiliation is centre-left he is nevertheless susceptible to right-wing extremist strategies to resolve problems in society. Other examples show that perceived insecurity of the viability of the company may strengthen such authoritarian views and lead some to despise colleagues who do not perform well enough. This exclusionist pattern of meaning can easily be transferred to the level of the nation state whose economic viability, according to the ideology of "competitive nationalism", is under threat.

In Hungary, the economic transition undermined living standards and increased insecurity for many. Even those who successfully maintained or improved their material situation usually had to achieve this with incredible effort. This includes, for example, generating additional income by taking a second or third job or, as in the case of Mr Iró, by setting up and running an enterprise in addition to full-time employment. Interestingly, the point of reference for comparison is often not the parents but the grandparents and the economic situation between the two world wars. Interviews in Hungary suggest that the (threat of) decline in living standards and precariousness can reinforce or even mobilise the prejudices that might have been acquired during family socialisation. This may in fact lead to voting for an extreme right party. There is no denying that anti-Communism has a great influence, as it is transformed into a scepticism against the political elite and may thereby lead to an affinity to the extreme right.

Often, the experiences related to working conditions also nurture the feeling that "those up there" who take the decisions do not know anything about the actual conditions of work.

> *"There are people sitting at the top, and they don't have a clue about what's going on in the factories and the community. They're just busy making as much money as possible. . . . You know, those directors, bosses and people high up in society. They think they can just press a few buttons, and the changes will come of themselves – but they don't."* Ms Jørgensen, unskilled worker in the printing industry, Denmark.

Contrasting the "people" to the elite was also frequent in one group of Swiss interviews (see Plomb et al. 2002). Identification with the middle classes, the milieu where *people are gaining their livelihood correctly without being able to afford [anything] whatsoever"* (Mr Bollinger, department manager, in early retirement, Switzerland), is the common basis of these individual stories. "We" is used frequently when referring to the domination from above *("they think we are idiots")*, in particular from "politics" and from "the ones who take the decisions". The "people" accordingly constitute a moral category: the ones who are working hard to get out and who are subject to the "irresponsibility" of the economic and political elite. This expression is also used when talking about a sentiment thought to be shared by everyone, namely feeling one's household budget being minimised by the charges, the pressure or the incomprehension of governmental bureaucracy (taxes, health insurance, indirect taxation, family allowance, etc.). The "people" (called "workers" by some) are thus an industrious and silent majority suffering from pressure from "above". This vision of the social world is evidently held by interview partners whose careers consist mainly of daily personal investments in maintaining their standard of living.

Some of the women we interviewed clearly expressed their feelings of injustice in relation to the double disadvantage they suffer as (blue-collar) workers and as women: they add to the equation their experiences of discrimination, problems at work and in employment that stem from patriarchal family relations, and the virtual impossibility of reconciling paid labour with motherhood. Not being able to maintain economic independence from a life partner in spite of hard work and far-reaching sacrifices is what hurts some of them most. Others, after having given up their own career-related hopes and dreams, are more concerned about the fate of their children. What makes some of the reproduction-oriented women attracted to right-wing populist views is, on the one hand, a lack of childcare facilities, school quality or access to vocational training and, on the other, the recognition of their motherly self-image, which is denied to them by the centre-left middle class.

From a sociological perspective we can conclude that socio-economic change forces people to reconsider and re-evaluate their position in the social world. They may find themselves in an "untenable position" if, for example, their current status and income no longer reflects their qualifications or their cultural capital. It may lead to a situation in which material and symbolic rewards are no longer perceived as offsetting efforts and sacrifices. This is highly relative and may be caused by changes in work, such as increasing work load, lack of recognition or precarious employment. But it may also stem from a threat to living standards because of the increased cost of living. Both may impact on the way people make sense of their working life, on how satisfied they are in general or how they are able to come to terms with physically and psychologically damaging working conditions. This perceived balance or the "mode of attachment" to work seems, in many cases, to be at the core of the relation between socio-economic change and political reactions. But these political reactions are not necessarily xenophobic, nationalist and authoritarian. First, we could also find democratic solidarist reactions. Second, the process in which feelings of frustration and injustice attach

themselves to particular issues or symbols is strongly influenced by the media and by what is on offer in politics.

3.2.3.2. *Insecurity, fear of declassing and feelings of powerlessness*

Insecurity emerges as one of the most important issues from the subjective accounts of the consequences of recent changes in working life. While in general this theme is highly relevant to most of the interviewees, the particular degrees and forms of insecurity addressed and the meaning attached to them differ widely. These range from precarious living conditions and perceptions of profound ambiguity of a world that is hard to understand on the one hand to calculable risks of one's market position on the other.

Unemployment, precarious employment and self employment with low income usually mean high levels of insecurity of material existence. Thinking about the future becomes difficult; usually, people in such situations give up making plans for their lives and tend to adapt passively to whatever happens to them. Social insecurity can thus imply a loss of control over one's life.

People in open-ended employment also report increased insecurity. The main sources of this are continuous restructuring of companies and workplaces, changing technology and skill demands or increased workloads and stress levels that question whether the job is feasible in the long run. In liberalised public services even the employees with civil-servant status report insecurity stemming from being moved around to different departments.

The way people cope with changes and increasing insecurity also varies and depends on several circumstances. One of these is whether people are used to having insecure employment or not. For obvious reasons, employees in the former public-service sectors who had sought security in their occupational choice often find it most difficult to cope. For many self-employed, insecurity has always been part of the everyday working life, which some have learned to live with. Objective socio-economic positions often do not correlate with the subjective perceptions of these positions and their stability: we can conclude that different frames of interpretation, social and cultural capital (and the extent of trust in its value and usability), expectations (building on past experience) as well as strategies of coping with change impact on assessing increasing insecurities as challenge or threat: some interviewees who were unsackable civil servants felt very threatened by restructuring measures (in the post and telecoms sector) whereas advancing interviewees in objectively insecure and risky positions felt or showed themselves fairly confident about their jobs and futures. Apart from experiences and mentalities of individuals, forms and meaning of occupational insecurity are influenced by the family background and the way the welfare society is organised.

At a general level, there is already a clear connection between such insecurity and loss of control on the one hand and, on the other, right-wing populism and extremism that addresses the population as a passive victim of overpowering opponents, often without going into clearly defined interests (Dubiel 1994; Steinert 1999). There is also a

connection with "competitive nationalism" as people frequently express feelings of powerlessness relating not only to their own socio-economic situation but also to the state of the country or society as a whole: *"We are finished economically and we are completely powerless. Germany has lost its standing in the world"* (Mr Marzahl, purchasing agent in the construction industry, Germany). Another general relationship can be seen in the fact that, in their stories, people who feel threatened by the immediate future seem to focus on the past. This quite often leads to nostalgic accounts contrasting the good old times with the unpleasant present and the frightening future. This corresponds to the backwardly oriented utopian political messages of right-wing populism glorifying traditional communities.

At a more specific level, the interpretation of the interviews showed different reactions to feelings of insecurity and powerlessness. Some are clearly authoritarian, others exclusionist, and many reveal a perceived lack of political representation. These reactions can be illustrated with the following examples.

The case of Mr Vanhaard, a Belgian railway worker, is a good example of an *authoritarian* reaction. When his wife lost her job through the bankruptcy of the national airline she worked for, he suddenly realised that working in a state enterprise does not guarantee employment security. The perceived insecurity leads him to criticise not only government policy, but also his colleagues. He is very harsh towards people who cannot cope with the changed pace of work.

> *"People work much too slowly, then you can see two of them working there on a job that could be done by one . . . they adapt to the pace of work – yes it's nice, isn't it – but if they don't adapt – well, sorry – that is an indication that they can't cope with the work."* Mr Vanhaard, railway worker, Belgium

Analyses of this interview showed that Mr Vanhaard reacted to the threat in an authoritarian way, by harshly condemning the "slackers", people who, in his eyes, do not work hard enough and therefore jeopardise the viability of the company and, hence, his own job and pension scheme and therefore his own future.

Turning to political authoritarianism, the interviews revealed that, in a state of general insecurity, attention and hope can be directed at all those who still appear as players, that is, as capable of action and having an effect.

Mr Pammer, an Austrian social-democratic blue-collar worker and later a minor salaried employee, was always aware of the fundamental dependence on corporate decisions, but now has the growing feeling of being a plaything at the mercy of a volatile economic situation which he sees as an emerging threat to his survival. Following the partial relocation of the plant, management wanted him to transfer to Hungary, which he was able to resist on health grounds. Even though a job was found for him in the company, it is highly insecure. And it is clear to him that at the age of 45 he will not find another job in the region should he lose this one. For him, this experience calls into question not only the trade union but also the parties, as these are not in the position to protect him from the loss of his job. Alongside the acute threat to his own job, the creeping decline of the region, to which he is emotionally very strongly attached, injures Mr Pammer's identity. He therefore sees the safeguarding and creation of jobs as the most important

socio-economic aim. Players who in his opinion have the actual power to swim against the tide of relocation of production to central and eastern Europe and to create jobs in Austria, and politicians who appear as "strong men" therefore appear to him fundamentally as shining figures.

Feelings of insecurity and powerlessness in the face of developments in the company, the labour market or in the global economy are aggravated by the perception that *political representatives* no longer provide any protection. Workers' representatives appear to be incapable of action and are seen to have "surrendered" to the employers or "swim along" with them. This relates to the general level of asymmetric power relations between the increasingly mobile capital on the one hand and trade unions that keep losing membership on the other, which forces labour to make concessions. But it also relates to immediate support for individual workers in the case of trouble. At this level the picture is mixed: while some respondents made a clear difference between workers' representatives in the company and on the shop floor on the one hand, and politicians on the other, others also report a lack of support by their union when they were in dispute with the employer.

Ms Frederiksen illustrates such a case. She was made redundant after years of hard work because she suffered from a serious allergy, which made it impossible for her to do her cleaning job. She was helped by a dermatologist and after many years of toing and froing she was finally awarded industrial compensation. About her trade union she says:

> *"I don't think the union can take credit for that, because they didn't lift a finger to help me – they did nothing to help me find another job. I was not offered other work. That was wrong, I feel, because they could easily have got up and said – she has slaved for so-and-so many years, so we feel she deserves an easier job."*
> Ms Frederiksen, former cleaner, Denmark

Although in the event she did not do so, she had considered voting for Pia Kærsgård the leader of the Danish People's Party, of whom she says:

> *"I like listening to her when she speaks. She doesn't use all big words or give election promises. If she had her way I'm quite sure in spite of everything that many things would be better for people on the shop floor."* Ms Frederiksen, former cleaner, Denmark

Here again, the public acknowledgement of one's problems and the political interest in the workers' world appears to be one of the populists' strong points. In this way the interviews revealed a crisis of representation which seems to exist in industrial relations but which is strongest in the field of party politics.

Our analysis of the interrelation between insecurity, powerlessness and political orientations revealed yet another, seemingly contradictory connection, which can be termed "conformist rebellion" (Hentges and Meyer 2002: 55). Racism is – at least for some of our interviewees – a strategy to articulate their protest against social injustice in an officially accepted and authorised way. Even if they were exposed to leftist class struggle or social equality slogans (which, as everybody knows, they rarely are), it appears to be quite improbable that these would be accepted without difficulty. After

all, the danger of further marginalisation and isolation would be far greater than if they were to advocate semi-official propaganda. In calling for an extremely authoritarian reintegration of the *Volksgemeinschaft,* some extreme right-wing German respondents idealise mechanisms that have turned out to be very effective in subordinating their own economic and emotional needs to the will of powerful agencies and institutions. What in terms of class relations can be seen as conformist, appears in the perception of most interviewees as a rebellion against pressures for political correctness. As far as problems stemming from immigration are concerned, many voiced the feeling that they are "not allowed to say anything". It is understandable that the consequent uneasiness makes xenophobic utterances by right-wing populists appear so "refreshing". It is therefore a rebellion in the double sense of protesting against injustice and of violating political correctness, and it is conformist as it is in line with the partly concealed views of the economically and politically powerful.

Overall, the interviews indicated high levels of perceived job insecurity, which was sometimes expressed openly, sometimes hidden behind wishful thinking of job stability and only given away indirectly, in throw-away remarks, such as *"in two years' time – if I am still here"*. Job security is perceived as being threatened mainly by plant closures or relocations, by fierce competition between companies, which may result in bankruptcy, and by company restructuring and rationalisation. But it is also related to high and increasing workloads and demands for flexibility and mobility, which make workers doubtful whether they will be able to cope or to reconcile work and family obligations in the long run. Our interpretations showed that people who turned out to be receptive to extreme right ideologies or messages tended to attribute the causes of negative affects individually and to express the conviction that in coping one can only count on oneself. Psychologically, such strong individualistic and meritocratic beliefs can be explained with reference to dissonance reduction processes: if the salience of their category of identification is low, even people in poor socio-economic conditions may justify and support the system that is at the origin of their disadvantaged position (Jost et al. 2003). Furthermore, this result is consistent with research showing that internal attributions (for example of poverty) are typical of conservative people (Heaven 1994; Zucker and Weiner 1993). Receptiveness to right-wing populist or extremist views was not only found in individualistic psychological coping strategies – which, on the one hand, enhance work ethics and achievement orientation and, on the other, increase the fear of failure and the perceived risk. It was also present in individuals whose social strategies, in contrast, focus on membership and stress the reliance on the individual's reference group. Defensive psychological reactions, including nationalism and anti-immigrant feelings, are likely in the case of individual strategies, but also with social psychological strategies if the reference group is assumed to be dissolved (Martinelli, Milesi and Catellani 2002: 46).

Similar to problems in the world of work, which are barely recognised in public, insecurity is also not taken up by public discourse in a way that represents the concerns of ordinary people. A good example of this is the enlargement of the European Union, which was presented in a rather positive way by mainstream politics in many member

states. Having experienced plant relocation to Hungary and other central and eastern European countries and new competition from immigrants on the labour market after 1989, interviewees in Austria expressed concern over the consequences of full membership by these countries. While Mr Daxhofer, who enjoys a secure position in the IT industry, talks about the *"queasy feeling"* he has on the subject, an unemployed female worker in a declining old industrial region speaks of *"panic-stricken fear"*. As the immediate concerns and legitimate interests of workers in this context are not addressed by other parties it is easy to understand how right-wing populists may take advantage of such potentials of political subjectivity.

For some, low income and long working hours, which again are sometimes a strategy to compensate for lower income, result in a retreat from social life, which they simply cannot afford any longer. As they interpret it, social life no longer works and life outside restricted social contacts becomes something strange or foreign. This alienation from society may lead people to see foreigners as symbols of a social life that has become foreign to them, and, consequently, can be seen as basis of xenophobic resentments. The phrase *"soon we will be the foreigners"* used by several of our respondents should therefore not be misunderstood as simply expressing a perceived threat to cultural identity by immigration. Rather, it seems to express alienation channeled by the dominant discourse on problems of society. What this may point to is nothing less than the endangered integration of sections of the working class into society.

3.2.3.3. The violation of values and the emergence of anomic conditions

It is obvious that it is not solely the upheavals of working life that impact on potentials of political subjectivity. The literature on right-wing populism and extremism often addresses more general and more long term socio-economic change such as "individualisation" in which traditional societal institutions such as the family or the occupational group, lose their former security and protective function. This may lead to social isolation, insecurity of action and to feelings of powerlessness – anomic conditions that can be targeted by right-wing extremist ideology (Heitmeyer 1992; Endrikat et al. 2002). The complexity and the contradictions of contemporary society may lead to problems of orientation. In such a situation, extreme-right ideological elements, such as anti-outgroup positions or authoritarianism, may help individuals to create a subjective sense of consistency (Zoll 1984).

We addressed these hypotheses in our research because consequences of individualisation, the violation of values or forms of anomy were touched on in the interpretation of interviews on life plans, working biographies, insecurity and views of the social world. A general finding from our research sample is that the more concrete interrelations between socio-economic change and receptiveness to right-wing populism or extremism already discussed in this chapter seem to be much more salient than general tendencies such as the loss of orientation, values or social ties. Anomy theory therefore only provides additional explanations, relating in particular, to rural regions or

particular social groups where the erosion of traditional communities, characterised by specific relations of reciprocity and social identities, is but a more recent phenomenon.

The following exemplary cases illustrate conditions in which the more immediate connections between changes in working life and receptiveness to right-wing populism and extremism described so far in this chapter did not seem to provide a full understanding and, consequently, the wider context of societal change had to be taken into account. 38-year-old Ms Veitschnig with civil-service status, who has been employed at the Austrian post office since leaving commercial college and has recently risen in the hierarchy, addresses the problem of high workload: *"Then you come home . . . I say, like a squeezed out rag, I often say."* (Ms Veitschnig, post-office counter worker, civil servant status, Austria) In this perspective, a nostalgic look back at the "good times" in the past in which one could work more slowly and had more time for work and the customers is noticeable. But Ms Veitschnig presents as equally important a second aspect of change which she also sees in a negative light: the "break-up", i.e. the restructuring of the company which accompanied liberalisation and the increasing pressure on employees to sell, to raise turnover. She sees the *"scrapping for customers"* in which the social norms of honesty and decency are violated as *"repulsive".* Strong feelings about the loss of values and community ties were also found with other interviewees from the same rural farming region near the Austrian border to a central European neighbour country. They see the current economic and political changes as a menace and to some extent they feel their cultural identity as threatened. Foreigners represent an issue to which this threat can attach itself.

Ms Kántor from Hungary, who holds a university degree in psychology and is head of the marketing department of a Hungarian telecommunication company, holds similar views. Her workplace experiences, developing marketing psychology and observing marketing strategies of other firms, reinforce her belief that consumer society is promoted by deceitful marketing campaigns that only serve the companies' profit interests. Her increasing dislike of her current position is partly connected to this resentment towards the excesses of consumer society. For her, the really dangerous process in modern history is globalisation. Globalisation is a process that destroys local communities, traditions and national cultures. Her negative perception of globalisation intertwines with the belief that globalisation is moved forward by a small circle of the Jewish financial elite. She clearly shares some of the major themes raised by the MIÉP but does not vote for this right-wing extremist party because she clearly differentiated herself from the "angry" people supporting the MIÉP.

Another example is Michel Rust of Switzerland, who is just starting his career in research and development in a transnational company. Although he in fact distinguishes himself from the milieu of small regional enterprises (workers, precision mechanics and other ordinary people of the technical domain) he partly shares their values. Delivering high quality work is highly valued and can lead to uneasiness when conditions do not make it possible to live up to such values. This element of his value system influences the way he draws boundaries, e.g. when it comes to the "mixture and flow of migrants" emanating "different mentalities" and corrupting Swiss principles of work. What is

particularly interesting in this and similar accounts is the definition of a "milieu of morality" which the interview partners oppose to the population categories (managers, immigrants) whom they hold responsible for the detrimental changes in society.

These illustrations from the qualitative interviews in different countries are intended to show the prevalence in some of our interviews of an uneasiness with the loss of values and of closely integrated communities. This means that, in addition to feelings of injustice, fear of declassing or feelings of insecurity clearly related to the world of work, we also found examples of political subjectivity, which can be addressed more generally by the backward looking utopias of unspoiled communities or the law-and-order and anti-immigration policies of right-wing populism and extremism. But some qualifications need to be added here: First, in contrast to theories focusing on this level of interrelationship, our findings suggest that this is only of secondary importance; we can assume that the attraction of political messages, styles of politics or ideologies of right-wing populism and extremism can more often be accounted for with reference to the more concrete reasons described in the previous parts of this chapter. Second, it is not always the ideological elements of racism, xenophobia, authoritarianism and nationalism – providing orientation, opportunities for identification or support to damaged social identities – that make right-wing populists or extremists attractive. If people adopt the principles of neo-liberalism combined with "competitive nationalism", support for right-wing populism and extremism can also be driven by economic considerations – globalisation as a challenge to the national economy leads to a call for a strong authoritarian government improving the conditions for competitiveness at international level. Another non-ideological reason for political support for right-wing populists or extremists can be found in the perceived lack of democracy – whether it is experiences of nepotism and corruption or the feeling of not being able to participate, of not being represented in the political game. This means that, while right-wing populists are rightly presented as a threat to representative democracy, the reasons for their success can partly be found in undemocratic conditions of contemporary European societies at local, regional and national levels, but also at the level of the European Union. It is this and other aspects we turn too now when, in the following, we discuss reasons for right-wing populism and extremism other than socio-economic change.

3.2.4. *Variations of political conversions*

In the previous chapter we described the major interrelation between perceptions of socio-economic change and potentials of political subjectivity found in the interpretation of the interviews. This presentation however did not fully depict the wide variety of how people's experiences may lead them to refer, in their interpretation of reality, to elements of right-wing extremist ideology or to find politicians or political messages of the extreme right convincing. We would like to present this variety in some detail in order to avoid the impression that certain elements of socio-economic change and particular individual reactions to them can be seen as the main reason for the success of right-wing populism and extremism. The multitude of political conversions therefore are the subject of this chapter.

Even though our research focuses on the appeal of the extreme right we have to bear in mind that this particular political conversion is just one among a wide range of different patterns of interpretation and coping. The empirical data provide information about the conversion from one position or camp to political abstention, illustrates political conversions which tend toward "voice", or provides examples for conversions from one position to another. Negative experiences in the world of work, which led some to follow right-wing populist arguments, strengthened the social-democratic, conservative or liberal convictions of others.

The first variations of political conversions presented below relate more or less directly to experiences in working life. In the interpretation of these cases it became clear how frustrations, injuries, intensified competition or over-identification with the company contributed to particular political orientations and to the sympathy for right-wing populism and extremism. Other types of political conversions, which will be dealt with subsequently, refer to wider societal developments such as problems of the welfare state and, in particular, in elderly care, consequences of globalisation or the downsides of the multicultural society.

Some of the patterns presented below are typical of several if not all countries under investigation, while others are more country-specific and can be read as national particularities.

3.2.4.1.   Political conversion as a reaction to experiences in working life

I.   *"I cannot bear such injustice . . ."* – the shock of unemployment or involuntary early retirement

Those effected greatly by unemployment not only suffer from diminishing income and reduction in living standards, but also run the risk of developing ailments related to psychological or "psychosocial" stress (Kieselbach 1996). The unemployed suffer from "moments of financial insecurity, problems of social integration, self-confidence and disorientation in time", aspects which form the basis for a stable and healthy identity. Long-term unemployment is often accompanied by difficulties in coping with one's daily life as well as social stigmatisation. The use of socially unacceptable methods for combating unemployment is often attributed to the inability of the person caught in this dilemma, rather than to the system which created this situation (ibid.: 187-88).

In our interviews it also became clear that losing one's job may lead to severe shocks and social isolation. The experiences that all the efforts, achievements and sacrifices, partly of decades, no longer counted for anything nurture intensive feelings of injustice. These, in turn, may induce them to change party allegiance and, for want of another interpretation, to embrace the division between "nationals" and "immigrants" as a main structural principle and, consequently, to support the demand for national preference.

It is not only unemployment that needs to be mentioned here. In each country we encountered such phenomena including psychosocial stress among civil servants, white-collar and blue-collar workers affected by some forms of early retirement. In the course

of privatisation, which increased rapidly since the beginning of the 1990s, employees of former state enterprises (with a medical recommendation) were the first to be retired early receiving their pension from the state. Similarly, in the declining industries (mining and steel), corporate management, together with the works councils, developed "social" plans. One avenue to reduce personnel was the early retirement. While some of the early retirees shared in this decision and enjoy early retirement, others indicated that they did not retire voluntarily. This new situation (retirement as early as in the mid-forties) not only causes financial difficulties but also gives rise to enormous emotional stress – problems that are discussed only with hesitation.

II. *"But at some point your body just won't function anymore"* – women workers in precarious living conditions

In highly industrialised societies, two differently organised areas of life confront each other. We could also interpret them as different spheres of influence in society, subject to different governing principles. Women have the task of reconciling these, at the moment conflicting structural principles and logic in the realm of production and reproduction. The social integration of women takes place in both work in a family and a reproductive capacity as well as in work in the market place. Women must do justice to such demands in different areas and combine reproductive and productive tasks and thus, become subject to a "dual societal role" (Becker-Schmidt 1987). These two social realms are not judged equally. Instead, market-generated work is considered "work" while family responsibilities are considered private matters. Since family-related work is usually primarily carried out by women, the consequences influence integration into the paid workforce. Women are over-represented in the lower levels of the employment hierarchy, so that one may speak of a gender-specific segmented employment market.

Coping with both strainful work and the double burden is often only possible for a limited period:

> *"[The job] wasn't bad, but unfortunately that is when I had the nervous breakdown. That's when it became clear, I always thought, that if I try my best that I would make it … But at some point your body just won't function anymore. […]I just couldn't manage: my job, my son, the shifts. And then at some point my son said to me: Mama, I'm afraid I may lose you as well."* Ms Renger, Germany

Such experiences lead to strong feelings of injustice and may make women particularly sensitive to the gap between the politicians on the one hand and the ordinary citizens on the other.

During the numerous interviews it became obvious that the experiences of women could not be reduced to the realm of employment, because, along with reports of their vocational/professional experiences, the female interviewees include their daily life experiences against the background of their "dual societal role". The necessary division between occupation and family became a subject of discussion along with questions of educational and school policies as well as neighbourhood conflicts. Some of the female interviewees criticised the supposedly overly liberal immigration and asylum policies of the various governments. They also saw a threat posed by (female and male) foreigners

in the competition for employment and the social safety net. A particular variation of the right-wing extreme attitude of women is expressed by their observation that (female and male) foreigners from Islamic societies pose a threat to western women's emancipation.

III. *"You really do start to hate them"* – the devaluation of subordination to norms of achievement and hard work

The work ethic and the expectation that everyone should abide by the achievement principle are at the centre of the interviews which serve here as an example. The interviewees firmly identify with their status as blue-collar workers, see themselves as part of the hard working community, and disassociate themselves vehemently from so-called social scroungers. A thorough analysis of the interview material reveals that the "community of decent and hard-working people" has something in common, namely the deterioration of working conditions over recent years or problems maintaining standards of living with the income they get for hard work.

Those who have not yet been affected by the processes of rationalisation and massive reduction of personnel and are still employed indicate that they suffer under increased work loads, stress, consolidation of work and enormously high level of anxiety. Often they are threatened by the Damocles sword of dismissal, which induces them to submit to those conditions, to agree quietly, not to rebel or take to collective measures in defence. Some of the interviewees report health problems (digestive and heart troubles and sleep disturbances) which they attribute to the deteriorating working conditions. The suffering under the worsening working conditions – which is often mentioned only in passing – makes itself heard in other ways: those who apparently succeed in withdrawing from this imperative, e.g., especially foreign welfare recipients, the unemployed and, at the moment even early retirees, are viewed by working people who, having internalised the "protestant ethic", suffer under the condition of their lives and work and feel angered by these alternative concepts. They demand that others should abide by the law of paid employment after the motto: Those who do not work, do not need to eat.

Immigrants who do not work and receive welfare benefits provoke particularly emotional reactions: *"They come here, they get plenty of money, they can buy a house and everything. You really start to hate them. Then you ask: Is that right? Is the system right in doing this?"* (Mr Kammer, Germany).

IV. *"Normally the socialists are the ones for the people"* – working-class identity and pragmatic change to right-wing populism

We found examples of the renunciation of social democratic parties and a turn toward either right-wing populist or extreme parties in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany and Switzerland. Reports of the interviews emphasised either disappointment over the broken promises of social-democratic governments or disillusionment with governments in which social democratic/socialist parties participated, as was also the case in France

with the French Communist Party (PCF). The disappointment extends most often to the labour unions, which are no longer perceived as having the power to represent the interests of labour.

Based on the fact that the interviewees in question felt a strong identity as workers and were, according to their traditions, solidly anchored in the labour milieu, provided it still existed, the conservative parties were not an acceptable alternative. They are confronted by the following alternative: either they do not vote at all or they vote for a right-of-centre party that claims to have taken up the interests of the "ordinary man".

V. *"But there comes a time, when you've had enough"* – white-collar workers and the threat of social decline

A sense of insecurity based on continuous restructuring or repeated job-loss as well as the subjective feeling of threats to one's cultural identity and the sentimental turning to nostalgia can be found in many interviews we conducted with white-collar workers or civil servants. Some of those interviewed have in common that they see themselves exposed to the danger of social decline although they still enjoy a relatively secure social status. An unfavourable management decision or an illness can mean that they can no longer afford the house or apartment, going on holidays, etc. Others have already lost occupational stability and, in order to more or less maintain their standard of living, they have to be highly flexible, commute long distances and accept jobs widely deviating from their vocational identity. The frustrations make themselves felt in suppressed anger which may attach itself to foreigners if those become the symbol for one's own social decline or if they are presented as receiving what they don't deserve.

VI. *"Transformation means torturing oneself"* – Upwardly mobile employees paying a high price and over-identifying with the company

Trying to understand sympathies for right-wing populism and extremism with a particular subset of the research sample, namely the "receptive" part of the "advancement" category, often showed that the political conversion occurred in connection with an improvement of the occupational or professional position. Typical examples are promotions to management grades, for example in privatised companies that are in constant processes of restructuring. Partly, this promotion leads to status inconsistencies because those concerned have a relatively low education level. Surprisingly, the improvement of the social position contributes to the political conversion. One reason for this is the price these people pay for their occupational success: they not only suffer from long working hours, high workloads and stress, but in their sandwich position they also have a clear view of the worsening of overall working conditions, e.g. in the process of privatisation and restructuring. The second reason is that occupational advancement often heightens the identification not only with the job but also with the company. This, in turn, further strengthens performance orientation and the demands put on subordinates, colleagues and workers and citizens in general.

The political conversion itself can take various forms. Some had clear a allegiance with the social-democratic party, others were floating voters; some are inclined to "ethnicise" social problems more strongly than before, others show intensified rigidities and work ethics. Some people's frustrations and feelings of alienation can be understood against the background of the upheavals in privatised companies such as post and railways. Others' reactions are clearly influenced by the general ideology of "competitive nationalism", which induces them to radicalise their work ethos and their identification with the company so that they easily embrace exclusivist and nationalistic ideologies of the extreme right.

3.2.4.2.   Conversions caused by wider social change and properties of the political system

VII.   Members of the middle class with a conservative and nationalist mentality

During the mid-thirties, the economist, David Saposs stated:

> "Fascism . . . [is] the extreme expression of middle-classism or populism . . . The basic ideology of the middle class is populism. . . . Their ideal was an independent small property-owning class consisting of merchants, mechanics, and farmers. This element . . . now designated as middle class, sponsored a system of private property, profit, and competition on an entirely different basis from that conceived by capitalism." (Saposs, cited from Lipset 1960: 134)

Members of the middle class opposed both capitalism and "big business". A quarter of a century later, Seymour Martin Lipset referred in his book *The Political Man* (Lipset 1960) to this thesis, which had already been presented in the mid-1930s, and extended it as follows: each social class could choose a democratic or extreme form of expression: "The extremist movements of the left, right, and centre . . . are based primarily on the working, upper, and middle classes, respectively." (Lipset 1960: 132) Right-wing extremism recruits its followers from the same social class that supports the liberal parties. Lipsets argues that socio-economic crises caused the former followers of liberal parties to turn to right-wing extremist parties. The NSDAP owed its election successes primarily to the old middle classes which, due to the processes of modernisation, were threatened by decline and loss of class status.

Several examples of the thesis presented by Lipset are evident in our empirical material. Some of the managers, entrepreneurs or self employed turned from the conservatives to the FPÖ after Jörg Haider took over the party, are fascinated by Gianfranco Fini, became local activists of the German REPublikaner after having voted CDU for years, etc. These political conversions are based on a conservative and often nationalistic political orientation formed through socialisation processes in the family, in local milieus or in schools and youth organisations. The radicalisation they represent is not always triggered by experiences in working life. If so, these may relate to unfair competition through the local political monopoly by a conservative party or to a failure in setting up a business, which results in loss of status and living standard. Authoritarianism, nationalism, call for discipline, individualism and meritocracy are the

ideological elements that make the extreme right attractive also to economically successful members of the middle class.

VIII. *"You just can't treat [the elderly] the way you sometimes hear about"* – plea for a better welfare state and protection of the national majority in Denmark

During the previous decades the social welfare safety nets established by the Western European states experienced massive changes. Without exception, for the interviewees of the countries we examined, the future of the social welfare state and social security became the subject of discussion. In particular younger employees greatly emphasised the question of whether or not their pensions were still safe. The discussion of the inter-generational treaty was linked to feelings of injustice and insecurity in view of one's own perspective of the future.

The Austrian and German researchers, in particular, encountered many interviewees who felt threatened by the dismantling of the welfare system. These assessments took on a special role in the Danish example. The Danish interviewees criticised the fact that the older generation, which had created the Danish welfare society, were now forced to suffer as it was dismantled. Here the interviewees express their own dismay but exhibited concern for the senior citizens. The criticism of the eroding social security systems is associated with an ideology of exclusion: in times of scarce resources it would have to be guaranteed that immigrants were not to profit at the expense of the majority population of the social welfare state.

IX. *"In Switzerland, we are quite fond of a piece of work well done"* – the dynamics of globalisation and the mixture of cultures threatening national and cultural identities

The interviews do not only focus on such topics as justice/injustice and security/insecurity but also on the loss of a (supposed) national or cultural identity. The respective references vary: in some cases the national collective is at the centre, in other cases it is in the region, the city or even the particular neighbourhood. In some cases the reaction can be traced back to experiences in working life. A Swiss manager, for example, accepted early retirement after a merger of his company and realised that the new Anglo-Saxon management principles devalued all his achievements; a technician feels uneasy because of the dissonance between his personal and locally rooted work ethics and the new "mentalities" of the globalised working milieus of advanced technology; a telecom employee, who became the victim of successive waves of restructuring that made his rich experience worthless, strongly resents "Americanisation" of the workplace and of society. Such experiences may result in the feeling that conditions of attachment as well as the investments in their professional lives have been utterly destabilised even if, in material terms, those affected have managed to profit in a way from the changes affecting the economy and the labour market. The destabilisation may lead to a longing for safeguarding the nation and the culture against foreign influence and immigration.

Several interviewees have experienced immigration more directly as a threat: they claim that they do not recognise "their street", "their village", "their town", "their region" anymore, that they cannot orient themselves, in short, they complain about the loss of their cultural identity. Significant environments such as family, school, colleagues and neighbourhood, which long functioned as emotional support, are now subject to serious changes and lose the emotionally stabilising function they once had.

X.   Double frustrations in family careers and individual career paths: patterns of extreme right mobilisation in Hungary

In Hungary, a country that has undergone an intense economic, political and social transition since the early 1990s, we noticed that in addition to immediately recognisable economic changes (e.g., at the place of work or within the social security systems), family traditions are enormously important in determining political attitudes. The transition to market economy was accompanied by a far-reaching crisis: almost two million jobs disappeared, living standards declined and insecurity became the normal way of life. Even those who were successful in the private sector achieved this with incredible effort: literally all their time apart from sleeping was devoted to working in two or more jobs.

The extreme right-wing party MIÉP was not particularly successful in turning widespread frustration into votes. Those interviewed who did vote for MIÉP or showed sympathy for the party, not only had reasons to do so on the basis of their experiences in working life. Rather, frustrations stemming from failure or too high a price for success in the rapidly changing economic environment tend to reinforce and mobilise anti-Communism and anti-Semitism, views acquired through socialisation in a family which, after having suffered under the communist regime in the 1950s, was deeply frustrated by the political transition because they felt that the old elite was able to maintain its positions.

3.2.4.3.   *Alternative political reactions: experiences in working life strengthening social democratic or conservative political positions*

The question of the attraction towards the extreme right is just one aspect of the more general question about the political effects of socio-economic change. In the analysis of the interviews, we concentrated first on biographical paths marked by radical conversions in the perception of politics, ideology and, sometimes, voting behaviour. However, within the European research sample one can find many excellent examples of "conversion" taking various directions: political conversions that tend toward "defection" – from one position (e.g. from the social-democratic view) to abstention; political conversions that tend toward "voice" (Hirshman 1972) – from one position to another (from "revolutionary left" to social-democracy; from left-wing to extreme-right, from right-wing or centrist views to extreme right, from commitment to political parties to commitment to social vocational associations; from an apolitical attitude to trade unionism, etc.).

The subject of the enquiry of course made it necessary to pay particular attention to conversions to the extreme right. Yet this focus should not lead us to lose sight of the fact that, in each country involved in the SIREN project, the majority of people do not vote for extreme-right parties. Right-wing extremist attraction is a minority phenomenon. In addition to the political conversions discussed above, it is necessary to point out that we found also other forms of political conversions, which it was not possible to present in detail. Many people had had the same experiences as those described above but showed no attraction to right-wing populism and extremism. On the contrary, some were strengthened in their, say, socialist convictions. Some of these persons were highly active in social life: retired workers involved in charitable works or in local politics, young workers engaged in trade unionism, early retired managers organising cultural activities, or employees dedicating their spare time to family life. Others, though showing some ideological affinity to the extreme right, consciously distance themselves from the followers of extreme right parties: the young, self-employed "winners" of technological and economic development partly displayed economic-liberal world views bordering on Social Darwinism, partly shared anti-Semitic and nationalist views with the extreme right, but they do not want to have anything to do with the parties of the mediocre people and "angry losers".

Others, on the contrary, have suffered loss of status as a result of restructuring and have found themselves, in certain markets, competing against members of a socially inferior group. Nevertheless, they have not been attracted to right-wing extremism. Why them and not the others? Political socialisation in the family and the social milieu, mentalities and psychological dispositions do play an important role. A further explanation refers to the convertibility of skills or social and cultural capital which allows people to pull themselves out of "untenable" positions (Balazs et al. 2002). Unlike the skills of technicians, engineers or administrative personnel, the practical skills of a rolling mill worker or steel-maker cannot be adapted for new jobs or activities. But individuals exhibiting political and cultural skills, such as the know how to organise demonstrations, negotiating skills, skills needed for contacts with journalists, economic or managerial knowledge associated with trade union responsibilities, can be retrained or use their competences in various other activities.

3.2.5.   Conclusions

The qualitative interviews were aimed to lead to an understanding of subjective perceptions of socio-economic change and of points of attraction of right-wing populism and extremism. The analysis of changes in working life and of politics from the vantage point of workers and citizens gave rise to conclusions on how experiences in the world of work may be transformed into potentials of political subjectivity. What can be inferred from our sample of more than 300 in-depth interviews is that socio-economic change is in fact an important factor for explaining the rise of right-wing populism and extremism in various European countries. Only rarely in the interpretation of interviews focusing on how people are affected by socio-economic change was this not a decisive contribution to the understanding of the attraction of the extreme right.

There are, however, also other issues such as, for example, discontent with mainstream political parties, the crisis of political representation especially of the working class or family socialisation, issues that could not be described in this chapter (see Hentges et al. 2003: 123pp).

There is widespread agreement in the literature both on working life and on right-wing populism that the erosion of traditional structures of working life impacts on the political system. The reason for receptiveness to right-wing populism and extremism is seen in the economic and social crisis and its disintegrating consequences, such as unemployment, delinquency, precariousness and social insecurity (Bourdieu 1992; Perrineau 1997; Sennett 2000; Kitschelt 1995, 2001; Castel 2000). In the literature, this interrelation between changes in working life and support for right-wing populism and extremism is theorised in different ways (see also Flecker 2002): The erosion of norms and values leaves people with outdated normative orientation and tensions between their values and their actions. The dissolution of traditional social milieus and the recourse to allegedly natural categories such as race, gender and age form the prerequisites for a resurgence of right-wing extremism (Heitmeyer 2002). Focusing on the problem of increasing complexity and intensified contradictions of social life, populist messages and, in particular, scapegoat theories and authoritarian views can help individuals to create a subjective sense of consistency in their apprehension of social reality (cf. Zoll 1984). In a world where traditional institutions no longer provide orientation, views and concepts based on ethnicity, anti-elite sentiments or in-group/out-group distinctions may fill the gap. A related theoretical argument points out the damage to social and personal identity caused in periods of accelerated socio-economic change. In addressing imaginary ethnic or national communities, right-wing populism serves the need to compensate for lost certainties and offers opportunities for identification that may help to stabilise the self (Ottomeyer 2000; Dörre 2001).

According to the findings of the qualitative research within the SIREN project, providing orientation and stabilising identities do of course play a certain role, but they are not the only and not even the prevailing factors. Within the main patterns that emerged, other theoretical considerations seemed to be more helpful for the understanding of people's receptiveness to extreme-right ideologies. More indications were found for theoretical views stressing that the individuals affected by far-reaching socio-economic change need to reconsider their position in the social world. In this respect the following main patterns emerged from the interpretation of interviews in all countries under investigation.

The first pattern involves intensive feelings of injustice stemming from frustrations of legitimate expectations relating to various aspects of work, employment, social status or standard of living. Company restructuring, redundancies, early retirement, new management styles or intensified competition on the labour and housing markets devalue qualifications, acquired experience, previous hard work and sacrifices and bring to nothing the expected rewards for the subordination to the demands of a pitiless world of work. The experiences differ widely and may range from layoffs out of the blue or involuntary early retirement to the lack of recognition of professional experiences and

contributions. Such frustrations are often expressed as feelings of injustice: people refer to other social groups that do not subordinate themselves to the hardships of work to the same extent and who are taken much better care of or who are able to arrange things for themselves illegally. These are, on the one hand, managers and politicians with high incomes, "golden handshakes" and generous pensions and, on the other hand, people living on welfare instead of working or refugees supported by the state. The core theme is that the "decent and hard working" and therefore morally superior people are being betrayed and that they have to realise that it was stupid to stay honest and loyal and to subordinate themselves to the exacting demands of an increasingly cruel world of work. This means that political messages and ideologies of right-wing populism that address the double demarcation of "the people" from the elites on the top and from the outcasts at the bottom of society quite easily find a resonance.

A second clear pattern in the mental processing of changes in working life has at its core the fear of *déclassement*, the insecurities and the feelings of powerlessness that are associated with industrial decline, precarious employment or the devaluation of skills and qualifications. The experience of being a plaything of economic developments or anonymous powers can be clearly linked with right-wing populists' addressing the population as a passive victim of overpowering opponents. The same goes for people's nostalgic accounts of the good old (working) times and populists' glorification of traditional communities. In some cases, authoritarian reactions to insecurity and powerlessness could be observed, while others made clear that a lack of political representation contributes to the feeling of not being protected as workers. People attracted to the extreme right seem to be convinced that they can only count on themselves. Since social-democratic parties have shown less and less interest in the workers' world, the public recognition of the problems of social decline and precariousness seems to have become one of the competitive advantages of populist parties.

A third pattern could be found with people who experienced occupational advancement, e.g. through promotion within the company. As a consequence, some tend to identify very strongly with the company and its goals. Regarding their work ethics, the performance orientation seems to be strengthened, which raises the demands they put on their colleagues and subordinates. They tend to believe in the power of the individual's abilities, internalise the rules of a neoliberal capitalist system and often even seem to share an ideology of Social Darwinism, i.e. the "survival of the fittest" on the (labour) market. Intense competition, which leads to long working hours, high workloads and an increase in the often repressed pains of work, seems to strengthen such views. It became obvious in the interpretation that the dominant ideologies of neoliberalism and competitive nationalism in combination with the experience of ubiquitous and enforced competition, both between companies and between people, may make people receptive to modern forms of right-wing extremism.

Differences between countries result from different aspects of socio-economic change being experienced at the time of the research, but also from the different agendas of the various right-wing populist or extremist parties. Regarding the competition on the

labour market – but also in other fields such as housing – the consequences of the reunification and the immigration of ethnic Germans from central and eastern Europe played a major role in Germany, while in France it is the population and, in particular, the youth with a north-African background or in Austria refugees from the Balkans that dominate the debates. In Hungary it is people's struggle with the consequences of transition combined with anti-Communist legacies and the condemnation of parliamentary democracy as a "puppet theatre", whereas in Switzerland economic difficulties coincide with the damage to the image of Switzerland and the vanishing of traditional Swiss particularities. While in Denmark and Belgium the deterioration of welfare provision was strongly linked with the issue of immigration, the main point in Italy seems to be the combination of high levels of insecurity and a deep distrust and disenchantment with politics. These differences in the ways in which right-wing extremists and populists take advantage of discontent are in fact variations on a common theme.

In addition to national variations, the forms of individual political conversions differed widely. There is, in our view, no such thing as one main path to right-wing populism and extremism. This reflects the programmatic and partly ideological openness and inconsistency of most right-wing populist and extremist parties and their forms of addressing widely varying population groups. As the presentation of the varieties of political conversions showed, people in different social positions who have experienced socio-economic change differently are attracted to the extreme right for completely different reasons. This may explain the large potential of sympathisers and voters these parties have, a potential that seems to be considerably larger than voting intentions and voting behaviour show.

3.3. Perceived socio-economic change and right-wing extremism: results of the SIREN survey among European workers

Yves De Weerdt, Patrizia Catellani, Hans De Witte, Patrizia Milesi

3.3.1. Introduction

In this chapter we report and discuss the results of the third phase of the SIREN project: the survey on subjective perceptions of socio-economic change and right-wing extremism in eight countries. In this introduction, we first of all discuss the core concepts and main research questions. Next, the design of the survey is presented.

3.3.1.1. Main research questions

The core concepts of the survey (and main research questions in this chapter) are depicted in Figure 3-1.

Figure 3-1: Overview of core concepts and main research questions
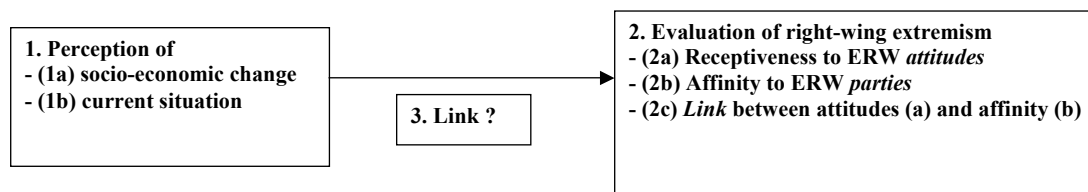
Our *first* research question relates to the *perceptions of socio-economic change* (SEC). Did the respondents experience (positive or negative) socio-economic change during, for example, the last five years? An analysis of the possible impact of SEC on political attitudes obviously needs to start by charting this "independent" variable. Figure 3-1 shows that we will be analysing two components. First, we will report on the perception of socio-economic change as such. Next, we will also report on some additional variables, related to the current situation of the respondents (e.g. the evaluation of their current income). The process of answering this research question will also include reporting on differences according to background variables (such as age, gender and occupation): Which category experiences more (or less) SEC?

The *second* research question refers to our "dependent" variable: the *evaluation of right-wing populism and extremism*. Here, too, two components are distinguished. First, we will report on the *"receptiveness"* of our respondents to extreme right-wing *attitudes*. On the basis of a literature review and the results of the qualitative interviews, five attitudes were identified that seemed relevant in predicting an extreme right-wing party preference. We will analyse whether our respondents endorse these views, and will examine differences according to background characteristics. Second, we will analyse

the *affinity* of our respondents to *extreme right-wing parties*: Are they in favour or against the local extreme right-wing party in their country, and how did this affinity evolve over the past five years? Again, we will examine differences according to background characteristics. Finally, we will also analyse whether the various receptiveness attitudes are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party.

Our *third* and final research question relates to the *link* between the *perceptions of socio-economic change* and the *evaluation of right-wing populism and extremism*. Is it true that respondents who experienced socio-economic change are more attracted to extreme right-wing attitudes and similar parties? In analysing this link, the role of social identification processes will be highlighted. We will also examine the presence of different psychological routes leading to a preference for a right-wing extremist party (e.g. a "winners" versus "losers" route), and identify the characteristics of workers who are more likely to follow these routes.

In answering these research questions, the results of the total sample are highlighted, without much reference to the separate countries involved. Readers who are interested in the results of a specific country can check these results in the original report (De Weerdt et al. 2004).

3.3.1.2.   Survey design

Taking the results of the qualitative research and the review of the literature on socio-economic change and right-wing populism and extremism as a basis, a structured questionnaire was developed which aimed at interviewing a representative sample of workers in the eight different European countries: Austria, Belgium (Flanders only), Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy and (the three regions of) Switzerland. The questionnaire consisted of 71 questions, covering seven different areas. When available, reliable questions and scales developed in previous cross-national surveys were used. The basic questionnaire was written in English and subsequently translated into the local languages. The operationalisations of the various concepts will be mentioned later on, when discussing the results.

Data collection was executed by private survey institutes in each country, co-ordinated by the Eurisko agency in Milan. The telephone survey (CATI: Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) was carried out between mid May and early July 2003. The duration of an average interview was 15 minutes. Filter questions ensured that only employed respondents who were born in the country and had performed paid work for at least five years were included in the sample. Quotas were set on regions, size of town and gender.

A total sample of 5,812 workers were interviewed. Except for the Swiss sample, which included 893 respondents, the other country samples each consisted of about 700 respondents. In each country, samples closely matched the working population, even though a slight under-representation of blue-collar workers, poorly educated respondents and extreme right-wing voters was noted, as is often the case in survey

research. The country samples were weighted in terms of key demographics (regions, size of town, age and gender) in order to increase representativeness.

3.3.2.   Perceptions of socio-economic change

3.3.2.1.   Socio-economic change during the last five years

All respondents were asked whether they had experienced socio-economic change in their work situation during the last five years. The questions were: *"Compared to five years ago, would you say that the amount of work you have to do has clearly increased, increased, stayed about the same, decreased, or clearly decreased?"* A similar question was asked regarding job autonomy ("the possibility to make your own decisions at work"), the social atmosphere at work ("how well people interact"; answering categories: "worsened" versus "improved"), job security and the financial situation of the family. The last variable is the only one that exceeds the work situation of the respondent, since it refers to his/her family as a whole. Table 3-3 contains the answers to these questions (percentages and means).

Table 3-3:   Perceptions of socio-economic change during the last 5 years (in percentages)

	Amount of work	Job autonomy	Social atmosphere	Job security	Family finances
1. Clearly decreased/ worsened	2.8	1.8	4.1	5.4	3.4
2. Decreased/worsened	11.2	8.4	21.9	21.6	20.1
3. Stayed about the same	25.3	45.1	48.4	54.9	36.7
4. Increased/improved	37.7	32.2	19.7	13.3	32.5
5. Clearly increased/ improved	22.9	12.5	6.0	4.8	7.3
Average change	**3.67**	**3.45**	**3.00**	**2.90**	**3.20**

Note: For "social atmosphere", the answering categories were "worsened" versus "improved". For all other variables, the answering categories ranged from "decreased" to "increased".

The results in Table 3-3 show no uniform trend. Some aspects of the work situation improved during the last five years, whereas others worsened. On average, job autonomy increased (44.7% reported an increase, whereas only 10.2% reported a decrease). This suggests a positive development, since job autonomy is associated with an increase in well-being (e.g. Karasek and Theorell 1990). The financial situation of the family equally improved (39.8% reported an increase, whereas 23.5% reported a decrease). These positive trends are however counterbalanced by some negative ones. Most striking is the increase in the amount of work. No less than 60.6% of the respondents reported an increase in workload, whereas only 14.0% reported a decrease. This development seems to be a negative one, since an increase in workload is

consistently associated with a decrease in well-being (e.g. Karasek and Theorell 1990). On average, also the job security of our respondents decreased slightly: for 27% job security decreased, whereas only 18.1% reported an increase. Finally, the results regarding social atmosphere are remarkable too, as on average no change is noted. The group which reported an improvement in the atmosphere at work is of exactly the same size as the group which reported that the atmosphere had worsened (each time about 26%).

3.3.2.2.   Evaluation of the current situation

The collation of information on experienced change was completed by some questions about the current situation of the respondents. First, all respondents had to answer the question *"In your opinion, how large is the probability that you will become unemployed in the near future?"* (adopted from De Witte 1999a). Self-employed respondents were asked *"In your opinion, how large is the probability that you will have to close down your business in the near future?"* Respondents could rate this probability on a five-point scale, ranging from "very small or impossible" (1) to "very large" (5). About 10% of the wage earners (9.6%) answered that this probability was very or rather large. For 76.5% this probability was rated as rather or very small. The percentages were similar for the self-employed (12.1% very/rather large; 74.2% very/rather small). So, on average, job insecurity was experienced as relatively low.

In order to measure the evaluation of the current income, respondents were asked to rate the question *"How would you evaluate the total amount of income of your household?"* on a four-point scale, ranging from "1" ("We do not have enough, and have huge difficulties to get by") to "4" ("We have more than enough, we can even save money"). On average, respondents indicated that they had enough income to get by without difficulties (score: 3.26). About 38.2% reported that they could even save money. Only 10.8% indicated that they did not have enough, and experienced some (or huge) difficulties to get by.

Finally, the respondents' perceptions of injustice were operationalised as their member group being treated unfairly as compared to other groups, and measured through the concept of collective (relative) deprivation (De Weerdt and De Witte 2004). The respondents had to rate three items on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An analysis of the principal components showed the presence of a single factor. As a consequence, a factor score was calculated for the entire dataset[3]. The results show that the respondents felt somewhat deprived. About 57% stated that they do not get the appreciation they deserve, and only 40.5% felt that they had the power needed to defend their interests. Surprisingly few respondents (40%) reported that they are sufficiently rewarded for the work they do.

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[3] Factor scores represent a deviation from the overall mean of the sample. This mean becomes zero. As a consequence, factor scores are relative scores (expressing the position of the respondent compared to all others), rather than absolute scores, indicating the absolute level of collective deprivation, for example.

3.3.2.3. Do certain categories experience more (or less) socio-economic change?

In order to find out whether there were differences within our sample regarding the experience of socio-economic change, a series of univariate analyses of variance were performed. The results of these analyses are presented in appendix 1. In general, these differences are limited in scope.

Gender differences were rather limited, with men scoring slightly better concerning the actual income of the household. They also experienced a slight increase in income compared to women, and felt a bit more deprived.

Age turned out to be the most relevant variable affecting changes in autonomy, social atmosphere and job security. Older workers reported a decrease in job autonomy, job security, family income and a worsening of the social atmosphere at work. The evaluation of the current situation was not affected by age, however, indicating that age was especially important in the experience of change in socio-economic conditions during the last five years. Our results thus suggest a negative development in the labour market position of older workers. This is in line with the conclusions of a recent study by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2003a).

The *level of education* of our respondents affected almost all variables, but especially those related to the income of the family. A higher educational level was associated with a more positive evaluation of the current income, and with a positive change in family income. However, the workload also increased among the highly educated. The *occupational position* revealed similar differences: Senior managers and high-ranking civil servants in particular expressed a positive evaluation of their income, and experienced a positive development in family income during the last five years. Additionally, this category (and the professionals) also experienced an increase in job autonomy. The latter were also associated with an increase in workload, however. Blue-collar workers experienced more job insecurity, a finding not uncommon across Europe (Näswall and De Witte 2003). Taken together, these findings suggest rather classic "social class" cleavages, with blue-collar workers occupying a less privileged position, reflected in their higher levels of collective (relative) deprivation.

The *sector* in which the respondents worked also proved relevant to a certain degree. Two findings were most striking. Respondents from the public sector experienced the strongest increase in workload during the last five years. The current perception of job insecurity was however lower among the respondents from the public sector compared to those working in other sectors (and especially the secondary sector).

3.3.3.   Evaluation of right-wing extremism

3.3.3.1.   Receptiveness to right-wing extremism

In the research literature on right-wing extremism, five attitudes are reported that prove relevant in the description of *"receptiveness"* to right-wing extremism: prejudice against immigrants, nationalism, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and political powerlessness (for overviews: Billiet and De Witte 1995; Lubbers 2001; Pratto 1999). These attitudes increase the propensity to sympathise with (or vote for) right-wing extremist or populist parties. As a consequence, we can consider these attitudes as aspects that make respondents "receptive to right-wing populism and extremism".

These five attitudes were measured by means of already existing attitude scales, consisting of several (e.g. 5) items. All items were scored on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An analysis of the principal components demonstrated that these five attitudes can indeed be distinguished among our respondents[4]. Factor scores were computed for each attitudinal dimension which will be used throughout this chapter. In this part, however, we will illustrate the evaluation of the five receptiveness attitudes with some typical items.

Prejudice against immigrants or "everyday racism" (De Witte 1999b) refers to negative attitudes towards foreigners because they are perceived as an (economic or cultural) threat. These negative attitudes play a crucial role in *ethnic competition theory* (Coenders 2001). This theory combines realistic conflict theory (Campbell 1967) and social identification theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Conflict theory states that social groups have conflicting interests because relevant material goods (employment, housing, social security) are scarce. This scarcity promotes competition. As a consequence, autochthonous respondents lacking essential resources develop negative attitudes towards immigrants, which make them susceptible to the appeal of extreme right-wing parties. Social identification theory adds to this view. This theory highlights identification processes, through which people build a positive in-group identity by contrasting their identity to a negative out-group.

The five items used to measure this attitude were adopted from previous research (Cambré, De Witte and Billiet 2001). On average, our respondents showed a rather positive attitude towards immigrants. This is witnessed by the rather low agreement with items such as *"Immigrants take away our jobs"* (16.9% agree) and *"Immigrants are a threat to our culture and customs"* (14.9% agree). The attitude of our respondents became less positive, however, when crime was discussed. About 42.3% agreed with the statement that *"Immigrants increase crime rates in our country"*.

Nationalism represents a positive attitude towards the autochthonous group ("in-group"). It plays a crucial role in the *theory of social disintegration,* stressing the effects

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[4]   Note that the amount of items for some dimensions needed to be reduced somewhat in order to obtain a similar structure in each country. The exact amount of items used to measure each component is mentioned further on in this text.

of disintegration caused by processes of modernisation and social exclusion, for example (e.g. Falter and Klein 1994). This theory assumes that individuals who feel disintegrated because of the important and rapid socio-economic changes of the last ten years are more likely to be receptive to nationalism because nationalism constitutes a substitute for social integration. Nationalism offers new group bounds and an identity, and thereby offers a substitute form of (social) integration. Because this integration is highly symbolic, this theory is sometimes referred to as the theory of *symbolic interests* (e.g. Lubbers and Scheepers 2000).

Nationalism can be measured in different ways. In this study, the concept of *"chauvinism"* was chosen, with three items adopted from Coenders (2001). Chauvinism refers to general national pride, a view of uniqueness and superiority of a person's own country and national in-group, to which one is (uncritically) attached. Chauvinism also implies a downward comparison of other countries and national groups. Our respondents, on average, showed a moderate level of chauvinism. About 40% agreed that *"Generally speaking, my country is a better country than most other countries"*. One item was rather strongly endorsed: 65.5% agreed with *"I would rather be a citizen of my country than of any other country in the world"*. Chauvinist feelings were not extreme, however, as witnessed by the fact that 'only' 22.7% agreed with the statement *"The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like the citizens of my country"*.

The *theory of psychological interests*, stemming from the psychological tradition of the Frankfurt School, highlights the importance of *authoritarianism* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson and Sanford 1950). Adorno et al. considered authoritarianism to be a personality trait, predicting ethnocentric attitudes and increasing the susceptibility of the individual for right-wing extremism. At present, authoritarianism is conceived as an attitude dimension with three basic components (Altemeyer 1988): conventionalism (rigid conformism to conventional norms and strict moral codes), authoritarian submission (uncritical and full submission to in-group authorities) and authoritarian aggression (fierce rejection and punishment of violators of conventional norms).

Authoritarian attitudes are measured with five items adopted from Meloen, van der Linden and De Witte (1994) and Altemeyer (1998). On average, our respondents showed a moderate level of authoritarianism. 57.2% agreed with the statement *"Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn"* and even 62.3% endorsed the item *"What we need most, more than laws and political programmes, is a few courageous and devoted leaders in whom the people can put their faith"*. Agreement was lower for other statements, however. About 43.1% agreed that *"Sex crimes such as rape and abuse of children deserve more than just imprisonment, such criminals ought to be publicly whipped or worse"*, and 'only' 32.1% endorsed the statement *"We need strong leaders who tell us what to do"*.

Next to authoritarianism, a rather recent theoretical approach was included as well: the concept of *social dominance orientation* (SDO). SDO is "a general attitudinal orientation towards inter-group relations, reflecting whether one generally prefers such relations to be equal, versus hierarchical" (Pratto et al. 1994). SDO thus reflects an

individual's tendency to classify social groups along a superiority versus inferiority dimension, stressing in-group superiority and favouring policies that maintain social inequality. This motivation to dominate over others was originally conceived as part of the concept of authoritarianism. Recent research however showed these concepts to be virtually unrelated (Altemeyer 1998; Duriez and Van Hiel 2002). SDO independently contributes to the prediction of attitudes such as ethnic prejudice, nationalism and the support of punitive policies, and to the preference for extreme right-wing parties (Pratto et al. 1994; Pratto 1999). As a consequence, it is sometimes referred to as a new (and modern) form of authoritarianism (Duriez and Van Hiel 2002).

Social dominance orientation was measured with three items, adopted from Pratto et al. (1994). On average our respondents showed a moderate level of SDO. About 58% endorsed the item *"I find it normal that some people have more of a chance in life than others"*, and 49.5% agreed with the idea that *"Some people are just inferior to others"*. Finally, 41.4% approved the item *"To get ahead in life, it is sometimes necessary to step on others"*. This emphasis on inequality was somewhat counterbalanced by the strong endorsement of items such as *"All humans should be treated equally"* and *"Economic equality should be stressed"* (respectively 86.9% and 77.9% agreement). These items could not be included into the measurement of SDO, however.

Finally, the *theory of political dissatisfaction and protest voting* was also included in our research design. This theory suggests that people who are adversely affected by socio-economic change become dissatisfied with politics. They experience political powerlessness and develop distrust in politics and politicians as a response to these changes. As a consequence, they vote for an extreme right-wing party, as an expression of protest against the political "establishment" ("protest vote", see for example Billiet and De Witte 1995; Van den Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2000). *Political power-lessness* refers to a feeling of lack of both political efficacy and political trust. Political efficacy concerns an individual's sense of personal competence in influencing the political system. Political trust includes the perception that the political system and authorities are responsive to the public's interests and demands.

Political powerlessness was measured with three items, based on Campbell, Gurin and Miller (1954); Olsen (1969) and Watts (1973). On average, our respondents exhibited a rather high level of powerlessness and dissatisfaction. About 59.7% agreed with the statement *"It seems that whatever party people vote for, things go on pretty much the same"*, and 57.6% endorsed *"People like me have no influence on what the government does"*. The most pronounced negative view is witnessed by 71.4% agreeing with *"The people we elect as members of parliament very quickly lose touch with their voters"*.

3.3.3.2.   Affinity to extreme right-wing parties

The respondents were finally asked to evaluate the most representative extreme right-wing party in their country (including its political stands), on a scale ranging from +2 ("I am strongly in favour of it") to -2 ("I am strongly against it"). The respondents were also asked to compare their current evaluation of that party with the one they had five

years ago and to state whether they were more in favour of it, less in favour of it or whether they had the same evaluation. Representative right-wing populist or extremist parties chosen in each country were the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs for Austria; Vlaams Blok for Belgium; Dansk Folkeparti for Denmark; Front National for France; MIÉP (Hungarian Justice and Life Party) for Hungary; Alleanza Nazionale for Italy; Union Democratique du Centre, Schweizerische Volkspartei and Unione Democratica di Centro for Switzerland. In Germany, no data were gathered on party affinity, due to the lack of a nationwide and well-known extreme right-wing party. This implies that Germany is never included in analyses of extreme right-wing party affinity.

The results showed that extreme right-wing parties do indeed have a following. About 18.6% of the interviewees were in favour of the local extreme right-wing party (of which 2.4% were strongly in favour). About half of the respondents (47.4%) were against, of which 23.3% were even strongly against. So, the proportion of those strongly against an extreme right-wing party is roughly 10 times larger than those strongly in favour. Note that 34.1% of the respondents were "neither in favour, nor against". When comparing the current evaluation with the evaluation from five years ago, 18.2% said that they were more in favour nowadays than five years ago, whereas 18% indicated that they became less in favour. The rest of the sample (63.8%) did not change their evaluation during this period. The results on the development thus suggest that the adherence to an extreme right-wing party seems to be somewhat variable.

3.3.3.3. *Are certain categories more receptive to and more attracted by right-wing extremism?*

In order to analyse the differences in receptiveness and affinity, a series of multiple regression analyses were performed, with the various receptiveness attitudes and the affinity variable as the dependent variables, and five background characteristics as independent variables. Table 3-4 contains the results of these analyses. First, standardised regression coefficients are shown, expressing the unique association of a given background characteristic with the dependent variable, after controlling all other variables. At the bottom of the table, the R and R^2 are shown, indicating the explanatory power of the analysis. R^2 is especially relevant as it expresses the proportion of variance of the dependent variable which is explained by the analysis.

Table 3-4: **Association of background variables with receptiveness and affinity (results of a regression analysis, standardised regression coefficients)**

	Prejudice against immi- grants	Chauvi- nism	Authorita- rianism	Social domin- ance orienta- tion	Political power- lessness	Extreme right- wing party affinity
Gender (-> female)	0.06***	-0.03ns	-0.02ns	-0.04**	0.06***	-0.04*
Age	0.05***	0.07***	0.03*	-0.00ns	-0.01ns	-0.02ns
Educational level	-0.13***	-0.05**	-0.19***	-0.09***	-0.17***	-0.21***
Occupational position						
Blue-collar or farm worker	0.13***	0.06*	0.16***	0.01ns	0.09***	0.05ns
White-collar worker, low-ranking civ. serv.	0.06*	0.01ns	0.07**	-0.03ns	0.06**	0.03ns
Middle mgr, teacher, middle-ranking civ. serv.	0.05*	0.03ns	0.02ns	-0.02ns	0.02ns	-0.01ns
Senior mgr, exec. staff, high-ranking civ. serv.	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*
Entrepreneur	0.06**	-0.00ns	0.05**	0.04**	0.06***	0.00ns
Professional (doctor, lawyer, etc.)	-0.01ns	-0.01ns	-0.01ns	0.04**	-0.02ns	0.03ns
Trader, farmer, craftsman	0.03*	0.04*	0.05**	0.09***	0.02ns	0.06***
Sector						
Primary/secondary	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*	*ref.*
Tertiary	0.01ns	0.01ns	0.03ns	0.03ns	-0.01ns	0.04*
Public	-0.05**	-0.02ns	-0.03ns	-0.03ns	-0.03ns	-0.06**
Other	-0.01ns	-0.01ns	-0.03ns	0.02ns	0.02ns	-0.01 ns
DF	(12.4727)	(12.4727)	(12.4727)	(12.4727)	(12.4727)	(12.4629)
F	20.21***	5.90***	36.84***	17.06***	23.72***	33.20***
R	0.22	0.11	0.29	0.18	0.23	0.28
R^2	0.05	0.01	0.09	0.04	0.06	0.08

Note: $*=p<0.05$ $**=p<0.01$ $***=p<0.001$

The analyses in Table 3-4 show that gender, age and sector are much less important than occupational position and the level of education in determining the five receptiveness attitudes. Women display slightly more prejudice against immigrants and slightly more political powerlessness than men, whereas men are slightly more in favour of SDO. These differences, however, are very small. Age also contributes a little to the explanation of the receptiveness attitudes, with older respondents expressing slightly

more prejudice, authoritarianism and chauvinism. Again, these differences are very limited. The impact of the sector is even more restricted: The only effect is a somewhat lower level of prejudice against immigrants in the public sector. The effect of the educational level and the occupational position is generally more pronounced. A higher level of education is especially associated with lower authoritarian attitudes, lower political powerlessness and less prejudice against immigrants. Blue-collar workers (and to a lesser extent low ranking white collar-workers) are more authoritarian, more prejudiced and feel more political powerlessness. A small effect on prejudice, authoritarianism and powerlessness is also noted for the entrepreneurs and the self-employed (traders, craftsmen, etc). The latter also seem to stress SDO slightly more than all other categories. The explanatory power of the analyses, however, is rather limited, as witnessed by the low proportions of variance explained by the five background variables (see R^2 at the bottom of Table 3-4).

The analysis of extreme right-wing party affinity (column 6 of Table 3-4) shows the level of education to be most important: A higher level is associated with a less favourable evaluation of the local extreme right-wing party. Here again, the explanatory power of the analysis is rather limited: Only 8% of all differences can be explained by introducing the five background characteristics.

3.3.3.4.   Does receptiveness lead to affinity?

As a final step in our analysis, we examine whether the five receptiveness attitudes are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party: Do people vote for an extreme right-wing party because of, for example, prejudice, chauvinism, authoritarianism, SDO or political powerlessness? We analyse this link by performing a regression analysis with affinity as the dependent variable, and the five background characteristics together with the five receptiveness attitudes as independent variables. Table 3-5 contains these results (the coefficients of the background variables are not shown in this table).

Table 3-5: **Association of receptiveness attitudes with extreme right-wing party affinity, overall and per country (results of a regression analysis, standardised regression coefficients)**

	Overall (1)	Austria	Belgium	Denmark	France	Hungary	Italy	Switzerland
Prejudice against immigrants	0.30***	0.17***	0.48***	0.51***	0.37***	0.15**	0.21***	0.36***
Chauvinism	0.07***	0.02^{ns}	0.14***	0.03^{ns}	-0.02^{ns}	0.11*	0.09*	0.16***
Authoritarianism	0.14***	0.19***	0.21***	0.24***	0.25***	0.07^{ns}	0.22***	0.25***
Social dominance orientation	0.07***	0.07^{ns}	0.01^{ns}	-0.01^{ns}	0.05^{ns}	-0.02^{ns}	0.16***	0.07*
Political powerlessness	0.05**	0.16***	0.20***	0.06^{ns}	0.12**	-0.07^{ns}	0.03^{ns}	0.10**
DF	(17.3774)	(17.522)	(17.513)	(17.532)	(17.501)	(17.439)	(17.508)	(16.652)
F	52.65***	5.26***	18.77***	14.50***	16.56***	3.86***	6.37***	21.10***
R	0.44	0.34	0.60	0.54	0.58	0.31	0.38	0.57
R^2	0.19	0.12	0.36	0.29	0.34	0.10	0.15	0.33

Note: *=$p<0.05$ **=$p<0.01$ ***=$p<0.001$. All background characteristics are controlled. The coefficients of these variables are not shown in this table, however.

The first column of Table 3-5 shows that all five receptiveness attitudes are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party. Not all attitudes are of equal importance, however. Prejudice against immigrants clearly stands out as the most important factor leading to a preference for an extreme right-wing party (bêta: .30, P < .001). Authoritarian attitudes play an additional moderate role (bêta: .14, P < .001). All other attitudes only play a small and minor role: chauvinism (bêta: .07, P < .001), SDO (bêta: .07, P < .001) and political powerlessness (bêta: .05, P < .01). Note that the coefficients of the last three attitudes are rather small.

Together, these five attitudes explain about a fifth of the variance in extreme right-wing party affinity, which is clearly an improvement compared to the analysis in which only the background variables were included (see Table 3-4). Interestingly, the coefficient of education (not shown in Table 3-4) drops strikingly after the introduction of the five receptiveness attitudes (beta drops from -.21 to -.12), suggesting that an important part of the impact of education on affinity is due to the attitudes related to the level of education.

Table 3-5 also contains additional information. All regression analyses were also performed for each country separately (with the exception of Germany). This allows us to verify whether the general trend is present in each separate country. The general trend that prejudice against foreigners is the dominant motive, with authoritarianism as the second important factor, is also found in four out of seven countries (Denmark, France, Switzerland and Belgium). In these four countries, between 29 and 36% of the variance in extreme right-wing affinity can be explained by the attitudes and background

variables included in the analysis. Austria and Italy show a slightly different profile, since prejudice and authoritarianism seem equally important, with SDO as an additional important factor in Italy (and more so than in other countries) and political powerlessness in Austria (and Belgium). Chauvinism is also more important in Belgium (Flanders) and Switzerland than in most other countries. Finally, this separate analysis reveals Hungary to be an "outlier". In Hungary, only 10% of the variance in extreme right-wing affinity can be explained. Here, only two attitudes play a (rather reduced) role: prejudice against immigrants and chauvinism. All other attitudes seem irrelevant in this country. This suggests that the motives to vote for an extreme right-wing party might be different in this Eastern European country than in Western European countries.

3.3.4. Socio-economic change and right-wing populism and extremism: the mediating role of social identity

The final aim of our research was to analyse the link between perceptions of change within the job domain and affinity with extreme right-wing parties, and to investigate the psychosocial processes that may underlie this link. In particular, we moved from the assumption that, under given conditions, experiencing change at work might mean experiencing uncertainty and threat.

People need to feel certain about their world and their place within it (e.g. Hogg 2000). Contextual factors, for example socio-economic crises and rapid change, may reduce people's certainty about their cognitions, perceptions, feelings and behaviours. In particular, rapid change may induce people to perceive that their personal identity is threatened. They may experience fragmentation, lack of control over themselves and their future. Unpleasant feelings of uncertainty may be enhanced if people feel that their social identity (Tajfel 1969; Turner et al. 1987) is also threatened, if they do not have a psychologically salient and stable group (e.g. in the work context: a group of colleagues) to identify with. The need of belonging and being committed to a group or a social category plays a relevant role in making people feel that they have a safe place in the world (e.g. Brewer 1995).

To reduce uncertainty, people usually look for clear-cut (i.e. secure) categories of social affiliation (for example, the nation). They tend to stress similarities between members of the same social category and differences between members of their social category and members of other categories. This leads to a strong favouritism towards the in-group and a strong discrimination towards the out-group (Jetten, Hogg and Mullin 2000; McGregor et al. 2001). Several psychosocial studies have in fact shown that people in conditions of uncertainty are especially likely to develop chauvinist and ethnocentric attitudes on the one hand, and prejudicial and xenophobic attitudes on the other (i.a. Sales 1972; Feldman and Stenner 1997).

It is interesting to note that in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination due to uncertainty may be found both in people who belong to high-status, powerful social categories and in people who belong to low-status, powerless social categories (Ellemers et al. 1992; Ellemers and Bos 1998; Doosje, Ellemers and Spears 1995).

People in a high-status, but uncertain, condition tend to be afraid of the out-group threatening their privileged position, and will defend their position through stating that it is fully fair and legitimate. They will develop supremacy ideologies, rationalising their in-group superiority and the out-group inferiority. People in a low-status, and still uncertain, condition tend to perceive the out-group as depriving them of what they deserve. They will state that their position is deeply unfair and illegitimate. In such circumstances, these people might be more receptive to fundamentalism, ethnocentrism and, more generally, the kind of issues dealt with by right-wing extremist or anti-system political groups.

Consistently, we expected that people who have experienced a positive change in their work conditions – who may be associated with people in a high-status, but uncertain, condition – and people who have experienced a negative change in their work conditions – who may be associated with people in a low-status, and still uncertain, condition – might both develop an affinity with extreme right-wing parties.

In investigating the presence of such a link, we speculated that this would be more likely to happen when people, in addition to experiencing change at work, experience a crisis in their identification with meaningful social categories at work. For this reason, measures of social identification at work were incorporated into the questionnaire, including both an identification with a limited and very concrete social category such as the work group, and an identification with wider and more abstract social categories such as the organisation or the professional category (i.a. Jetten, O'Brien and Trindall 2002; Ashforth and Johnson 2001; van Knippenberg et al. 2002). We hypothesised that a lack of social identification at work, but also an enhanced tendency to identify with a clear-cut and somewhat abstract category such as the organisation would be among the factors favouring a transformation of the perception of change at work into an increased receptiveness towards right-wing populism and extremism. Therefore, we envisaged the existence of a causal chain developing from the perception of change in job conditions to an identification at work, and from an identification at work to attitudinal antecedents of right-wing populist or extremist party affinity.

In order to test our model, we carried out a path analysis,[5] that is, a series of multiple regression analyses involving all the relevant variables. For most variables, factor scores were employed that were derived from the analyses of the principal components of the different measures for each variable included in the questionnaire (see details in De Weerdt et al. 2004). The list of variables follows below:

Perceived change in job conditions. Factor score based on a one-factor solution saturated by three items, regarding a perceived change in social atmosphere at work; job autonomy and job security.

Identification with the work group or the colleagues with which the person works.

Identification with the organisation, company or institution in which the person works.

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[5]   The analysis sample did not include Germany.

Identification with the occupational or professional category.

Social dominance orientation. Factor score. Single measures are listed above.

Collective relative deprivation. Factor score based on a one-factor solution saturated by three items, measuring the perceived appreciation received by a person's significant group; satisfaction with rewards received by a person's group and the perceived power of a person's group to defend its interests.

Chauvinism. Factor score. Single measures are listed above.

Prejudice against immigrants. Factor score. Single measures are listed above.

Authoritarianism. Factor score. Single measures are listed above.

Political powerlessness. Factor score. Single measures are listed above.

Right-wing party affinity. See above.

As a first step, a multiple regression analysis was carried out, with right-wing party affinity as the criterion and all the other psychological variables as predictors. Then, each variable shown to be a significant predictor in the first analysis was employed as a criterion in subsequent regression analyses, and so on, until all significant predictors of endogenous variables were identified. Except for the "identification with the organisation" and "identification with the occupational category" variables, all the other variables turned out to play a significant role in the path analysis. Most significant paths ($p<.001$) which emerged from the whole series of multiple regression analyses are shown in the causal model depicted in Figure 3-2. In the model, the partial correlation coefficients on the paths show the relative effects of the predictor variables on the endogenous variables, with all other variables that have paths influencing them (directly or indirectly) held statistically constant.

Figure 3-2: **Analytic path model displaying the relationships between a perceived change in the job domain, social identity, receptiveness attitudes and right-wing populist or extremist party affinity**
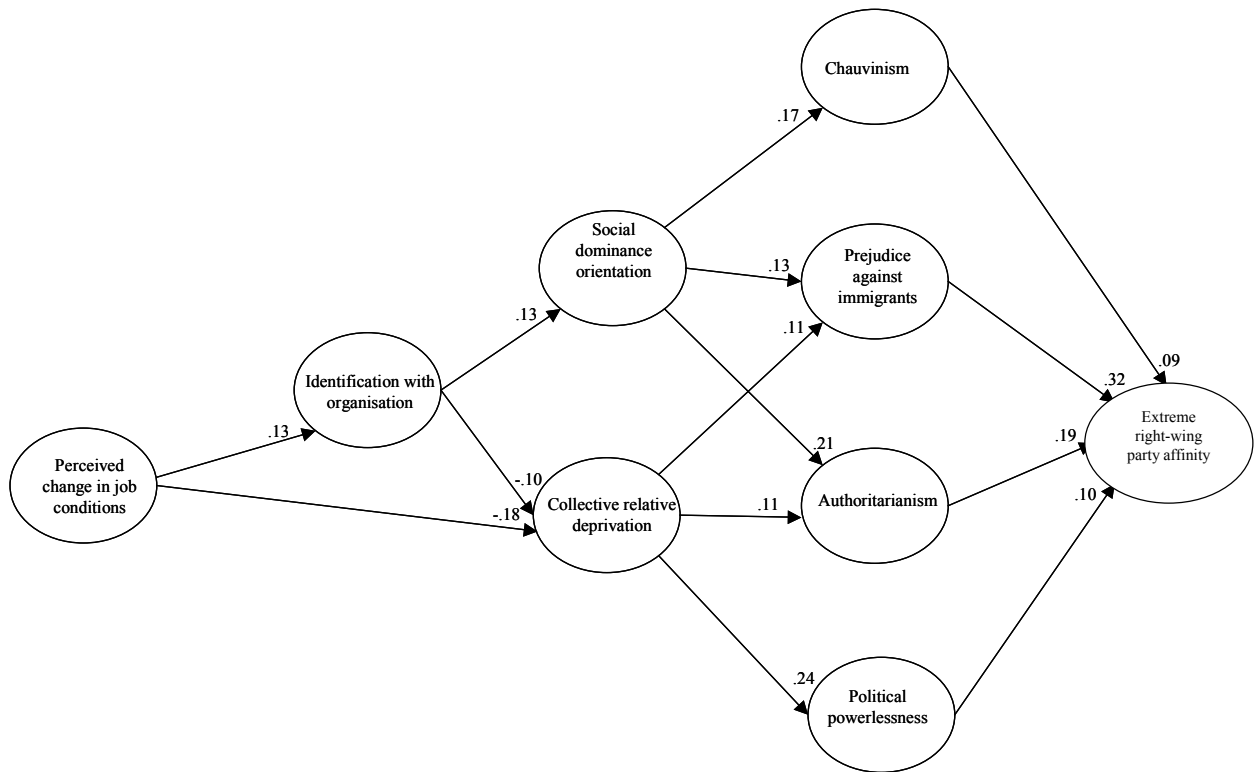
Note: Only most significant path coefficients ($p<.001$) are reported.

The analysis showed the presence of two different pathways leading from the perception of change in job conditions to right-wing party affinity, and in both pathways an identification with a person's own organisation played a significant mediating role.

We might label the first pathway as *"the winners'"* pathway. Perceived changes in a person's own working conditions are positively related to an identification with a person's own organisation ($\beta=.13$, $p<.001$). Given that a *high* score in the "perceived change variable" corresponds to a perceived *positive* change in working conditions, we may say that people perceiving an improvement at work are also more inclined to identify with their organisation. This identification may in turn favour a social dominance orientation ($\beta=.13$, $p<.001$), that is, an orientation of these people to legitimate inequality and dominance of some groups over others. The same people will be more likely to express chauvinism ($\beta=.17$, $p<.001$), prejudice against immigrants ($\beta=.13$, $p<.001$) and authoritarian attitudes ($\beta=.21$, $p<.001$) and, ultimately, to favour right-wing populist or extremist parties. Thus, the belief that the individual may successfully face up to any change and that people who may be an obstacle to this process should be put aside, seems to prevail in this first psychological route to right-wing extremism.

We might label the second pathway as *"the losers'"* pathway. A perceived change in working conditions is negatively related to collective relative deprivation, both directly (β=-.18, p<.001) and through the mediation of identification with a person's organisation (β=-.10, p<.001). This means that people perceiving negative changes in their job condition, and who do not particularly identify with the organisation they work in, are more likely to perceive that they are treated in an unfair way as compared to others. Collective relative deprivation, in turn, may foster prejudice against immigrants (β=.11, p<.001) and authoritarian attitudes (β=.11, p<.001). People following this path may also develop political powerlessness (β=.24, p<.001), that is, the perception that any collective reaction to injustice may be ineffective because politics is not reliable, too far from a real citizen's needs, and difficult to deal with. The outcome is an attraction towards the extreme right, very likely an attraction towards a strong leader, someone to whom individuals may delegate the solution of their own problems.

As already mentioned, neither an identification with a person's work group nor an identification with the occupational category played a role in either pathway. Actually, an identification with a person's work group was positively related to a perceived change in job conditions (β=.11, p<.001), but not to the other variables included in the model. This result suggests that an identification with relatively small groups within the job domain, unlike an exclusive identification with a higher-order and abstract entity such as a person's organisation, may be a way of coping with a change in job conditions without developing attitudes that may lead to an affinity towards the extreme right.

Which categories of people are most likely to follow either route to right-wing populism and extremism? A first answer to this question may be found looking back to the tables in previous sections of this chapter, in which the links between socio-structural characteristics of our sample and each psychosocial variable investigated in the questionnaire are shown, including variables featuring in the two pathways described above.[6] However, those data are limited to the extent that they refer to one single variable of either route at a time. A further analysis was therefore carried out, aimed at investigating the most frequent background characteristics of two extreme subgroups of the sample, made up by the individuals who achieved high scores on all the variables typical of either the "winners" or the "losers" pathway (see details in De Weerdt et al. 2004).

According to this analysis, the categories of people who are more inclined to follow the "winners" pathway are young people (i.e. under 35) with a secondary level of education, self-employed, and working in sectors such as commerce, professional services, or consultancy. The categories of people who are instead more likely to follow the "losers" pathway are middle-aged (between 35 and 54) blue-collar workers, with a secondary level of education, working in the sectors of industry or social services.

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[6] Analyses regarding socio-economic change were carried out on the whole sample, including Germany. However, when the same analyses were carried out without Germany the significant effects described here were still present, and are therefore also relevant for the present analysis.

3.3.5.   *Conclusion*

In this chapter, the results of a survey on socio-economic change and right-wing extremism in eight European countries were reported. The conclusion synthesises and discusses the main results of this survey.

3.3.5.1.   *Socio-economic change?*

The results on socio-economic change in the eight European countries were rather mixed. On average, the amount of work performed by our respondents increased during the last five years, and their job security decreased somewhat. Feelings of deprivation seem to prevail among a (small) majority of our interviewees. These negative aspects are counterbalanced, however, by an increase in job autonomy and in the financial situation of the household. At the moment of the survey, a large majority were not experiencing financial hardship, and only a minority felt insecure about their jobs. No clear trend was apparent regarding the social atmosphere at work.

Gender differences in socio-economic change were rather limited. Especially older workers reported negative changes (e.g. in job autonomy, job security, family income and social atmosphere). The findings regarding occupational position and level of education suggest rather classic "social class" cleavages, with blue-collar workers occupying a less privileged position (e.g. a lower income, less autonomy and more job insecurity), leading to higher levels of feelings of collective (relative) deprivation. Respondents from the public sector experienced the strongest increase in workload during the last five years, but reported the lowest level of job insecurity.

3.3.5.2.   *Receptiveness and affinity towards right-wing populism and extremism?*

In the research literature, five attitudes are reported that are relevant in the description of *"receptiveness"* to right-wing populism and extremism: prejudice against immigrants, nationalism, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation and political powerlessness. The results of our survey show that these five attitudes are clearly present among our respondents, though in varying magnitude. Our results also showed that extreme right-wing parties do have a following: About 18.6% of the interviewees were in favour of the local extreme right-wing party, whereas 47.4% of them were against (party *affinity*). When comparing the current evaluation with the evaluation from five years ago, 18.2% said that they were more in favour nowadays than five years ago, whereas 18% indicated that they had become less in favour. The results of the development thus suggest that the adherence to an extreme right-wing party seems to be somewhat variable.

Gender, age and sector were not very important as determinants of receptiveness or affinity. The effect of the educational level and the occupational position was generally more pronounced. A higher level of education is especially associated with lower authoritarian attitudes, lower political powerlessness and less prejudice against immigrants and a less favourable evaluation of the local extreme right-wing party. Blue-collar workers (and to a lesser extent low ranking white-collar workers) are more

authoritarian, more prejudiced and feel more political powerlessness. A small effect on prejudice, authoritarianism and powerlessness is also noted for the entrepreneurs and the self-employed (traders, craftsmen, etc.).

A final analysis showed that all five receptiveness attitudes are indeed associated with an affinity to an extreme right-wing party. Prejudice against immigrants clearly stands out as the most important factor leading to a preference for an extreme right-wing party, and authoritarian attitudes played an additional moderate role. All other attitudes (chauvinism, SDO and political powerlessness) only played a small and minor role.

3.3.5.3. *The link between change and affinity: two psychological routes to extreme right-wing affinity*

Our research finally also revealed the presence of two different psychological routes that may lead from a perceived change in job conditions to right-wing populism and extremism. In what we have called the "winners" route, people tend to believe that those who may be an obstacle to this process should be put aside. The same people are also likely to share the typical organisational goal of keeping competitive and defeating as many competitors as possible. In what we have defined as the "losers" route, people are deeply aware of their discomfort, due to negative change at work, but also perceive that they are not competent or strong enough to cope with it. The outcome is an attraction towards the extreme right, very likely an attraction towards a strong leader, someone to whom individuals may delegate the solution of their own problems.

Thus, our results suggest that both positive and negative change at work may increase perceived uncertainty. Change and the necessity for all workers to adapt to the ever-changing requirements of working life are dominant principles in the current work environment. But to what extent can people cope with continuous change, which also implies strong uncertainty and lack of control on the world around them? Two opposite reactions seem likely to arise, and they both seem somewhat "pathological". The first is the one we have found in the winners' group. It is a sort of *manic* reaction: Workers tend to feel that some categories of people, including themselves, are simply better than others, more capable of dealing with the uncertainties but also with the challenges that characterise contemporary working life. The second reaction is the one we have found in the losers' group. It is a sort of *depressive* reaction: People lose self-esteem, feel powerless faced with a work reality that appears completely out of control.

Prejudice against immigrants has been shown to play a highly significant role in both psychological routes from a perceived change at work to an affinity with right-wing extremism, suggesting that uncertain workers may easily focus on a clear-cut and easy-to-identify out-group, such as the one made up by foreigners, in order to reduce uncertainty. Foreigners may be taken as scapegoats, held responsible for what is wrong in the work environment, and the process of uncertainty ends up leading to misplaced aggressiveness.

Even if our research was mainly focused on highlighting conditions that may favour an attraction towards the extreme right, our data offer some insights into the conditions under which people may cope with positive or negative changes at work without

developing extreme right-wing attitudes. For example, we have observed that a strong identification with the work group may be positively related to a perception of change at work without leading to extreme right-wing attitudes. As we have seen in the introduction, an identification with a lower-order category, such as the work group, is the most likely to adequately fulfil people's basic need of belonging (Ashforth and Johnson 2001). In a context of change, such a need may become very urgent because people may look for psychological protection as well as for models on how to think and behave under conditions with which they have never coped before (Hogg 2000). It is hence conceivable that workers who may count on a strong identification with a lower-order group may be more psychologically equipped to face up to uncertainty that is related to change, and thus be less likely to develop ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes.

To conclude, the present research has demonstrated the presence of a meaningful link between psychological reactions to a change in job conditions and right-wing populism and extremism. Although the existence of such a link has been often hypothesised in the past, an empirical demonstration of this by a large-scale European survey had so far been lacking.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter we present the conclusions drawn from the research and the consortium's policy recommendations.

The conclusions and policy implications of the research were developed in two steps: first, the themes and policy areas to which a contribution can be made on the basis of the research findings were selected. These are work organisation and working conditions, insecurity and inequality, older workers, migration and political representation. Second, the SIREN partners discussed conclusions and policy implications in the light of both the policy context and other related research. This chapter draws on the contribution of the SIREN consortium partners and on the input made by a large number of participants in workshops held in several countries during the last months of the project. Because of the subject matter of the research, which relates to a broad range of policy areas, it is difficult to put forward policy recommendations in the narrow sense of the term. Rather, in the light of the research findings, fundamental policy problems are addressed and implications for policy making are discussed. The recommendations given are necessarily tentative.

4.1. Work organisation and working conditions

4.1.1. The empirical findings of the SIREN project

Work organisation and working conditions were important issues in the empirical investigations within the SIREN project because it turned out that the workplace level plays a crucial role in perceptions of socio-economic change. Work organisation in this context relates to the design of tasks, to cooperation and control as well as to working-time arrangements and contractual forms of employment. Working conditions mainly include the workload, demands for flexibility, including mobility and temporal availability, and cover both physical and psychological strains.

The analysis of the interviews clearly showed that poor working conditions and health-and-safety problems have not been overcome in modern workplaces. Often, blue-collar workers reported that work has become more repetitious with reduced cycle times. Many interviewees pointed to increased workloads and pressures at work. The interpretation revealed that in the past workers had resigned themselves to unpleasant and even damaging working conditions because they were at least able to reach an acceptable living standard and integration into society. Now, for some, the much more precarious situation questions this integration and consequently makes the disadvantageous working conditions much harder to accept.

The qualitative findings also showed that new forms of work organisation have ambiguous consequences for workers. On the one hand there is the trend to give

employees more influence and responsibility; on the other hand one finds increased management control and Taylorised work. Some interviewees suggest that the acquisition of greater influence and acceptance of responsibility in work is positive, as they experience this as more satisfying. Others perceive it as a form of personal pressure. The reactions will often depend on the way the changes are introduced, and on the extent to which employees are integrated into processes of change.

In the private sector, but even more so in the public services, restructuring of companies and organisational change at workplace level have become continuous features of working life. One consequence of restructuring that was felt by many interviewees is the devaluation of qualifications and work-related values. Sometimes, accumulated experience and appropriated skills are no longer recognised or appreciated. Changes in work organisation as well as new rules aimed at increased productivity, efficiency and flexibility can negatively impact on the quality levels employees can reach. Such developments are extremely irritating for many workers because they may violate work-related values or even threaten occupational identities.

Many interviewees, blue-collar and white-collar workers as well as self-employed people, have experienced increased pressure of work – usually described as an almost constant rise since the early 1990s. Interviewees say they are afraid they cannot keep up with the pace. Older employees in particular express this feeling but we also find it among younger people. This not only contributes to a negative evaluation of current working conditions but also enhances feelings of insecurity.

Graph 4-1:   **Overview of five work-related changes in eight European countries**
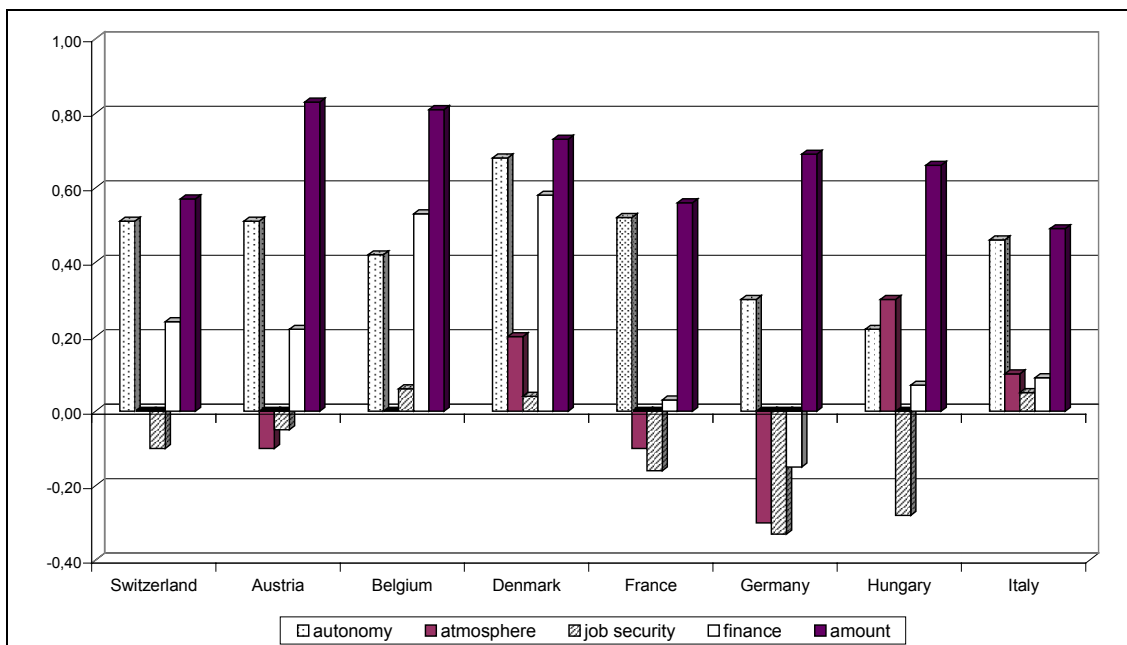
Source: Yves De Weerdt, Hans De Witte, Patrizia Catellani, Patrizia Milesi, Turning right? Socio-economic change and the receptiveness of European workers to the extreme right: Report on the survey Analysis and Results. Deliverable 4 for the project SIREN (2004).

The quantitative results are consistent with the qualitative findings: the subjective perceptions of workers interviewed in all countries indicate an increase in the amount of work as well as an increase in job autonomy. Perceived job security has decreased in five out of eight countries. The work climate has also deteriorated on average: only three countries have seen an improvement in social atmosphere.

No simple relation emerged from the survey data regarding the relation between changes in work and political orientation: no clear correlation could be found between negative changes and attraction to right-wing populism. Interestingly, affinity to the extreme right could be found both among those who report negative changes and those who report positive ones. The path analysis carried out within the evaluation of the quantitative data of the SIREN project has shown two different psychological routes to extreme right-wing affinity:

The first one, called the "winners" route, denotes categories of people who perceive a positive change in their job conditions. According to this model path, they develop a strong identification with the organisation and believe that some social groups should dominate over others. This, in turn, entails chauvinism, prejudice towards immigrants and, ultimately, an affinity towards right-wing populism and extremism. The conviction that the individual should successfully face up to any change and that people who may be an obstacle in this process should be pushed aside seems to prevail in this first psychological model route. According to the analyses, the categories of people who are more inclined to follow this first route are young people with a secondary level of education working in sectors such as commerce, professional services and consultancy. These people are likely to be either self-employed or part of small or medium-sized organisations with which it may be rather easy to develop a strong identification; they are also likely to fully share the typical organisational goal of remaining competitive and defeating as many competitors as possible. This type is well illustrated by cases from the qualitative research in which promotion and higher income coincide with high workloads and stress.

The second route to right-wing populism and extremism, named the "losers" pathway, was typically represented by people who have perceived negative change in their job conditions and, in addition, lack meaningful identification in their work context. These people are likely to develop strong feelings of injustice and are convinced that people like them are not sufficiently rewarded for the work they do. This may foster a displaced aggressiveness reaction, such as prejudice against immigrants, and authoritarian attitudes. These individuals are deeply aware of the discomfort caused by negative changes at work but they also perceive that they are not competent or strong enough to cope with it. The outcome is attraction towards the extreme right, including a very likely attraction towards a strong leader, someone to whom individuals may delegate the solution of their own problems. The categories of people more likely to follow this route are middle-aged blue-collar workers with secondary level of education, who are working in the industry or social-service sectors. They are very likely to work in large organisations with which it may be rather difficult to identify.

4.1.2.   The policy implications

The European Commission's Green Paper "Partnership for a new organisation of work" (1997) suggested the implementation of new forms of work organisation to enhance competitiveness and to make increased use of human potentials while at the same time improving working conditions. In the debate, these new forms of work organisation were often referred to as the "high road" to innovation and competitiveness. The cornerstones of such a strategy are "partnership" and participation, team working and flexible forms of organisation, as well as utilisation of knowledge for continuous improvement (Totterdill 2002). In the meantime, it has become quite obvious that the expectations regarding both the dissemination and the effects of a "high road" work organisation have not been fulfilled. Regarding dissemination, recent research shows that only a minority of European companies have implemented new forms of work organisation. Some 10% of companies surveyed in a study commissioned by the European Commission can be seen as "system users" of high-road strategies, applying an integrated approach to work design, co-ordination and human resource management (Business Decisions Limited 2002). Research on the spread of team working within the European Foundation's EPOC project revealed that less than 4% of European businesses have implemented team working as a dominant organisational principle (Benders et al. 1999). Furthermore, the use of new forms of work organisation seems to be restricted to particular groups of employees, giving workers with lower status or in non-standard employment less opportunity for participation (Helfen and Krüger 2002; Goudswaard and De Nanteuil 2000). In a report for the European Commission based on a Eurobarometer survey Gallie and Paugam state that "less than a third of employees in the European Union were in jobs where tasks were of high quality on measures of variety, opportunities for self-development and task control" (Gallie and Paugam 2002: iv).

Not only were expectations placed on new forms of work organisation not met in terms of its dissemination. On top of this, high-road strategies do not necessarily lead to win-win situations with both an improvement in the competitiveness of the company and the quality of work for the workers. Most research points to ambiguous consequences regarding the quality of work. Increased opportunities for participation and self-organisation are contrasted with increased workload and stress and problems regarding the work-life balance. In new forms of work organisation it is much more difficult to find ways to limit workloads. What is more, the demands of "flexibility" often mean flexibility *of* workers, clearly limiting the flexibility *for* workers. Overall, the perseverance of "old" forms of work organisation and the ambiguity of high-road strategies lead to increasing levels of stress and psychological strain, which is shown in representative surveys on working conditions (Paoli and Merllié 2000).

The findings from the SIREN project confirm some negative developments in working conditions that were established by specialised surveys. The analyses of the individual situation, of the subjective perceptions and of the meaning people attach to their working conditions revealed that the intensity of work and long working hours can mean a perceived threat to the viability of the job, to health and to social contacts. The

interpretation of the qualitative data also showed that suffering at work, even if it does not lead to overt job dissatisfaction, may entail feelings of injustice and aggression. We were able to understand how unpleasant and unhealthy working conditions may, under particular circumstances, nourish resentments against those who, in the media, are presented as illegitimately receiving income and care ("social scroungers", refugees, etc). In such a situation appeals to tolerance and political correctness are not only useless, they even exacerbate the problem. It is therefore important to acknowledge that often it is not only or primarily xenophobia and racism but a perceived lack of recognition, pains of work and feelings of powerlessness that are at the core of the problem.

> *What is needed are legitimate forms to express pains of work, public recognition of related problems and of course sincere efforts to improve working conditions.*

Negative consequences of detrimental working conditions are exacerbated by long working hours, the incidence of which seems to be on the rise: in the European Union more than 4 million people, or 16% of the workforce, now work more than 48 hours a week compared to 3.3 million (or 15%) at the beginning of the 1990s (European Commission 2003). The debate on working hours is of course a difficult one: on the one hand stress and strain at work seem to make it necessary to reverse the tendency towards the prolongation of working hours and revive the long-term process of working time reduction. Although changing organisational structures and forms of employment make it more and more difficult to limit working hours, in particular by statutory regulation, research shows that working-hours regulation through legislation or multi-employer bargaining still impacts on societal working time standards and therefore is an appropriate means to limit and reduce working time (Lehndorff 2003). On the other hand, previous reductions of working hours have led to even more stress and strain through an intensification of work. In France the introduction of the 35-hour week and the increased flexibility have led to ambiguous results for workers, namely further intensification of work and a decrease in income. What is more, it often is not as much the number of hours worked but the subjective meaningfulness of work and the degree of time sovereignty, which is increasingly threatened by fragmentation of work and lack of control, that most concerns workers.

> *Effective regulation of working time and workloads need to be developed that are sensitive to the diversity of employment relations, vocational identities and living situations. These regulations should consider the different needs of women and men.*

Apart from regulating working time, much more attention would need to be given to shaping working conditions and designing work organisation. The need might be comparable to the situation at the end of the 1960s, when workers started revolts against Taylorist work organisation. However, only few programmes or policy initiatives are currently available in the area of work organisation and improvement of working conditions (e.g. the Danish programme against repetitive work or the Finnish Workplace Development Programme).

Workplace development programmes need to be generalised, with the required adaptations to different societal conditions, throughout the European Union and policies aimed at improving the work-life balance have to be implemented.

Programmes to support new forms of work organisation and to improve working conditions and the regulation of health and safety as well as of working time are necessary but not sufficient. It is obvious that the shaping of markets has a more or less direct impact on working conditions. The political decisions creating and regulating markets for goods and services need to be taken into consideration when dealing with the problem of the quality of work. This becomes most obvious with the current "liberalisation" and restructuring of public services. This giant "societal experiment" calls for evaluation, reflection and, if needed, policy reconsideration. Currently, however, hardly any data are available on the consequences of liberalisation and privatisation on employment and working conditions. Within the SIREN project it was only possible to investigate subjective perceptions of change and individual reactions in some sectors and countries.

Problems of governance in the area of work organisation and working conditions indicate that workers' bargaining positions need to be improved in combination with the enhancement of public awareness. As the power position of the majority of individual workers is restricted by high levels of unemployment, and the bargaining power of collective labour threatened by increased capital mobility, it seems that, if little choice is available on the labour market, only decisive steps towards viable alternatives for individuals to paid work may create the conditions for far-reaching improvements in working conditions (e.g. "de-commodification" of labour through the introduction of a basic income). If not, it is difficult to imagine how workers will not perceive themselves as passive victims of structural change and corporate strategies. And it is precisely as a passive victim that right-wing populism addresses the "little man".

In restructuring processes, workers' experiences, attitudes and tacit knowledge need to be taken more seriously. Serious involvement of workers is required, which has various advantages: First, it may reduce the negative and expensive consequences of restructuring, which to some extent are produced by an underestimation of the complexity and too little investigation into work content, informal aspects of co-operation and distribution of work, workflows, communication processes, etc. Second, workers' sentiments of frustration and anger resulting from far-reaching top-down decisions, which we frequently encountered in the qualitative interviews, "victimise" those affected in the sense that they perceive themselves as helpless objects of management and politics: often our interviewees complained about "them up there" who "know nothing and don't care" about their real world of work "down here" – it is therefore important for trade unions and policy makers not only to address the material consequences of restructuring and continuous organisational change. It became obvious in the research that often workers find it harder to suffer violations of human dignity than material losses.

Opening up instead of narrowing options for safeguarding material existence outside paid work, and giving workers a strong voice in restructuring and organisational change may be both a lever for improving working conditions and a measure against feelings of powerlessness.

Right-wing populism does offer workers who are negatively affected by change an apparent interest in, and caring for, the "ordinary man". However, the "winners" route described above suggests that employees and self-employed people who have benefited from recent changes might also, if for a different reason, be attracted to extreme right-wing ideologies: they believe in the power of the individual's abilities, internalise the rules of a neoliberal capitalist system and often seem to share an ideology of Social Darwinism, i.e. the "survival of the fittest" on the (labour) market. Strong competition which leads to long working hours, high workloads and an increase in the often repressed pains of work seems to strengthen such views. Ubiquitous and enforced competition may threaten the integration of society. The emergence of extreme right-wing political orientations is only a symptom of this process and to some extent represents nothing more than mainstream views that have come to a head.

Regarding the "winners" from recent socio-economic changes who have become attracted to right-wing populism and extremism, further research is needed on how trade unions and companies can act against unitary organisational cultures fixated on competitiveness and denying a multiplicity of interests and organisational goals, because these nurture undemocratic and exclusionist stances. At the societal level this would mean preventing competitiveness from becoming a dominant value. This in turn might make it necessary to tame the ferocious economic competition between individuals, companies and countries.

4.2. Work and employment: insecurity and inequality

4.2.1. The empirical findings of the SIREN project

Many of the perceived negative consequences of socio-economic change and, in particular, change in work can be subsumed under the headings of insecurity and inequality. Within the qualitative interviews, perceived insecurities with regard to work and employment were a crucial concern. Taking the ILO concept of insecurity (cf. Standing 1997) as a point of departure, the most important forms of perceived insecurity are:

- job insecurity in the sense of doubts regarding the mid-term perspectives of a particular job within a company

- employment insecurity, meaning fear of losing current employment in impending redundancies, problems of coping with demands for performance, health worries or concerns about the economic viability of the company

- income insecurity and perceived threats to the standard of living or material subsistence due to unemployment, early retirement or precarious employment, and

- skill reproduction insecurity due to computerisation, increasing demands for theoretical knowledge, restructuring, decline of the industry or the occupation.

Relating to *job insecurity*, corporate restructuring and continuous change at workplace level lead to a general feeling of insecurity, which is aggravated by the fact that change processes are rarely participatory in nature and people have hardly any voice regarding the design of their jobs. These very processes often contribute, in the view of many respondents, to a devaluation of knowledge, skills and work-related orientations. Information technologies and new forms of work organisation affect the qualifications of people who have mainly had traditional, technical vocational training, while young people may see the reproduction of their skills acquired in education and vocational training threatened by new Taylorism. Job insecurity is further strengthened by intensified competition between workers, which leads to a deterioration of the social atmosphere at work.

Relating to *employment insecurity*, "downsizing" and restructuring are being felt even more severely. Insecurity also stems from changed forms of employment. The proportion of temporary work and fixed-term contracts is increasing, and those in such work arrangements expressed the feeling of being exploited because they felt that the company was not investing in them while at the same time it was trying to benefit from their work as much as possible. Insecurity impacts heavily on people's ability to plan their occupational and private future: interviewees in very precarious employment situations simply stated that they could not imagine themselves in three or five years from now because they had given up thinking about the future. They seemed to have given up the possibility of making any plans and were resigned to being forced to adapt to anything that happens to them. This is an alarming signal of loss of control and it has obvious consequences for people's well-being, their integration into society, their participation in further training as well as their ability to participate in consumption.

In contrast to those negatively affected by restructuring or changes in forms of employment, the successful, highly qualified and mostly younger people were often confident that their training, their competencies and social relations would allow them to actively adapt to the ever-changing requirements of working life. Their accounts are largely shaped by a discourse of challenge, risk and adventure, which might be a specific way of coping with insecurities by positively embracing them. Nevertheless, we found ambivalent feelings of insecurity among younger workers too. Highly skilled younger workers or self-employed say they do not think they can keep up this way of working and make a living from it very long, and they see this phase ("riding the wave") as a preparation for a consolidation of their overall life. Long working hours, partly unpaid work and high levels of flexibility and mobility are sacrifices they are prepared to make in order to secure their professional future or to find a steady job. This should be a cause for concern, given the prolongation of these entry-phases into the employment system and the scarcity of secure employment in many regions and sectors. It also contributes to the growing competition between younger and older workers which leads to a more widespread adoption of Social-Darwinist value orientations in working life.

Income insecurity is on the increase due to the spread of precarious work, low-wage jobs and non-standard employment as well as through continuous restructuring. The situation is exacerbated by reductions in, and limitations of access to social security benefits. Old-age pensions are a particularly sensitive issue in this context. Pension reforms and questioning the viability of the public pension systems combined with the fragility of private pension funds has left many people extremely insecure regarding their income after retirement. "What is secure at all nowadays?" asked one of our interlocutors in this context. The related frustrations are especially far-reaching for people who have been working in former state enterprises, as unequivocal findings from all the countries show: people working in the public sector feel they have made sacrifices during their career (lower wages as compared to the private sector) mostly in view of secure employment and a good pension. Now, as this perspective is under serious threat insecurity is hitting these workers particularly hard.

Skill-reproduction insecurity is particularly sharply felt by many blue- and white-collar workers. Some interviewees with low-level education complained that in working life more and more theoretical knowledge is needed and that employers are looking for intelligent workers for almost every job. To them, the levels of education needed appear simply out of reach. Information technologies entail important risks of social exclusion for people with poor reading and writing skills. Just like some older workers in the interviews, functionally illiterate people may be afraid of the new technologies. Functional illiteracy therefore seems to be an important point of attention in relation to labour-market policy.

Others are concerned that the changes in work are devaluing their knowledge, skills and competencies or their cultural capital more widely. Trying to understand their occupational situation leads us to the conclusion that, though further training is much needed, it is not the only remedy. First, the question needs to be raised of whether an organisational and technological development that builds on, and enhances, workers' knowledge and skills rather than destroying them is possible. Second, learning opportunities should be provided that make it possible for workers to adapt to new requirements on the basis of already acquired theoretical and experiential knowledge.

What is at stake is not only skills, but often people feel their work-related orientations such as internalised norms and values are being devalued. This relates to such diverse aspects as product or service quality no longer being an organisational goal, or the principle of honesty towards a customer needing to be violated in order to achieve sales targets. Some workers express their ensuing problems of identification with their work with feelings of shame or even disgust. Our interpretation of the qualitative material showed that this alienation is part of the political subjectivity addressed by right-wing populists in targeting the "decent" people and in idealising traditional communities or the past in general.

According to the interpretation of the qualitative material growing *social inequality* is a key issue for many citizens and, in particular, for those in precarious living situations or threatened by social decline. Some expressed their anxiety regarding their social position through the observation that there is hardly any middle class in society any

more and that the gap between rich and poor is widening. What is crucial in our context is that the inequality, in the view of many respondents, is no longer legitimate because it deviates too strongly from distributional patterns based on meritocracy. The frustrations and injuries that were expressed in many interviews mirror the partial abandonment of previously dominant principles of justice, namely the distribution of rewards according to performance or contribution – let alone according to need.

Growing inequality affects women especially. With regard to perceived insecurities and feelings of injustice most of the qualitative research showed that their perspectives were decidedly different from men's: female interviewees were very occupied with experiencing a double disadvantage they suffer as (blue-collar) workers and as women; women are more severely affected by socio-economic change and increasing insecurities and inequalities, as they are also confronted with experiences of sex discrimination as well as problems at work and in employment stemming from patriarchal family relations and the virtual impossibility of reconciling paid labour with motherhood. Not being able to maintain economic independence from a life partner in spite of hard work and far-reaching sacrifices is what hurts some of them most. Others, after having given up their own career-related hopes and dreams, are more concerned about the fate of their children. What makes some of the reproduction-oriented women attracted to right-wing populist views is, on the one hand, a lack of childcare facilities, school quality or access to vocational training and, on the other, the explicit recognition of their motherly self-image.

The situation of women is reflected by the quantitative results where the only variables that showed significant gender effects with regard to perceptions of socio-economic change were the assessment of the financial situation and how one subjectively survives on one's income: male respondents show a bigger increase (or smaller decrease) in their (family's) financial situation. And not surprisingly men find it easier to survive on their income than women do.

The quantitative findings regarding insecurity and injustice in general show a somewhat different picture to the qualitative ones – the basic material dimensions of change (job security, income) seem less problematic than the psychological and symbolic ones (perceived insecurity, social atmosphere): first, while most people in work in the eight countries consider the chance of losing their jobs or having to close down their business rather small, a large minority (27%) have experienced a decrease of job security in recent years (compared to only 18% who have experienced an increase). Second, on average an improvement in family income in seven out of eight countries (except Germany) was reported. Third, however, the social atmosphere at work is found to be deteriorating somewhat in Austria, France and Germany; a small increase is found in Denmark, Italy and the strongest in Hungary; in this context age turned out to be the most important variable (see the chapter on older workers). Fourth, interviewees who have seen their family income decrease over the last five years show a greater feeling of political powerlessness.

People who have experienced an improvement in their family financial situation in the last five years show lower levels of prejudice against immigrants as compared to people

who have seen their family income decrease in the same period. One general result was that a higher or increased income relates to lower levels of receptiveness towards right-wing populism and extremism. What is alarming in this context is that on average more than 20% of the respondents expect that their financial situation is going to deteriorate during the next five years.

We can conclude that many people consider the pressures of flexible capitalism as a great restriction on their personal well-being and freedom and would feel far more comfortable if they could rely on basic protection against at least some of the most severe insecurities inherent in contemporary societies. Long before talking about the dangers of right-wing populism and extremism, this is already an important message of our research: though discontent among working people has risen significantly in the course of the last two decades, a commitment by policy makers to fighting unemployment, social insecurity and growing inequality, as important causes of this discontent, seems to be widely missed by European citizens.

4.2.2. The policy implications

The European social model is usually seen as being able to combine economic performance with social justice; it is argued that Europe's more extensive welfare systems and better employment relations allow for a more socially acceptable and less conflict-prone adjustment to globalisation (Ferrera et al. 2000: 14; The Social Protection Committee 2003). According to this position the avoidance of large inequalities, long-term skill investment and more or less generous systems of social protection count as comparative advantages of the EU.

The debate on social protection within the EU is strongly focused on activation and employment to increase employment rates and to overcome alleged employment pathologies of the European welfare models (Hemerijck 2003). On the one hand, low employment levels and high levels of unemployment among low-skilled workers are said to be linked to wage and labour cost rigidities (high levels of social contributions) caused by high-wage employment in the export-oriented sectors in a number of continental countries. Thus low-wage, low-skilled employment is priced out of the market; a service gap is emerging. Due to growing budgetary restrictions and the obligation to bring down public deficits, these employees can no longer be absorbed by the public sectors, as was the case in Scandinavia for a long time. On the other hand, highly polarised labour markets, growing wage inequalities, the emergence of working poor characterise labour market developments in the Anglo-Saxon, liberal models of welfare capitalism. Thus there is a consensus emerging that different European welfare models suffer from different employment pathologies. The European Employment Strategies and the European Policies on Social Protection propose a number of measures for how different member states might tackle their employment problems (cf. Ferrera et al. 2000; Hemerijck 2003).

Focusing on individual perceptions, our research reflects the increasing tension between high levels of unemployment, the spread of flexible and precarious labour and the

dynamics of restructuring on the one hand and, on the other, a tendency to the weakening instead of strengthening of social protection. Recent results from an EU project on social protection and guaranteed minimum income systems shows an astonishingly high rate of insufficient protection: in the mid-1990s between 2% and 13% of the population at some point lived with less than the national minimum income standard (Groenez 2004: 10). It is a declared goal of the European Union to promote both flexibility of labour market and social security.[7]

The findings of the empirical phases of the SIREN project point to the following main political problems.

Working conditions: the situation at work already described in the first chapter is also important in this context because poor working conditions have negative consequences for job and employment security. With regard to the work design, to high workloads or long working hours, respondents often expressed concern about the mid- or long-term viability of their jobs. This is in line with other European research:

> "Poor task quality can be seen as an important long-term risk factor for social exclusion in that it is likely to reduce commitment to employment and to undermine the maintenance of learning skills. Poor quality tasks, in particular those with low job control, can also increase people's vulnerability to ill health from work pressure." (Gallie and Paugam 2002: iv).

Low wages: precarious employment and living situations and problems of maintaining living standards indicate that low income levels are among the most pressing concerns of many people. This reflects the incidence of low-wage employment which (including part time work) amounted to some 15% in the EU-15 and has been on the increase in many member states since the 1980s (Schulten 2004). This development especially affects women – in particular those with low qualifications. Income discrimination is well documented for all European countries. In Austria, for example, wage differentials between men and women hardly changed between 1983 and the end of the 1990s in spite of the relatively strong growth of the female participation rate, with average wages (controlled for working hours) of men 23% above those of women (cf. Böheim, Hofer and Zulehner 2001). In the UK the situation is similar: at the end of the 1990s women in full-time employment earned 82% of the average hourly wage of men in full employment, while women in part-time employment even earned only 60% of the average hourly wage of men in full employment (Grimshaw and Rubery 2000). The increase in precarious employment, which disproportionately affects women, has further increased wage inequality, with women being more likely to be in low-paid employment (Robson et al. 1999).

In this context, focusing on the employment level and less on the quality of employment and, in particular, creating employment in the low-wage sector may contribute to tendencies towards precarisation and increased inequality. The strong feelings of

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7   E.g. Council Decision of 22 July 2003 (2003/578/EC).

injustice caused by growing inequality as revealed in the SIREN research point to the limitations of such strategies.

Against this background the SIREN research once more points at the necessity to strengthen initiatives for equal pay for women and men at the level of legislation, collective agreements and companies' human resource management. The expansion of a low-wage sector as a means of fighting unemployment obviously entails high psychological, social and political costs.

Social protection: in view of our research findings, old-age pensions are of paramount importance in the debate on social insecurity. A specialised European survey on the issue showed that only 21% of the working-age population expect that they will not have problems getting by on the state pension. However, the state pension is expected to be the main source of income. In order to secure pensions, the majority is in favour of raising taxes and contributions, while raising the age of retirement is only favoured by 23% – which means that "many recent reform measures undertaken by national governments are at odds with the order of preferences as revealed by this survey" (European Commission 2004b: 9). Furthermore, the survey showed that more people disagree than agree with financial disincentives to early requirement.

The SIREN findings underline the sensitivity of the issue: withholding the expected rewards for a long life of hard work and denying access to early retirement with an acceptable income for those who have sacrificed their health at work or cannot find employment provokes particularly strong feelings of injustice. The issue triggers particularly strong emotions and may further alienate citizens from mainstream politics.

It seems to be crucial to restore security and calculability after a period of pension reforms and to reconsider the introduction of financial disincentives to early retirement as a means to raise the factual retirement age.

The second equally pressing problem relates to social protection of flexible workers, one of the topics in the debate on 'flexicurity'. Employment that deviates from the standard employment relationship usually involves fewer social rights. In an attempt to cut costs, member states have made access to benefits even more difficult and thereby made social protection even more dependent on permanent standard employment. Again, this development affects women in particular ways: non-standard and flexible forms of employment are of special importance to women because they often make it possible to take up employment and are therefore typical of the labour market integration of women. For a long time, only few women and hardly any mothers have been in standard employment relationships (Anxo and O'Reilly 2000). In the continental-conservative model of social security, non-standard employment does not offer adequate social protection (Bettio et al. 2000; Heidenreich 1999). In order to increase social protection, in particular for temporary workers, self-employed and quasi-subordinate employees, it is crucial to expand the concept of work under an employment contract and to create a minimum level of social rights common to all forms of work regardless of the type of employment.

The SIREN findings underpin the salience of an argument recently put forward by Swank and Betz (2003). They argue that globalisation, because of increasing insecurity,

contributes to the electoral success of the extreme right, and they show that right-wing populist and extremist parties are less successful in countries with universal and generous social security systems, because these reduce insecurity. This leads to the recommendation that countries with a continental-conservative system, for example, should make social protection less dependent on employment and thereby move towards the Scandinavian model.

> *The research findings once more underline the necessity to adapt social protection to the spread of flexible labour and to the increased female labour market participation.*

EU enlargement: possible consequences of EU enlargement need to be monitored carefully. Workers in the "old" member states may be concerned about possible negative impacts on their labour-market opportunities. Taking the SIREN findings, for example the relocation of jobs to low-wage countries and competition from legally or illegally employed migrants were the source of major concerns of people in vulnerable labour-market positions. There is a danger that the generally positive picture of EU enlargement presented by mainstream politicians contrasts with the experiences of many people and therefore aggravates the alienation of many workers from politics.

4.3.   Older workers

4.3.1.   The empirical findings of the SIREN project

The empirical results from the SIREN project point out that the far-reaching changes in working life experienced by many workers have a more severe impact on older workers. One phenomenon found again and again in differing shapes and sizes in the qualitative interviews was the experience of breaches of implicit contracts: workers have the impression that their performance orientation, actual performance and work and – what it comes down to – their subordination to societal norms go unrecognised or unrewarded. For older workers this obviously takes on more weight as they look back on a working lifetime or decades of hard work and loyalty to one (or several) companies.

Aspects of such perceived breaches of implicit contracts include the exposure to increasing insecurities and the devaluation of qualifications and work-related values. Both affect older workers more seriously: employees approaching or above the age of 50 realise that losing their job would mean long-term unemployment because they see no opportunities for themselves on the labour market. At the same time, older workers in particular recognise that they are the ones who will have to leave in the case of closures or redundancies accompanying privatisation and restructuring.

The qualitative research of the SIREN project also showed that redundancy, for older workers, often means a deep shock and the shattering of identities. Some older employees, who have experienced being transferred to some dead-end department or position, felt excluded and dumped in preparation for (early) retirement or dismissal. In a number of cases, violations of human dignity were reported by interviewees. Not

surprisingly therefore, middle-aged and older workers in many interviews took on a rather nostalgic perspective, dwelling and focusing on a far brighter past.

Some interviewees expressed feelings of uselessness and failure after being made redundant. Such feelings must be understood in the context of societal norms shaped by individualisation and competition, which encourage people to base the meaning they attribute to life on gainful employment and which foster the perception that only economically productive people are entitled to respect and appreciation. In the case of people who are excluded (or at risk of being excluded) from the labour market, for instance, these internalised norms can lead to either self-destructive self-blaming or to a projection of the responsibility for this exclusion (or *déclassement*) onto other social groups, such as migrants("scapegoating").

The quantitative data confirm the qualitative results, i.e. that older workers are more intensely affected by socio-economic change. Age seems to be the most relevant variable with regard to perceived changes in job security: under-35-year-olds report no clear decrease in job security. It can be expected that, due to the prolonged phases of entry into the employment system with high ratios of non-standard employment, younger workers will start with high levels of insecurity and gain job security later on. Interestingly, it is not necessarily the over-55-year-olds who report the strongest decrease in job security, but the category of people aged between 45 and 54. This is alarming given the time period this age group still needs to stay in the employment system – and in view of the meagre chance of finding a new job once having become unemployed.

Graph 4-2:   Changes in work by age groups
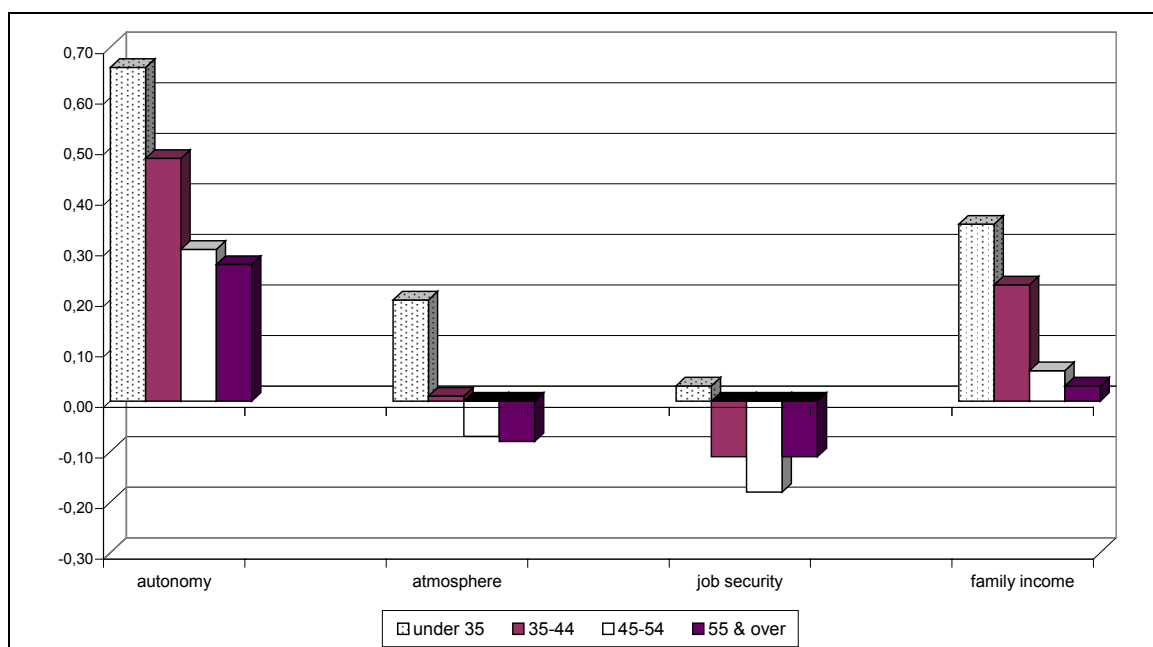
Source: Yves De Weerdt, Hans De Witte, Patrizia Catellani, Patrizia Milesi, Turning right? Socio-economic change and the receptiveness of European workers to the extreme right: Report on the survey Analysis and Results. Deliverable 4 for the project SIREN (2004).

The survey results show that older workers identify slightly more strongly with the company or organisation they work for. This could be interpreted as being due to loyalty bonds emerging from long-term employment relationships or the consequence of knowing that outside or after their existing jobs they most likely face long-term unemployment – which may strengthen their attachment to the employer owing to the sheer lack of alternatives.

With regard to perceived job autonomy, older people in all countries also report a significantly lower increase compared to young people. Last but not least, older workers also show themselves as being more pessimistic about the social atmosphere – the older the worker the more pronounced is the complaint about a deteriorating working climate; this mirrors the nostalgic stories by some older workers in the qualitative interviews.

In the light of the SIREN results, age does not appear to be a significant factor influencing an affinity towards right-wing extremism in any of the countries apart from Hungary, where a significant effect of age on extreme right-wing party affinity can be found. The variables of prejudice against immigrants, political powerlessness, authoritarianism, and chauvinism were chosen to determine this affinity. Interestingly, only chauvinism[8] turned out to be connected with age: except for Switzerland, where older people were assessed as being less chauvinist, increasing age in the other countries seems to be associated with chauvinist attitudes.

The middle-aged and older workers who showed an attraction to right-wing populism and extremism are a majority in the group that follows what we called the "losers' route" to right-wing populism, in which negative changes in work, strong feelings of injustice and feelings of political powerlessness play a major role.

4.3.2.   The policy implications

In recent years, work and employment of older workers has been high on the agenda of the European Union. At the Council of Stockholm in 2001 the goal was set to increase the average employment ratio of men and women between 55 and 64 to 50% by 2001. The main approaches and areas discussed in which measures can and should be taken are the following: the trend towards early exit schemes should be reversed; active and preventive measures should take a "whole working life" perspective and be embedded in the concept of "age neutrality"; lifelong learning approaches that do not solely aim at improving vocational skills should be pursued; measures should be taken to address all aspects relevant to an aging workforce, i.e. education, health, training, social protection, equal opportunities (European Foundation 1999).

Priority was given to joint initiatives by governments and social partners to keep workers in employment longer. In addition, an examination of tax and social security systems was recommended with a focus on the incentives and disincentives to

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8   Chauvinism was defined as a general national pride, a view of uniqueness and superiority of one's own country and national in-group. It refers to a rather uncritical attachment to one's own country and national in-group, and implies a downward comparison of other countries (DeWeerdt et al. 2004: 59).

individuals and enterprises. In support of these policies, research was carried out on good practice in the area of productive aging and fighting age barriers in working life (Walker and Taylor 1998). In a Communication of March 2004 (European Commission 2004a), the European Commission states that although progress has been made in terms of the Stockholm and Barcelona goals, this progress is insufficient. The EC concludes that member states will have to take drastic measures in the area of active aging, in particular financial incentives, access to training and lifelong learning and active labour-market policy, good working conditions, flexible working hours and counselling.

In the Joint Employment Report, the Commission had already spoken of a "lack of comprehensive approaches on active ageing" and calls the strategies of most member states piecemeal. Evidently, measures to reform benefit and pension systems and to reduce incentives for early retirement prevail (cf. European Commission 2001: 23). This seems to be one of the reasons for the crisis of legitimacy that became obvious in the SIREN research: access to adequate benefits and pensions has been made more difficult although the underlying problems driving older workers out of the employment system, such as poor working conditions, illness and unemployment, are far from being solved.

The perception of older workers seeing no or few opportunities on the labour market if they lose their jobs is in line with research showing that it is very difficult for older workers to re-enter employment once they have become unemployed (Behrens 2000). Measures by social partners to support outplacement strategies and active labour market policies are important to improve the situation. However, the main conclusion should be that keeping older workers in employment has to have top priority. Few countries are pursuing policies in this area. One of the most famous initiatives in this respect is the Finnish National Programme for Older Workers (FINPAW) and its emphasis on work ability.

To attain this goal, additional efforts seem to be necessary to fight age discrimination, e.g. in cases of restructuring. Regulation can support this: in Sweden, for example, the "last in, first out" rule limits the possibility of selecting older workers for redundancy. Although in practice the effects of the law are limited by a range of exemptions, job protection may be a means to limit companies' strategies to externalise costs caused by unsuitable working conditions (Calleman 1999).

As already pointed out, the issue of incentives for a longer working life and of disincentives for early retirement is a very delicate one. As our research findings show, early retirement is not always voluntary. This relates in particular to cases of retirement in the process of restructuring and headcount reductions in the public services. Being forced to leave early and to accept a lower pension after a life of hard work and loyalty to the company and in view of age-discrimination and the absence of job-offers for older workers leaves people with severe disappointments and strong feelings of injustice.

> *The policy to introduce disincentives to early retirement may aggravate the situation because it increases the loss of income. A more sensitive approach seems to be needed to companies' strategies that aim at externalising the cost of workforce reduction.*

The findings of the SIREN project, as well as other research, show that the intensity of work is on the increase and that overall working conditions for older workers are deteriorating (European Foundation 2003a; Molinié 2003). This not only means an increasing disincentive to stay in employment, it also makes it more likely that a number of people cannot work until the regular retirement age because of health problems. Policy objectives at national and European level clearly address this issue pointing out the salience of work organisation and health and safety issues. For some groups of workers it nevertheless seems premature to try to keep people in employment longer while working conditions are still deteriorating and health conditions are worsening. In view of the research findings it seems particularly important that anti-discrimination policies such as the relevant EC directive are implemented and applied in all member states.

> *It seems crucial to improve working conditions, to fight age discrimination and to provide employment for older workers and thus create the preconditions for raising the factual retirement age.*

The SIREN findings show that employment and income insecurity are particularly pressing problems for older workers. Increasing workloads, fiercer competition and a lack of opportunities on the labour market are contributing to this perception. As already mentioned, the chances of older workers finding employment are slim once they lose their jobs. This means that the appropriateness of "employability", in the sense of increasing people's value on the external labour market as one main goal of the employment strategy, needs to be questioned for this age group. In contrast, supporting adaptability within employment and employment protection are of primary importance.

These policy-oriented conclusions would be incomplete if they only related to labour-market regulation without also addressing policies that deal with the formation and organisation of markets, e.g. for public services. "Liberalisation" policies, but of course also the single market and EMU, have triggered large parts of the current restructuring waves. The ensuing problems of the employment of older workers therefore need to be addressed at this level and in these areas of policy-making too.

4.4.   Migration

4.4.1.   The empirical findings of the SIREN project

Immigration is currently the most important political issue of right-wing populists and extremists in nearly all countries under investigation. As a consequence, it played a crucial role in the SIREN research. Most workers, whether "losers" or "winners" of modernisation, are affected by changes in working life that entail more competition, more pressure to achieve, more speed, stress, and intensity in performing one's work, etc. At the same time, the rewards for this intense involvement in work are becoming increasingly insecure or are subjectively assessed by many as no longer adequate. It

may imply that people are slowly realising the decrease in and the insecurity of rewards for hard work and subordination in terms of living standards and societal integration.

Internalised norms of achievement as well as the suffering entailed by subjecting oneself to the demands of working life may make many people merciless towards others, who apparently do not conform in the same way. The qualitative research of the SIREN project showed that – in a process termed "double demarcation" – some workers direct their frustrations and feelings of injustice against "those up there" (politicians, management, and maybe also academics) or those "further down" (long-term unemployed, immigrants, asylum seekers, in some countries also against people depending on social benefits and people in early retirement), who in their view are privileged, deceitful or lazy enough not to have to function according to the norms of the "hard-working and decent" community. The emotions involved cannot be understood without reference to the pains of work, the physical and psychological strains that people have to accept, while often living in rather precarious circumstances.

With regard to the racist and xenophobic resentment and prejudice against "foreigners" we encountered various modes of discourse within the qualitative interviews:

First, there are workers who, because of their position on the labour market, see "foreigners" as direct competitors for jobs. This includes competition within the country, when employers officially or unofficially hire migrants prepared to or forced to accept lower wages as well as transnational competition, when companies relocate plants to lower-wage countries. Understandably, clandestine employment of immigrants in the tourist industry, for example, is a bone of contention for unemployed waiters. But in the construction industry, too, undocumented employment and wage dumping have given rise to conflicts between local workers and immigrants from central and eastern Europe. In Germany, competition between eastern and western Germans following German reunification is a similar issue. Usually, feelings of resentment are directed against the immigrants taking the jobs rather than the employers involved, who make the decisions. Although, in this context, "foreigners" can be seen as a real threat enhancing fears of unemployment and insecurity, the fact of employers not significantly appearing to be responsible for this already points at a process of problem displacement taking place that is in the interest of economic and political elites.

Second, strong emotional reactions of respondents revealed intense feelings of injustice. These may be due to precarious living situations, fears of social exclusion, pains of work or the perceived high price that is paid to maintain standards of living. The ensuing aggression is directed, under the influence of dominant ideologies and the media, to social groups that are perceived as benefiting from society without contributing to it: politicians, asylum seekers and "social security scroungers" are among the groups most often referred to. Most respondents who exhibited anti-immigrant feelings made a clear distinction between "foreigners" who work and therefore contribute to society and those who do not work but receive benefits. This shows that it is usually issues of distribution, and not only racism, that are at the core of the problem, although in the definition of the problems and in the suggested solutions the ethnic dimension becomes paramount. Depending on the country and on the social position of the respondents, the

main issues of distribution related to the welfare state, including elderly care, to the labour market or to housing and schools. In contrast to the reactions referred to above, competition is not the main mechanism here. Rather, "foreigners" who allegedly or apparently do not work, such as asylum seekers, are perceived as a provocation and therefore attract xenophobic aggression stemming from strong feelings of injustice (which may originate from completely different social relations).

Third, there are white-collar, middle-class workers who show themselves threatened by "foreigners" in another way: for them immigrants in a symbolic way stand for societal change perceived negatively as threatening them with symbolic *déclassement* – "foreigners" in their neighbourhood or in their children's schools for them symbolise social decline. Some interviewees gave the impression of having retreated from society, for instance, because they feel they can no longer keep up with consumption standards. To them, immigrants, whom they perceive as being conspicuously present in the public sphere, become symbols of a social life they no longer enjoy. Often it is therefore alienation from society that can be seen as a basis of xenophobic resentment. The phrase "soon we will be the 'foreigners'" used by some interviewees should therefore not be misunderstood as simply expressing a perceived threat to cultural identity by immigration. Rather, it seems to express alienation channelled to the migration issue by the dominant discourse on problems of society.

In the quantitative results, prejudice against immigrants, defined as a rejection of immigrants for economic and cultural reasons, turned out to be the strongest indicator of extreme right-wing party affinity. In all countries under investigation, educational level is related to this prejudice: people with a lower educational level show higher levels of prejudice against immigrants. Occupational position is a significant factor in five out of eight countries: the pattern for wage-earning categories is clear-cut – the blue-collar and executive-manager categories are at opposite ends, with the former showing more pronounced prejudice against immigrants. Perceived positive change in job conditions on the other hand seems to assuage prejudice against immigrants. A change in family finance also seems to affect xenophobia: people who have seen their family income decrease in the last five years show higher levels of prejudice against immigrants as compared to people who have experienced an improvement of their family's financial situation during the same period. Finally, in half of the countries under investigation, subjective income matters as well: people who indicated that they do not get by well on their income also showed stronger prejudice against immigrants.

Among people who have experienced positive changes in job conditions and who have a medium level of education, prejudice may nevertheless be observed if these people put competition and inequality among their major values.

4.4.2.   The policy implications

The findings referred to above clearly emphasise the importance of policies directed at reducing feelings of insecurity and injustice through concrete measures of providing secure and stable employment and income resulting in satisfactory living conditions and

a subjectively meaningful integration into society. Experience in various countries has shown that not tackling the underlying problems but asking for tolerance and political correctness instead has contributed to the success of right-wing populism and extremism.

Policy recommendations in this area are rather delicate: while anti-discrimination and affirmative action measures are needed to reduce the disadvantages for immigrants, these very measures may be used to argue that migrants receive preferential treatment. Another problem is that the demand for tolerance on the part of the national population may exacerbate the problem, if structural difficulties are not tackled. This also refers to the EC proposal for an anti-discrimination directive which, from this vantage point, does not seem to be sufficient. We can conclude from our research that it is difficult to reduce aggression without facing up to those who are actually responsible for social misery. Unless structural problems are addressed, we are caught in a double-bind: if migrants are not allowed to work, they are blamed for being a financial burden on the state; if they are allowed to work, they are blamed for taking away work from nationals.

Research on social identity indicates that policy makers need to stress similarities rather than differences among people (e.g. being workers, parents, etc.). This idea has to be endorsed by trade unions, who, as long as they focus on the target group of male skilled workers, are contributing to a desolidarising segmentation of the workforce. Although solidarity has always been a core value in the self-perception of trade unions, this concept did not fully embrace, for instance, women, migrants or other disadvantaged and discriminated groups on the labour market. At the same time, concepts of solidarity and stressing similarity need to take into consideration the effective discrimination and disadvantages of special groups and be flexible enough to work out differentiated approaches for different groups.

At the same time, politicians, policy makers and the media should not try to create a social community in which all differences disappear, but instead communicate in ways that create a community feeling, in which differences are perceived as values contributing to the enrichment of the society, but where problems of living together in a multi-cultural society may also be addressed. In Germany, for example, the ideology of an ethnically homogeneous nation contributed to xenophobia and racism amongst those who experienced the disadvantages of a multi-cultural society (Hentges and Butterwegge 2000; Jaschke 2001). Activities such as the grassroots initiative in Thüringen, Germany, against low pay – supported by the Ver.di trade union[9] – seems to be a good-practice example, as it aims at drawing attention to those who are responsible for social problems, thereby reducing the danger of scapegoating and ethnic tension.

The first conclusion to be drawn from the research is that there is a need for recognising problems caused by social inequality and socio-economic change. In doing so, trade unions and policy makers should stress similarities instead of

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[9] BürgerInnen gegen Billiglohn – für Gleichbehandlung, Soziales Netzwerk Thüringen, http://www.bi-gb.de [Citizens against low wages – for equal treatment, Social Network Thüringen].

differences between the various groups of workers and, in particular, between the national population and "foreigners".

In 2003, there were 19 million non-nationals (i.e. people resident in a country of which they are not a national) living in the 15 EU member states, accounting for 5.1% of the Union's total population (Grünell and Van het Kaar 2003). 13 million (or 3.4% of the total EU population) of those were non-EU nationals. In a recent report on "Migrants, Minorities and Employment", the EUMC recommends that the European Union continue its work towards the approximation of national legislations with regard to conditions for admission and residence of third-country migrants.

> "This involves setting out a legally prescribed route to a long-term status that acknowledges that migrants who are legally resident in a Member state on a long-term basis should not be denied the civic, social and economic rights enjoyed by Union citizens." (2003: 90)

With regard to employment, the EUMC suggests efforts to improve the employability of immigrants by placing more stress on the special educational needs of immigrants. Also, more severe measures against the exploitation of irregular migrants are called for:

> "In the field of illegal employment of aliens such measures could also include higher obligatory sanctions against employers, who are found to have violated labour laws, as well as efforts to recover lost wages and withheld benefits for illegal migrants." (2003: 91)

In this context, regulations such as those forbidding asylum seekers to work[10] should be changed, as this fosters hostility: work permits for asylum seekers and refugees would reduce the "provocation", often deplored in the qualitative interviews of SIREN, that asylum seekers are "fed by the state". Again, here it is interesting, in terms of a displacement of problems, that it is the refugees themselves rather than legislators who are criticised for this situation. The differentiation between migrants and refugees, i.e. treating refugees as transitory aliens, aggravates their position and the consequences at a societal level: it is necessary to acknowledge that the presence of the majority of refugees is not transitory but – in the light of continuing threatening conditions in numerous countries of origin – is of a long-term character (Kühne 2000).

Granting migrants the same civic, social and economic rights as those enjoyed by Union citizens seems an important precondition for more solidarity with migrant workers. Enabling refugees and asylum seekers to work would help to avoid "scapegoating". The prescription of ethical codes for employers with regard to the employment of migrants and the enforcement of rules regarding terms and conditions of all workers could be effective measures.

In most European countries two issues appear to determine the principles and positions of employers' organisations and trade unions to a large extent – labour shortages and

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[10] According to Grünell/Van het Kaar, in the EU, the "general rule is that asylum-seekers are not allowed to enter the labour market. . . . Usually, only asylum-seekers who are granted refugee status are free to enter the labour market" (Grünell and van het Kaar 2003).

equal rights for migrants. Employers and their organisations generally stress the importance and advantages of the free movement of labour, although there are obvious national nuances in their views. Although trade unions and their federations acknowledge that to fill certain jobs (new) migrants are "unavoidable", the general attitude towards migration is hesitant; unions generally stress the need to improve the situation of migrants already in the country, regardless of whether they are employed or unemployed. In most countries trade unions are increasingly active in working to combat racism and promote equal treatment (Grünell and Van het Kaar 2003).

These initiatives should not remain restricted to union members or blue- and white-collar workers in general, however. The SIREN research findings, as other studies, show that different social groups show similar levels of xenophobia, racism, and of attraction to right-wing populism and extremism. Among the self-employed, the "traders, farmers and craftspeople" category seems to be particularly receptive to right-wing populism and extremism.

It seems important that trade unions are supported in their initiatives and that other interest groups, such as chambers of commerce and farmers' associations, follow the example of the trade unions and start initiatives against racism and xenophobia.

A crucial protagonist involved in the creation of "foreigners" as scapegoats is the media: hence, personal experience or observations of daily life with migrants become confirmations of a "truth" manufactured by the mass media and that comes down to the identification of "foreigners", criminals and "social scroungers" as exploiting the "hard-working national population". The mass media have played a significant role in preparing the breeding ground for right-wing populism and extremism: even though a few interviewees refer to their own experiences with criminal and violent migrants, most of them quote and reproduce the press coverage of the primarily problematic effects of immigration (see also the research carried out by the EUMC (2002a) on racism in the mass media and also Hentges et al. 2003: 64 ff).

At a European level, politicians and journalists should be issued with guidelines and recommendations (like those from the German Press Council) on how to deal with the topic of migrants in a non-discriminatory way: measures such as self-obligations not to use discriminating stereotypes in words and deeds and not to mention the nationality of perpetrators when reporting crimes are substantial steps in the right direction.

Public discourse on migration issues in general – and not only the tabloids, which are most crude in scapegoating processes – will have to change direction. Achieving such a change in discourse is a prime responsibility of politicians at European, national and regional level. So far, hard facts with regard to migration have not been sufficiently publicised: First, the discourse on refugees would be entirely different if the societal value of humanitarian rights came into the picture (instead of continually focusing on costs or criminality issues). Second, demographic trends show that aging western European societies with low birth rates are increasingly dependent on immigration as an important resource for economic and societal development. Third, the actual statistics and calculations (e.g. for Austria) prove that "foreigners" pay more in terms of taxes and

financial contributions to social security, unemployment benefits, etc. than they get out of this system. That means there are enough facts, arguments and reasons that could be used, but they would mean a different orientation in terms of political decisions and value orientation: as long as established conservative and social-democratic parties all over Europe decide not to highlight some facts and shape public discourse in a more humanitarian and solidarity-oriented fashion, they are riding the right-wing populist wave.

4.5. Politics and political representation

4.5.1. The empirical findings of the SIREN project

Although the SIREN project's main focus is on changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism and extremism, different political reactions to the consequences of socio-economic change were analysed. Apart from an attraction to right-wing populism and extremism, perceived negative changes in particular also triggered a strengthening of socialist, conservative or liberal political orientations. These differences in individual reactions are partly due to mentalities mainly shaped by social milieus and family socialisation, but they also result from differences in the individuals' educational and political capital and, in particular relating to comparisons between countries, from the mainstream parties' programmes and messages on offer in a particular situation.

In general, the qualitative interviews brought out the quite negative relationship many interviewees had towards politics: experiences and disappointments include observations of and conflicts with undemocratic structures in – or attributed to – the established parties; also we frequently found the conviction that politicians were unable or unwilling to promote changes in favour of workers (sometimes there were also accusations against shop stewards and trade unions of having changed sides and playing the role of co-managers). Lack of interest in politics has been diagnosed by political scientists as a crisis of the legitimacy of representative democracy as well as of the established conservative and social-democratic parties. This diagnosis of "de-politicising" trends raises the question of how this lack of interest has emerged. Our research provides important indications for what is often marginalised in the dominant discourse of political science: the disqualification of the traditional "game" of politics – in the eyes of many interviewees – rests notably on the disappearance of the workers' world from the political scene and the national media. Workers' apparent "lack of interest" in politics comes back to politicians' "lack of interest" in workers' problems.

Many interviewees felt themselves let down and not satisfactorily represented by parties from the social-democratic camp (or their trade unions). The public acknowledgement of people's problems and, in recent years, the political interest in the workers' world appear to be among the populists' strong points. Some interviewees show themselves as pragmatic and realistic on the question of right-wing parties being the better workers' party and the party of the "ordinary people": they are convinced that the right-wing

populist parties are on the side of the "bosses" and explain their voting for them as being the most powerful means they possess to annoy the established parties.

Last but not least, anti-EU attitudes were strong among many of those who showed themselves attracted by right-wing populism and extremism. Partly, such orientations came up when people presented themselves and their country as passive victims of overwhelming, anonymous powers, partly in the context of a loss of national identity, partly respondents accused the European Union of corruption and a lack of democracy. Some interviewees who were concerned about EU enlargement had especially virulent fears about the effects on the labour market. For example, interviewees in Austria who find it difficult to earn sufficient income in tourism or who had experienced the relocation of their job to Hungary expressed strong feelings of resentment because of the enlargement of the European Union. Such reactions are in stark contrast to the official information, which mainly presents positive consequences – a gap which may exacerbate the impression people have that their concerns are not taken into account in the sphere of politics.

As mentioned above, for some interviewees voting for right-wing populist or extremist parties is their form of protest, but they do not trust those parties either. However, the fact that the racist and Social-Darwinist ideologies of these parties are not recognised as such or at least do not interfere with sympathies or voting behaviour can be interpreted as disquieting testimony to the prevailing societal and political culture: on the one hand we are faced with authoritarian and historical legacies such as those of fascism and Nazism in some countries. On the other hand, in all eight countries we encounter a political climate that – under the influence of neoliberal restructuring and thinking – is drifting towards far right-wing ideologies: apart from "trendsetters" such as Christoph Blocher, Umberto Bossi, Jörg Haider, Pia Kjaersgaard, etc., the political elites of nearly all established parties are at present architects or fellow travellers of this societal development. Established political elites are also powerful stimulating forces for racism through their promotion of competitive nationalism for economic reasons or through jumping on the discursive tracks of right-wing populists, mainly relating to the issue of immigration, in order to increase or secure their electorate.

Additionally, an increase in the personalisation of politics became evident in the qualitative interviews, which is partly due to the reception of politics via television. This form of reception gives a strongly personality-related and personalised approach to politics (Butterwegge et al. 2002), which is communicated in many interviews. People often orient themselves less towards political positions or programmatic points than to the way, and by whom, some issues are expressed. Thus politicians' charisma and appearance become the decisive marketing qualities. It can be assumed from our analyses that the increasing personalisation of politics is a highly relevant factor for the success of populists.

Another reason for the political support for right-wing populists or extremists can be found in the perceived lack of democracy – whether it is experiences of nepotism and corruption or the feeling of not being able to participate in the political game. This means that, while right-wing populists and extremists are rightly seen as a threat to representative democracy, the reasons for their success can partly be found in undemocratic conditions of contemporary European societies at local, regional and national levels, but also at the level of the European Union. With many interview

partners the impression arises that they see themselves as a powerless object and not the subject of politics. They have never had experience or success in political action and activity and conclude that ordinary people in general have no say and cannot change anything. As a result of this experienced passivity, politics is seen as being "up there", while they themselves are down below and powerless.

Turning to the quantitative results, the question of "political powerlessness" appears to be relevant in the light of the findings given above. Political powerlessness was defined in terms of an assessment as to both (a lack of) political efficacy and political trust – political efficacy concerns an individual's sense of personal competence in influencing the political system; political trust stresses perceptions that the political system and authorities are responsive to the public's interests and demands. Here, not surprisingly, we find a correlation with education: in all countries apart from Austria, where the relationship is not significant, educational level is strongly negatively related to political powerlessness. The less educated clearly feel more powerless when it comes to politics. Another strong element in relation to political powerlessness is occupational position. Within the wage-earning categories, the blue-collar and farm workers, at one end, and the senior manager category, at the other, form the extreme opposites, with the blue-collar category feeling most powerless politically. Next, a change in family finance is also related to political powerlessness. People who have seen their family income decrease over the last five years show a stronger feeling of political powerlessness. Political powerlessness is a relevant factor enforcing extreme-right party affinity in Austria, Belgium, France, and Switzerland; yet the effect of other receptiveness variables, e.g. anti-immigrant prejudice or authoritarian attitudes, is much stronger. On the "losers" pathway to extreme right-wing party affinity, however, the path analyses dealing with the links between the perception of changes within working life, social identity, and right-wing party affinity, includes "political powerlessness" as one relevant factor.

We can conclude that the findings of the SIREN project are indicative of a crisis of representation which seems to exist in industrial relations but which is strongest in the field of party politics and regarding the institutions of the state and the European Union. According to the research results, this crisis seems to be due to a lack of interest and recognition of many people's living situations on the part of politics on the one hand and, on the other, to the perception of being unable and not having the opportunity to actively engage in decision-making that affects one's life. It is an alarming finding in a democratic society that citizens consider themselves as passive victims of economic and political forces that are beyond their influence, and often even beyond their comprehension. Not surprisingly, right-wing populists successfully address people as passive and as victims.

4.5.2. The policy implications

It is quite obvious that the main issues mentioned above should be major concerns for policy makers both at national and EU levels. The findings not only point to problematic forms or structures of representation and political deliberation, they also relate to the content of policy making. Many workers argued that the social-democratic party in their country no longer represented the working class. In general, the

ideological and programmatic differences between the mainstream parties seem to have disappeared, which adds to disenchantment with politics and leaves room for populist political entrepreneurs.

Regarding the EU level, it is not very surprising that the main political projects of the last decade or so, e.g. the single market, European Monetary Union, the single currency and the recent enlargement, are perceived as decisions that were taken by political and economic elites and – while strongly impacting on people's lives – were neither open to influence by the majority of European citizens nor furthered their interests. Demands for protectionism, defending the welfare state and distribution politics in the guise of exclusionary policies seem to be an attractive approach to many people who are concerned about growing insecurity and high levels of social inequality.

> *These observations suggest that at European Union level economic policy needs to be informed by social concerns and complemented more strongly by social policy.*

What is more, the respondents' views mirror the fact that politics, in particular at regional and national level, is increasingly constrained by the economic and political framework defined at supra-national level. Often, in an attempt to pass on the blame for detrimental developments, politicians present these constraints as being even stronger than they actually are. Under such circumstances, (populist) politicians and entrepreneurs who signal the ability and the power to act become more attractive. Directly addressing problems and offering simple solutions are core aspects of this image.

In addition, if people have never had the chance to experience that their voice does indeed make a difference (in the family, in school, at work or in politics), then for them democracy is nothing more than just a word denoting – in their view – a deeply corrupt society that only benefits the well-off. Right-wing populists not only address these experiences of powerlessness, they also abuse them by pretending that there is no alternative to an authoritarian system. This is why fighting right-wing populism and extremism makes it necessary to make not only the sphere of politics but also civil society as a whole more democratic. Only if people are able to identify their own life with the working of democracy at the grassroots, will they be able to identify with democratic ends.

Trade unions and local government need to increase possibilities for participation, not only giving people a voice but also by involving them in political processes in an active way. Politicians and trade unionists have to realise that political representation needs to be complemented by political participation. The lack of democracy at local level and in enterprises needs to be addressed. In this context, the objective of "human dignity" could provide an orientation for analysis as well as for activities. To take an example that played an important role in the research: while restructuring is often carried out in a "socially acceptable way" (i.e. without direct lay-offs), human dignity is still often violated if, for example, people are more or less forced to accept a loss of income through early retirement, if workers have to train other workers who are going to take over their jobs in a process of relocation, or if workers in public services are put into "human resource pools" and then transferred to employment positions without being given any work.

Making the various spheres of life more democratic and actively searching for ways to enhance the control people have over their lives by empowering them to directly influence conditions that impact on their living situations seems to be crucial in this respect. Consequently, the impact assessment of European-level policies should include a consideration of their effect on the actual scope of policy-making at local, regional and national level. Scope for decision-making and support needs to be given to initiatives that aim at empowering people to influence their living situation.

5.   DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

Dissemination activities and the exploitation of results have been high on the agenda of the SIREN project from its very beginning, both with a dissemination strategy already planned for in the project schedule (workshops, international conference, website, etc.) and additional dedicated dissemination activities by the coordinator and all project partners that ensured optimum exploitation and dissemination of the results of the SIREN project not only within a wide range of scientific communities but within the social partners, the media and beyond.

Data

Owing to its innovative interdisciplinary approach combining the fields of sociology of work, social psychology and political science, the SIREN project generated valuable original data and original knowledge for exploitation in the research on changing employment and working conditions and in the research on political attitudes. Thus, the qualitative phase of the research produced more than *300 in-depth interviews* (and ca. 30 per partner), which not only informed the national and synthesis reports on qualitative findings but have served as a basis for further research and publications (see below), either nationally or internationally. The *quantitative survey* yielded a comprehensive dataset on representative data covering eight European countries available for further research. Sets of national data were also made available to the national SIREN teams, who have already begun or are planning to use them for further research. In future, the European dataset can also be made available to researchers outside the SIREN consortium.

Dissemination and publication strategy

To make the research findings of the project available to other researchers as well as the public, the SIREN project has been dedicated to a wide range of dissemination activities. Thus all European synthesis reports were also published as *print versions* and have been distributed to and ordered by libraries, researchers and academic and non-academic organisations.[11] The reports are also available as downloads from the project

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[11] These include: Poglia Mileti, F. et al. (2002), Modern Sirens and Their Populist Songs: A European Literature Review on Changes in Working Life and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism; Hentges, G. et al. (2003), The abandoned worker – Socio-economic change and the attraction of right-wing populism. European Synthesis Report on Qualitative Findings; De Weerdt, Y. et al. (2004), Turning right? Socio-economic change and the receptiveness of European workers to the extreme right – Report on the Survey Analysis and Results.

website. Similarly, a number of country reports on qualitative findings have already been published or made available as downloads.[12]

In addition, the national SIREN teams have taken great care to present the SIREN project and its research findings both internationally and in their own countries. Thus the project and its results formed the basis of or informed close to 40 conference papers and presentations to both academic and non-academic audiences, 10 university courses and close to 20 publications, articles, reports and discussion papers.[13] Cooperation with other projects and researchers working in the same areas (such as the cooperation with the FIAB project "Prekäre Arbeit – Ursache von sozialer Desintegration und Rechtsextremismus", at Ruhr Universität Bochum in Recklinghausen) further ensured dissemination.

Workshops and international conference

To ensure efficient dissemination of the project findings outside the purely academic community as well as to discuss the project results and suggested policy recommendations, the SIREN project included a *series of workshops with policymakers* at both national and EU level. Held in Paris, Recklinghausen, Budapest and Brussels in Spring 2004, the highly successful workshop series assembled renowned academics, including Annie Collovald, Michel Pialoux, Klaus Dörre, Martin Kronauer, Antal Örkény and András Bozóki, representatives from EU-level institutions, such as Elena Saraceno (European Commission's Group of Policy Advisors), the EC's DG Research and DG Employment and Social Affairs and ETUC, experts from trade unions and the social partners, including DGB, Ver.di and IG Metall, the Hungarian Metal Workers and Liga trade unions and the Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists, as well as NGOs working in the areas of working conditions and unemployment (e.g. "Stop Précarité", "AC: Association contre le Chômage" in France, AGE – the European Older People's Platform) and minority and anti-discrimination issues (Hungarian National Roma Council).[14]

Additional workshops not planned for in the project schedule were held throughout the project's lifetime, including an introductory workshop in Vienna in June 2002, to which all SIREN teams contributed, and a workshop held with Danish trade unions in May 2004.[15]

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[12] Hentges, G. (2003), Right-Wing Extremist Attitudes in Germany: Implications of Neoliberalism and Competitive Nationalism, USB-Publishing, Cologne; Balazs, G., Faguer, J.-P. and Rimbert, P., (2004), Compétition généralisée, déclassement et conversions politique, Les effets différentiels de la crise dans la sidérurgie et dans la haute technologie, Rapport du Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi; Grinderslev, E. and Thoft, E. (2002), Xenophobic populism in Denmark – the Welfare State under pressure, Interim country Report on qualitative findings – Denmark, http://www.casa-analyse.dk/files/pdf/SIREN_ HPSE-CT-2001-00058_Deliverable2_Denmark_3.pdf

[13] For a list of conference papers, presentations and lectures, see Annex 4. For a list of publications, reports and discussion papers, see Annex 2. For a list of university courses, see Annex 5.

[14] For details, see Annex 3 and Annex 7. Workshop programmes are also available through the project website the project website, at http://www.siren.at.

[15] For a list of workshops held within the SIREN project, see Annex 3.

On June 17-18, 2004, the *international conference*: *Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe,* in Vienna, presented the SIREN project's qualitative and quantitative research findings at a European level as well as specific country results and analyses to both academic audiences and a policy-oriented public. Organised by Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA) in cooperation with the Renner Institut Wien, the conference assembled a number of eminent scholars and leading experts in the areas of both working life and right-wing populism and extremism as well as policy-oriented experts, including Guy Standing, from the International Labour Organisation, Geneva, Cas Mudde, Universiteit Antwerpen and the co-editor of the Routledge Series on Extremism, and John Wrench, from the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Ortrun Gauper, an expert on international and European economic policy at the German services union, ver.di and Asbjørn Wahl, the national co-ordinator of the campaign For the Welfare State (For velferdsstaten) in Norway. With close to ninety participants the conference provided an excellent forum for academic discourse and animated discussions of the SIREN results and their implications and generated a wide range of interest in the project and future cooperation.[16]

Website, electronic newsletter and media presence

Dissemination of results and the project's international presence was also achieved by a *project website* set up at http://www.siren.at, which went online in November 2001. With up to close to a 1000 visits/month, the website has been an excellent tool for offering information on the project and the consortium, announcements of project reports, publications and workshops, downloads, and has served as an efficient information and registration tool for the SIREN conference.

In addition, an electronic *SIREN Newsletter*, has been distributed at irregular intervals since autumn 2002 to ca. 1000 recipients, supplied by the SIREN consortium to academic and research institutions, scientific networks, policymakers, NGOs, the media and interested individuals. Numerous web links to the project on the newsletters and websites of partner organisations, international networks (e.g. http://www.tolerance-net.org) and major scientific project databases complement the project's international presence.

The conference and workshop series in particular has meant that the SIREN project has repeatedly been present in the *media*, especially the print media and the radio. Thus a special report on the SIREN conference with interviews with a number of conference speakers was broadcast on Austrian radio station Ö1 following the conference in June and the Danish broadcasting station broadcast interviews with Gudrun Hentges and Eva Thoft on the issues of the SIREN project.[17]

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[16] For the conference programme and abstracts of papers, see Annex 8. The conference documentation can also be downloaded from the project website.

[17] For a list of media reference and radio programmes on the SIREN project, see Annex 6.

Further Exploitation

The SIREN consortium is dedicated to disseminating the results of the SIREN project in further publications. This, in particular, relates to an edited volume presenting all the country findings and the European synthesis o the SIREN project:

Flecker, J. (ed.) *Changing working life and the appeal of the extreme right* (book proposal submitted to the Routledge Studies in Extremism and Democracy, including contributions by all national SIREN teams).

The findings from the German-speaking countries are collected in an additional edited volume:

Butterwegge, Ch., Hentges, G. and Meyer, M. (eds) (2004) *Die Wurzeln des Rechtspopulismus in der Arbeitswelt,* Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften (forthcoming).

Additional monographs (on e.g. Switzerland), contributions to further edited volumes and articles on the SIREN findings at country level are forthcoming or in preparation (see also Annex 2).

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7. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: List of Project Deliverables

Deliverable 1: European literature review: COMPLETED

The European Literature Review was submitted to the EC on May 24, 2002, and also made available to the EC in printed form:

- Poglia Mileti, F., Tondolo, R., Plomb, F., Schultheis, F., Meyer, M., Hentges, G., Mairhuber, I. and Flecker, J. (2002) *Modern Sirens and Their Populist Songs: A European Literature Review on Changes in Working Life and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism*, Neuchâtel/Vienna.

Deliverable 2: Interim country reports on qualitative research: COMPLETED

These eight reports were submitted to the European Commission in electronic form on December 20, 2002 and also submitted to the Commission on paper:

- Balazs, G., Faguer, J.-P. and Rimbert, P. (2002) 'Widespread competition, "déclassement" and political conversions' Interim country report on qualitative findings (France), Noisy le Grand.
- De Weerdt, Y., Descheemaeker, F. and De Witte, H. (2002) 'Increased work pressure: a relevant but insufficient explanation', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Flanders), Leuven.
- Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Krenn, M. and Papouschek, U. (2002) 'Perceptions of changing working lives and the impact on political orientations', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Austria), Vienna
- Grinderslev, E. and Thoft, E. (2002) 'Xenophobic populism in Denmark – the Welfare State under pressure', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Denmark), Copenhagen.
- Hentges, G. and Meyer, M. (2002) 'Right-wing extremist attitudes in Germany – Consequences of competitive nationalism and neoliberalism', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Germany), Köln.
- Martinelli, V., Milesi, P. and Catellani, P. (2002) 'Psychological and social consequences of perceived uncertainty within the job domain: a qualitative analysis of Italian workers' accounts', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Italy), Milan.
- Plomb, F., Poglia Mileti, F., Tondolo, R. and Schultheis, F. (2002) 'Elementary forms of right wing populism: Facing socio-economic changes in today's Switzerland', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Switzerland), Neuchâtel.

- Tóth, A. and Grajczjár, I. (2002) 'Socio-economic changes and attraction to right wing extremism in Hungary: Perceptualisation of present frustrations through the lens of the past', Interim country report on qualitative findings (Hungary), Budapest.

Deliverable 3: European Synthesis Report on Qualitative Findings   COMPLETED

This SIREN project deliverable was delivered to the European Commission in electronic form on April 11, 2003 as well as on paper. The print version of the report was submitted to the European Commission in mid-May 2003:

- Hentges, G., Meyer, M., Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Thoft, E., Grinderslev, E., and Balazs, G. (2003) *The abandoned worker – Socio-economic change and the attraction of right-wing populism European Synthesis Report on Qualitative Findings,* Cologne and Vienna.

Deliverable 4: Interim report on the survey analysis and results: COMPLETED

This SIREN project deliverable was completed in February 2004 and delivered to the European Commission in electronic form, with a print version of the report produced in March/April 2004 and also submitted to the European Commission:

- De Weerdt, Y., De Witte, H., Catellani, P., Milesi, P. (2004) *Turning right? Socio-economic change and the receptiveness of European workers to the extreme right – Report on the Survey Analysis and Results*, Leuven, February.

Deliverable 5: SIREN Policy Recommendations Report: COMPLETED

This report was delivered to the European Commission in electronic form in May 2004 as well as on paper:

- Flecker, J. and Kirschenhofer, S. (2004) *Roads to Right-Wing Populism – and Back. The SIREN Policy Recommendations Report*, Vienna.

Deliverable 6: Workshops with Policy Makers: COMPLETED

Four workshops to discuss the policy implications of the SIREN findings on a national as well as EU level were held in Spring 2004 in accordance with the Technical Annex to the Contract. For details, see Annex 7:

- *Reconversions économiques et conversions politiques*,19 March 2004, Paris/France, organised by the Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE).

- *Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung - Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen*, 16-17 April 2004, Recklinghausen/Germany, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB) of Ruhr-University Bochum and the Institute of Political Science at the University of Cologne.

- *Political attitudes, life situations and the appeal of radical ideologies*, 27 April 2004, Budapest/Hungary, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

- *Roads to right-wing extremism – and back: The policy implications of the SIREN research findings*, 24 May 2004, Brussels/Belgium, organised by HIVA, KU Leuven.

Deliverable 7: Final Report: COMPLETED

Delivered to the European Commission in electronic and print form in September 2004:

- Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Balazs, G., De Weerdt, Y., De Witte, H., Catellani, P., Milesi, P., Hentges, G., Meyer, M., Poglia Mileti, F., Plomb, F., (2004) *Socio-economic Change, Individual Reactions and the Appeal of the Extreme Right: Final project report,* Vienna.

Deliverable 8: International Conference   COMPLETED

- *Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe. An international conference on the individual perceptions of socio-economic change and political orientations*, 17-18 June 2004, Vienna, organised by Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA) in association with the European Commission, Renner Institut Wien, Science Centre Vienna/WZW Wien and the SIREN consortium. For the conference programme, abstracts and further details, see ANNEX 8.

ANNEX 2:   Project publications, reports and discussion papers

Balazs, G., Faguer, J.-P. and Rimbert, P. (2004) *Compétition généralisée, déclassement et conversions politique, Les effets différentiels de la crise dans la sidérurgie et dans la haute technologie*, Rapport du Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi.

Balazs, G., Faguer, J.-P. and Rimbert, P. (2002) 'Transformations Economiques et Socials et Risque de Populisme', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Butterwegge, Ch., Hentges, G. and Meyer, M. (eds) (2004) *Die Wurzeln des Rechtspopulismus in der Arbeitswelt,* Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften (forthcoming).

De Weerdt, Y. and De Witte, H. (2004, accepted) 'Hoe "werken economische attitudes? Collectieve relatieve deprivatie als verklaring voor de band tussen de beroepspositie en de economische attitudes van werknemers in Vlaanderen', *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken*.

De Weerdt, Y., De Witte, H., Catellani, P. and Milesi, P. (2004) *Turning right? Socio-economic change and the receptiveness of European workers to the extreme right,* Report on the Survey Analysis and Results of the SIREN project, Leuven.

De Weerdt, Y., De Witte, H. and Descheemaeker, F. (2003) 'Sirenes aan stuurboord? Over de mogelijke impact van sociaal-economische veranderingen op de vatbaarheid van Vlaamse werknemers voor extreem-rechtse ideeën', *Over.werk*, vol. 3, pp. 162-166.

De Weerdt, Y., De Witte, H. and Van Gyes, G. (2002) 'National Report on Populism and Right-Wing Extremism and Socio-Economic Change in Flanders (Belgium)', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project

De Witte, H. (Red., 2001) 'Rechts van de democratie. Enkele lacunes in onderzoek naar rechts-extremisme opgevuld'. [To the Right of Democracy. Some neglected issues in research on right-wing extremism] Themanummer. *Tijdschrift voor Sociologie*, vol. 22, No. 1.

Flecker, J. (ed.) *Changing working life and the appeal of the extreme right* (book proposal submitted to the Routledge Studies in Extremism and Democracy, in preparation).

Flecker, J., Hentges, G. and Balazs, G. (2005) 'Sozioökonomische Veränderungen und Rechts-populismus', in Ch. Butterwegge, G. Hentges and M. Meyer (eds) *Die Wurzeln des Rechtspopulismus in der Arbeitswelt*, Wiesbaden, (forthcoming).

Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Krenn, M. and Papouschek, U.(2005) *Arbeitswelten im Umbruch und die Auswirkungen auf politische Orientierungen* (in preparation).

Flecker, J. (2004) 'Die populistische Lücke: Umbrüche in der Arbeitswelt und ihre politische Verarbeitung', in Ch. Butterwegge, G. Hentges and M. Meyer (eds) *Arbeitswelt und Rechtspopulismus, Sozioökonomischer Wandel, individuelle Reaktionen und die Hinwendung zur extremen Rechten*, Opladen: Leske + Budrich (forthcoming).

Flecker, J. and Hentges, G. (2004) 'Prekarität, Unsicherheit, Leistungsdruck: Katalysatoren eines neuen Rechtspopulismus in Europa?, in Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik, 11/2004, (forthcoming).

Flecker, J. and Hentges, G. (2004) 'Was hat der Rechtspopulismus in Europa mit der Arbeitswelt zu tun?', in *Zeitschrift für sozialistische Politik und Wirtschaft SPW*, 4/2004, 55-56.

Flecker, J. (2002) 'From ordinary miseries to political disasters: How does radical right-wing populism benefit from changes in working life?', in L. Panitch and C.Leys (eds) *Fighting Identities – race, religion and ethno-nationalism: Socialist Register 2003*, London: Merlin Press.

Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Mairhuber, I. and Papouschek, U. (2002) 'Socio-economic change and right-wing extremism in Austria', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Flecker, J. and Kirschenhofer, S. (2001) '"Liaisons Dangereuses": Neoliberaler Kapitalismus und die Anziehungskraft der extremen Rechten', in J. Flecker, U. Papouschek and Th. Riesenecker-Caba (eds) *Herausforderungen der Arbeitswelt: Beiträge zu neuen Arbeitsformen, Geschlecht, Informationstechnik*, München and Mering: Rainer Hampp Verlag.

Hentges, G. and Meyer, M. (2005) 'Veränderungen in der Arbeitswelt und rechtsextremistische Orientierungen', in Ch. Butterwegge, G. Hentges and M. Meyer (eds) *Die Wurzeln des Rechtspopulismus in der Arbeitswelt*, Wiesbaden, (forthcoming).

Hentges, G. (2004) '"Ich bin ein Desperado für Deutschland". Prekarität, Integration und rechtspopulistische Orientierungen', in M. Ottersbach and E. Yildiz (eds), *Migration in der metropolitanen Gesellschaft: Zwischen Ethnisierung und globaler Neuorientierung*, Festschrift für Wolf-D. Bukow zum 60. Geburtstag, Münster/Hamburg, 191-204, (forthcoming).

Hentges, G. and Flecker, J. (2004) 'Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung und Ausgrenzung: Tagungsbericht über Workshop Recklinghausen', in *Zeitschrift für sozialistische Politik und Wirtschaft SPW*, 3/2004, 50-52.

Hentges, G. and Flecker, J. (2004) 'Rechtspopulistische Konjunkturen in Europa – sozioökonomischer Wandel und politische Orientierungen', in J. Bischoff, K. Dörre, E. Gauthier et al., *Moderner Rechtspopulismus – Ursachen, Wirkungen, Gegenstrategien,* Hamburg: VSA-Verlag.

Hentges, G. and Meyer, M. (2003) *Right-Wing Extremist Attitudes in Germany: Implications of Neoliberalism and Competitive Nationalism*, Cologne: USB-Publishing.

Hentges, G., Meyer, M., Flecker, J., Kirschenhofer, S., Thoft, E., Grinderslev, E., Balazs, G. (2003) *The abandoned worker – Socio-economic change and the attraction of right-wing populism.* European Synthesis Report on Qualitative Findings of the SIREN project, Cologne and Vienna.

Hentges, G. and Ellerbe-Dück, C. (2002) 'The Potential Link Between Socio-Economic Changes and the Resurgence of Right-Wing Extremism and Radical Populism in the German Context', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Karpantschof, R. (2002) 'Populism and Right-Wing Extremism in Denmark 1980 – 2001', *Sociologisk Rapportserie*, No. 4.

Karpantschof, R. and Hansen, H. (2002) 'National Report on Populism and Right-Wing Extremism and Socio-economic Change in Denmark, 1989-2001', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Milesi, P. Martinelli, V. and Catellani, P. (2002) 'Socio-economic Change and the appeal of the Extreme Right in Italy', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Milesi, P. and Catellani, P. (forthcoming) 'Ascesa o declino: percezione del cambiamento nel contesto di lavoro', in C. Kaneklin, G. Scaratt, and A. Bruno (eds) *I processi di generazione delle conoscenze nei contesti organizzativi e di lavoro*, Milano: Vita e Pensiero.

Poglia, F., Plomb, F. and Schultheis, F. (2003) *Les formes élémentaires du populisme de droite: faire face au changement dans la Suisse d'aujourd'hui*. Paris: Harmattan editions (Collection "questions sociologiques") (forthcoming).

Poglia Mileti, F., Tondolo, R., Plomb, F., Schultheis, F., Meyer, M., Hentges, G., Mairhuber, I. and Flecker J. (2002) *Modern Sirens and Their Populist Songs: A European Literature Review on Changes in Working Life and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism*, Neuchâtel/ Vienna: Editions EDES.

Poglia Mileti, F., Tondolo, R. and Schultheis, F. (2002) 'Socio-Economic Change and Right-Wing Extremism in Switzerland', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

Grinderslev, E. and Thoft, E. (2002), 'Xenophobic populism in Denmark – the Welfare State under pressure', Interim country Report on qualitative findings of the SIREN project (Denmark), available online: <http://www.casa-analyse.dk/files/pdf/SIREN_ HPSE-CT-2001-00058_Deliverable2_Denmark_3.pdf>.

Tóth, A. and Grajczjar, I. (2002) 'The Emergence of the Extreme Right in Post-Socialist Hungary and its Connections to Social Changes', unpublished discussion paper for WP1 (National Literature Review) of the SIREN project.

ANNEX 3: Workshops

- *Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe*, 7 June 2002, Club International Universitaire, Vienna. Organised in cooperation with the Renner-Institut, Vienna, this workshop, in which participants from all SIREN teams participated, afforded a first occasion to present the SIREN research to the general public and provided an overview of recent socio-economic changes and the political situation in the countries of the SIREN consortium.

- *Reconversions économiques et conversions politiques*, 19 March 2004, Paris/France, workshop organised by the Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE) as part of the SIREN workshop series with policymakers. The first workshop in the series focused on the impact of socio-economic transformations on political conversion, with eminent speakers from the academic community (Annie Collovald, Michel Pialoux) and policy makers (including NGOs Mouvement "Stop Précarité" and "AC – Association contre le Chômage").

  For programme and further details, see Annex 7.

- *Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung – Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen?*, 16-17 April 2004, Recklinghausen/Germany, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB) of Ruhr-University Bochum and the Institute of Political Science at the University of Cologne. The second workshop in the SIREN series of workshops with policymakers dealt with flexible and precarious work and exclusion as possible breeding grounds for right-wing populist orientations. Among many others, experts speaking at the two-day workshop included Klaus Dörre and Klaus Kraemer (FIAB, Recklinghausen), Martin Kronauer, (FHW Berlin), Christoph Butterwegge (Universität zu Köln) as well as experts on migration, intercultural and anti-racism from the German trade union organisations, DGB Bildungswerk, Ver.di and IG Metall.

  For programme and further details, see Annex 7.

- *Political attitudes, life situations and the appeal of radical ideologies* 27 April 2004, Budapest/Hungary, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as part of the SIREN workshop series with policymakers, this workshop predominantly focused on the problems experienced by transformation economies like Hungary. Speakers included Antal Örkény (Eötvös Loránt University, Budapest), András Bozóki (CEU) as well as speakers and discussants from a wide range of policy-making areas, including Imre Szekeres (Vice-President of the Hungarian Socialist Party), Lajos Horváth (Vice-President of the Liga trade union), Károly Szőke (President of the Hungarian Metal Workers' Union), Ferenc Rolek (Vice President of MGYOSZ-Confederation of Hungarian Employers and Industrialists) and Orbán Kolompár (President of the National Roma Council).

  For programme and further details, see Annex 7.

- *Roads to right-wing extremism– and back: The policy implications of the SIREN research findings*, 24 May 2004, International Trade Union House, Brussels/ Belgium. With a special emphasis on the implications of the findings of the SIREN

project on the social and employment policies of European countries and the European Union, the final workshop in the SIREN workshop series with policymakers, organised by HIVA, KU Leuven, was predominantly targeted at EU level policy-making organisations. Among the speakers and discussants were Elena Saraceno (European Commission's Group of Policy Advisors), Lars-Erik Andreasen (DG Employment and Social Affairs), Andrew Watt (European Trade Union Confederation), Catelene Passchier (ETUC's Working group on "Trade Union action on racial and religious discrimination across Europe"), Umut Erel (Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University) and Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE European Older People's Platform).

For programme and further details, see Annex 7.

ANNEX 4: Conference papers, presentations and lectures

2002

- Flecker, J.: 'Do changes in working life contribute to the rise of right-wing populism? Introduction of the SIREN project and comments on the Austrian discussion', paper presented at the SIREN workshop, Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe, held in cooperation with the Renner Institut, Vienna, 7 June 2002.

- Tóth, A. and Grajczjar, I.: 'The crisis of the extreme right and the rise of the populist moderate right in Hungary in the context of socio-economic change', paper presented at the SIREN workshop, Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe, held in cooperation with the Renner Institut, Vienna, 7 June 2002.

- Milesi, P. and Martinelli V. R.: 'Right-wing extremism and social change in Italy', paper presented at the SIREN workshop, Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe, held in cooperation with the Renner Institut, Vienna, 7 June 2002.

- Thoft, E. and Grinderslev, E.: 'Danish People's Party – Custodian of the welfare state? Right-wing populism and socio-economic change in Denmark', paper presented at the SIREN workshop, Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe, held in cooperation with the Renner Institut, Vienna, 7 June 2002.

- De Weerdt, Y.: 'Flanders: Right-wing extremism in a prosperous region', paper presented at the SIREN workshop, Socio-economic change and right-wing populism in Europe, held in cooperation with the Renner Institut, Vienna, 7 June 2002.

- Flecker, J.: 'Changes in working life and the rise of right-wing extremist and populist parties in Europe', lecture presented at the Oberseminar of the Institute for Sociology of the University Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany, 12 November 2002.

- Flecker, J.: Participation in a panel discussion on 'Neoliberal economy and the rise of right-wing populism – two sides of a coin?', Conference 'Rechtspopulismus in Europa – Zwischenbilanz am Ende des Wahljahres 2002', organised by Dr.-Karl-Renner-Institut and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Vienna, 30 November 2002.

2003

- Milesi, P.: 'Socio-economic change and the attraction to the right-wing', presentation of the SIREN project and the theoretical model underlying the quantitative research, workshop organised by the Itanes group (Italian National Election Studies) on the Italian general elections of May 2001, 14 March 2003.

- Krenn, M. and Flecker, J.: 'Abstiegsängste, verletztes Gerechtigkeitsempfinden und Ohnmachtsgefühle – zur Wahrnehmung und Verarbeitung zunehmender Unsicherheit und Ungleichheit in der Arbeitswelt', contribution to the conference 'Insider und Outsider', organised by Denkwerkstätte Graz, Graz, Austria, 14-16 May 2003.

- De Weerdt, Y.: Presentation of the main qualitative findings and the framework of analysis for the quantitative survey of SIREN at the 2003 Integrating Social Theory and Research (ISTAR) Summer School on 'European Values and Identity', organised by the European Consortium for Sociological Research (ECSR) in Belfast, 29 August – 4 September 2003.

- Poglia Mileti, F. and Plomb, F.: 'Le migrant comme figure du changement', paper presented at the congress on "Triumph und Elend des Neoliberalismus" of Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Soziologie, 1-3 October 2003.

- Flecker, J. and Krenn, M.: Workshop on SIREN results with the Austrian Trade Union for Salaried Employees (GPA), Vienna, 28 October 2003.

- Hentges, G.: 'Rechtsextreme Orientierungen im europäischen Kontext: Präsentation der Ergebnisse der qualitativen Forschung (SIREN)', paper presented at Forschungsinstitut Arbeit Bildung Partizipation e.V. (FiAB), Ruhr-Universität Bochum, 12 November 2003.

2004

- Hentges, G. and Meyer, M.: 'Sozioökonomische Veränderungen und rechtspopulistische Einstellungen in Europa - Ergebnisse eines empirischen Forschungsprojekts', lecture presented at the University of Cologne, Forschungsstelle für interkulturelle Studien, 14 January 2004.

- Thoft, E. and Grinderslev, E.: Presentation of the SIREN results for a working group of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions - LO: Conclusions from the interview research, 3 March 2004.

- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Right wing populism in the European context. The Siren Project', 2h-guest lecture in Prof. Sandro Cattacin's course, 'Sociologie de la migration', University of Neuchâtel, 22 March 2004.

- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Changements et économiques et impact sur les parcours individuels', séminaire résidentiel de troisième cycle, organised by ISSP, University of Neuchâtel, 26 March 2004.

- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Right-wing populism in the European context: The Siren Project', 2h-guest lecture in Prof. Bernard Voutat's course, 'Politique comparée', University of Lausanne, 31 March 2004.

- Balazs, G., Faguer J.-P. and Rimbert, P.: Introduction à l'enquête française, paper presented at the workshop, Reconversions economiques et conversions politiques, organised by Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi within the framework of the SIREN project, Collège de France, 19 March 2004.

- Flecker, J.: 'Les résultats du projét SIREN – quelque thèses', paper presented at the workshop, Reconversions economiques et conversions politiques, organised by Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi within the framework of the SIREN project, Collège de France, 19 March 2004.

- Flecker, J.: 'Besteht ein Zusammenhang zwischen dem Umbruch der Arbeitswelt und dem Aufstieg des Rechtspopulismus in Europa? Erfahrungen aus dem SIREN-Projekt', paper presented at the workshop, Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung – Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen?, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB, Ruhr-Universität Bochum) and the SIREN project (Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften (Abteilung für Politikwissenschaft) der Universität zu Köln), Recklinghausen, Germany, 16 April 2004.

- Hentges, G.: 'Fleiß ohne Preis" – Politische Auswirkungen faktischer Bedrohung und symbolischer Ausgrenzung angelernter Industriearbeiter/innen – Erfahrungen aus dem SIREN-Projekt', paper presented at the workshop, Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung – Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen?, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB, Ruhr-Universität Bochum) and

the SIREN project (Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften (Abteilung für Politikwissenschaft) der Universität zu Köln), Recklinghausen, Germany, 16 April 2004.

- Krenn, M.: 'Ausgrenzende Integrationsnormen und rechtspopulistische Orientierungen', paper presented at the workshop, Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung – Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen?, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB, Ruhr-Universität Bochum) and the SIREN project (Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften (Abteilung für Politikwissenschaft) der Universität zu Köln), Recklinghausen, Germany, 16 April 2004.

- Meyer, M.: 'Rechtsextreme Tendenzen auf deutschen Baustellen und mögliche gewerkschaftliche Gegenstrategien', paper presented at the workshop, Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung – Nährboden für rechtspopulistische Orientierungen?, organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB, Ruhr-Universität Bochum) and the SIREN project (Seminar für Sozialwissenschaften (Abteilung für Politikwissenschaft) der Universität zu Köln), Recklinghausen, Germany, 16 April 2004.

- De Weerdt, Y.: 'Changes in working life and attraction to populism', paper presented at the workshop, Political Attitudes, World of Work and the Attraction to Extreme Ideologies, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences within the framework of the SIREN project, Budapest, 27 April 2004.

- Flecker, J.: 'The populist gap – changes in working life and the reactions of mainstream politics', paper presented at the workshop, Political Attitudes, World of Work and the Attraction to Extreme Ideologies, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences within the framework of the SIREN project, Budapest, 27 April 2004.

- Hentges, G.: '"I am a desperado for Germany": Right-wing populist orientations in Germany', paper presented at the workshop, Political Attitudes, World of Work and the Attraction to Extreme Ideologies, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences within the framework of the SIREN project, Budapest, 27 April 2004.

- Tóth, A and Grajcjzar, I.: 'Political and economic changes, frustrated national identity, aversion and attraction to populist political programs', paper presented at the workshop, Political Attitudes, World of Work and the Attraction to Extreme Ideologies, organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences within the framework of the SIREN project, Budapest, 27 April 2004.

- Thoft, E. and Grinderslev, E.: Presentation of the SIREN results to union representatives and consultants arranged by the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions – LO: Conclusions from both the survey and interview research, Copenhagen, 29 April 2004.

- Catellani, P., De Witte, H. and Hentges, G.: 'Socio-economic change and roads to right-wing extremism – Findings of the SIREN project', paper presented at the worksho, Roads to right-wing extremism – and back: The policy implications of the SIREN research findings, organised by HIVA, Leuven, within the framework of the SIREN project, Brussels, 24 May 2004.

- Hentges, G., Flecker, J. and Balazs, G.: 'Rechtspopulistische Konjunkturen in Europa – Ergebnisse der qualitativen SIREN Untersuchung', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 17 June 2004.

- Catellani, P., De Witte, H., De Weerdt, Y. and Milesi, P.: 'Perceived socio-economic change and right-wing extremism: The SIREN survey among European workers', paper

presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 17 June 2004.

- De Weerdt, Y. and De Witte, H.: 'The public-private divide and receptiveness to right-wing extremism in Flanders', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Milesi, P. and Catellani, P.: 'Two psychological routes to right-wing extremism: How Italian workers cope with change', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Tóth, A. and Grajcjzar, I.: 'Contrasting routes towards right-wing extremism and the importance of working life: the Hungarian case', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Poglia Mileti, F. and Plomb, F.: 'Individual expressions of right-wing extremism: Understanding the affinity to radical populism in observing the changes in the work field – the case of Switzerland', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Meyer, M. and Hentges, G: '"Ein ganz schöner Druck von oben": Veränderungen in der Arbeitswelt und Rechtspopulismus in Deutschland', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Balazs, G., Faguer, J.-P. and Rimbert P.: 'Widespread Competition and Political Conversions in France', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Thoft, E. and Grinderslev, E.: 'The welfare state under pressure: The Danish case', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Kirschenhofer, S., Flecker, J., Krenn, M. and Papouschek, U.: 'Varianten rechtspopulistischer Anziehung in Österreich', paper presented at the international SIREN conference, Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe, Vienna, 18 June 2004.

- Catellani, P. and Milesi, P.: 'Due percorsi psicologici verso la destra: un'indagine sui lavoratori europei', paper presented at the VI Italian National Congress of Social Psychology, Sciacca, 22-24 September 2004.

- Milesi, P., Catellani, P. and Covelli, V.: '"Vincenti" e "perdenti" in contesto lavorativo: spiegazione del cambiamento e processi di adesione alla destra', poster presented at the VI Italian National Congress of Social Psychology, Sciacca, 22-24 September 2004.

ANNEX 5: University courses

The following university courses were influenced by, made use of and provided information on the SIREN project and the issues it covers:

2001-2002

- Tóth, A. and Grajcjzar, I.: 'Nationalism and the Rise of the Extreme Right Wing in Europe', 2-semester seminar taught at the Eőtvős Loránd University of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ELTE), Budapest.

2002-2003

- Tóth, A. and Grajcjzar, I.: 'Socio-economic changes and the extreme right and populism in post-war Europe and in Hungary', course taught at the őtvős Loránd University of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ELTE), Budapest, presenting an overview of the state of extreme right and populist movements in post-war Italy, Austria, France, Germany and in Hungary and comparing the fate of these movements in the political-economic context.
- Catellani, P.: 'Social Psychology of Politics', held at the Catholic University of Milan, Faculty of Political Science.
- Milesi, P.: 'Social Psychology', course taught at the University of Pavia, Faculty of Political Science.
- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Théories sociologiques avancées', held at the University of Neuchâtel.
- Plomb, F.: 'Stratification sociale', held at the University of Fribourg.

2003-2004

- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Introduction to sociological theories', taught at the University of Neuchâtel, Dept. of Sociology (ISSP), winter term 2003/2004.
- Hentges, G. and Meyer, M.: 'Soziökonomische Veränderungen und die Attraktivität rechtsextremer Ideologien', seminar taught at the University of Cologne, summer term 2004.
- Poglia Mileti, F.: 'Théories sociologiques avancéees', taught at the University of Neuchâtel, summer term, 2004.
- Plomb, F.: 'Changes in the workplace and new inequalities', taught at the University of Neuchâtel, summer term 2004.

ANNEX 6:   Media presence and radio programmes

- Papouschek, U. and Flecker, J.: Interview on SIREN findings, broadcast on Austrian radio station, Radio Orange, Vienna, 27 January 2004.

- Flecker J. and Krenn, M.: Interview with on SIREN and related research, broadcast on Austrian national radio station, Ö1, science programme "Dimensionen", 19 February 2004.

- Hentges, G.: Interview on SIREN findings by Danish journalist, Journalisten Jesper Tynell, broadcast by Danish Broadcast Corporation, (http://www.dr.dk/orientering/ or_MP/2004/ark0422.shtm).

- Thoft, E.: Interview with Eva Thoft, published in Ugebrevet A4 (Newsletter of the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions –LO), No.17, 10 May 2004 (http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/ smcms/Ugebrevet/4766/5747/5772/5778/Index.htm?ID=5778).

- Grinderslev, E and Thoft, E.: Interview about the consequences of changes in working life with Eva Thoft and Edvin Grinderslev (CASA), broadcast by Danish Broadcast Corporation, 13 May 2004.

- 'Salzburger Nachtstudio', 1-hour programme on the main findings of the SIREN project, including interviews with speakers at the SIREN conference in June 2004, broadcast on Austrian national radio station, Ö1, science programme, 'Salzburger Nachtstudio', 23 June 2004.

- Berlingske (Danish daily), short comment on the consequences of changes in working life (with information provided by CASA), 29 June 2004.

ANNEX 7: Documentation of SIREN workshop series with policy makers (Delverable 6)

1. Reconversions économiques et conversions politiques,19 March 2004, Paris/France, organised by the Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi (CEE)

1.1. Programme

ATELIER
RECONVERSIONS ECONOMIQUES ET CONVERSIONS POLITIQUES

SIREN "Socio economic change and the appeal of the extreme right"

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19 mars 2004, de 9 h 30 à 18 h 00

Collège de France
52, rue du Cardinal Lemoine
Paris 5eme
Escalier B au fond de la cour à gauche,
troisième étage (chaire de sociologie)
Téléphone de Gabrielle Balazs : 01 44 27 18 42

L'enquête européenne à laquelle nous avons participé portait sur le lien entre les transformations socioéconomiques de ces vingt dernières années et l'attraction pour l'extrême-droite.

Pour la France, nous avons essayé de comprendre comment les agents sociaux transposent politiquement la précarisation de leur existence. Deux enquêtes par entretiens ont été menées auprès d'habitants d'anciennes vallées sidérurgiques décimées par les restructurations industrielles et auprès de salariés d'une entreprise multinationale de l'informatique de la "French Silicon Valley".

Au cours de cette journée, nous aimerions croiser les résultats de ce travail avec d'autres enquêtes portant sur des objets et des terrains connexes. Il s'agirait tout à la fois de discuter les mécanismes par lesquels l'insécurité sociale et économique contraint les représentations et les investissements politiques de ceux et celles qui la subissent, et d'aboutir à quelques "recommandations politiques" que nous pourrions adresser à la Commission européenne.

Après un rapide résumé de l'enquête française et la mise en perspective de quelques éléments de l'enquête en Autriche, en Allemagne et en Suisse, chacun pourrait présenter rapidement – eviron 10-15 minutes – son travail ou un point particulier lié à la problématique. Il s'agit de laisser le plus de temps possible aux réactions et la discussion informelle entre chaque groupe d'interventions (l'atelier n'est pas public).

9 h 30 café
- Balazs, Rimbert, Faguer: introduction enquête française
- Flecker, Hentges, Poglia, Plomb: introduction enquête européenne

- Annie Collovald: rôle des classes populaires dans le vote FN
- Michel Pialoux: Reconversions industrielles et conversions politiques: le cas de Sochaux Montbéliard

Pause Déjeuner

14 heures
- Evelyne Perrin: La précarisation des jeunes des classes populaires
- Claire Villiers: Réponses syndicales à la précarisation
- Franck Poupeau: les stratégies d'évitement scolaire entre fractions de classes
- Laurent Bonneli: politique de sécurité : les réponses institutionnelles à la délinquance

Fin vers 18 heures

1.2.   Workshop summary: Conclusions from the discussions (contributed by Gabrielle Balazs):

For the presentation of the research findings from the SIREN project it is crucial to carefully consider the notion of populism and its use in the political and public debate. As Annie Collovald argued in detail, there is a danger of reproducing the denunciation of the working class by the intellectual elites. In France, for example the "vote ouvrier" for Le Pen has always been clearly in minority in comparison to other social groups. This can be most clearly shown by taking the voting abstentions into account. Nevertheless, the "proletarisation" of the extreme right-wing vote has dominated the debate in recent years. The workshop participants agreed that it should be avoided to maintain a direct causal link between disadvantages and social frustration even though these are among the reasons for the attraction of the extreme right.

Regarding policy recommendations this means that the social frustration need to be addressed without attributing the reasons for the rise of the extreme right to the working class and the underclass.

A related important aspect refers to the variety of meanings conveyed by core notions such as immigration, security and insecurity, precariousness and, of course, populism. As they are part of the political discourse which often exploits their ambiguity, the terms cannot be used in a scientific way unless clear definitions are provided.

Further points of discussion in view of the policy recommendations that should be derived from the SIREN project:

1. Improvement of the situation of individuals in view of the changing character of capitalism and the tendency towards precariousness: It is important to construct collective securities and to provide the securities involved in the standard employment relationship also to precarious labour.

2. Collective identities of social groups and positive representation: Although effectiveness of top-down initiatives are limited …

3. European statistics are of little validity when it comes to sociological problems. This relates in particular to composite indicators of precariousness or the subjective aspects.

4. The European Commission should not only be addressed in the role of policy maker that may contribute to the mitigation of social problems. It must also be seen as architect of economic and social developments that contribute to the problems. This relates to the effects of EMU on the social security system, the intensification and generalisation of competition or the increasing precariousness in areas with previously high employment and social security such as the public services. One example given was the focus on the 'enterprise spirit' which, through further increasing competition, exacerbates rather than mitigates socials problems. Policies should be reconsidered in view of the effects on security and working conditions of the political formation of markets.

1.3.   Abstracts

Gabrielle Balazs, Jean-Pierre Faguer et Pierre Rimbert
Introduction enquête française

A vingt-cinq ans d'intervalle, ouvriers du fer et techniciens de l'électronique ont subi des restructurations industrielles qui ont aussi déstructuré leur espace social. Déclassés, nombre d'entre eux ont vu décroître ou s'annuler le taux de conversion des espèces de capitaux spécifiques qu'ils détenaient. En révisant à la baisse les chances objectives de réussite, les transformations survenues ruinent les investissements scolaires et professionnels initiaux, fragilisent des positions déjà souvent situées en deçà des espérances, anéantissent les profits sociaux liés aux trajectoires ascendantes et exacerbent la concurrence entre fractions de classes. Il en résulte une multiplication de positions socialement "intenables" à la fois par la difficulté de s'y maintenir sans déchoir et par la faible probabilité d'en sortir "par le haut".

On fait l'hypothèse qu'une station prolongée dans ces positions de "porte-à-faux" social influe sur les catégories politiques de ceux qui s'y trouvent relégués et, dans le contexte politique et économique actuel, contribue à installer les conditions de possibilité d'un intérêt pour certains thèmes véhiculés par l'extrême-droite.

Laurent Bonelli
Politique de sécurité : les réponses institutionnelles à la délinquance

Les quartiers populaires français ont subi de profondes transformations morphologiques et sociales depuis le début des années 1980. Les mutations liées au modèle de production post-fordiste ont modifié les processus disciplinaires antérieurs, qui ne semblent aujourd'hui plus capables de juguler les «désordres» générés par les jeunesses populaires. Saisies par les professionnels de la politique sous le label générique «d'insécurité», ces déviances juvéniles deviennent un problème social à part entière, dont la résolution va être de plus en plus confiée aux forces de police.

Voir notamment Evolutions et régulations des illégalismes populaires en France depuis le début des années 1980 (Cultures & Conflits, n°51, automne 2003, pp.9-42). Accessible sur http://www.conflits.org/article.php3?id_article=744.

Annie Collovald
Le rôle des classes populaires dans le vote FN

Les usages de la catégorie de populisme pour qualifier et décrire le FN sont trompeurs. L'analyse des commentaires électoraux du vote FN le montre. A l'inverse de ce qui est affirmé, les groupes populaires ne sont pas les plus nombreux dans l'électorat frontiste, ils se retrouvent principalement dans l'abstention et la non-inscription sur les listes électorales. Il n'y a pas de réceptivité naïve ou subjuguée aux thèses xénophobes : la question des immigrés renvoie le plus souvent non pas à "la lutte contre l'immigration" mais à des situations de vie, au chômage, etc. Il n'y a pas non plus pouvoir charismatique de J.-M. Le Pen sur ses troupes : l'électorat FN n'est ni fidèle ni loyal. C'est un électorat "passoire" qui se recompose sans cesse et est fondé sur l'agrégation provisoire et changeante de dispositions disparates. Enfin et surtout il n'y a pas une seule manière de voter et un seul rapport au vote qui serait le vote idéologique. Les électeurs ne votent pas tous voire ne votent que très rarement en fonction de leurs idées : ils votent en fonction de leur ancrage social, de leurs expériences sociales et en fonction du degré de proximité qu'ils ressentent avec les hommes et les partis qui se concurrencent pour le courtage de leur voix lors des campagnes électorales.

Les usages du populisme proposent ainsi des explications par l'exceptionnel plutôt que par l'ordinaire sociologique. Ils empêchent d'analyser l'offre politique et ses transformations, le rôle des médias et le rôle de ces interprétations en termes de populisme dans la réussite électorale et surtout politique du FN. Ils autorisent aussi le retour de théories explicatives depuis longtemps contestées en sociologie et qui regagnent un crédit scientifique nouveau dans la conjoncture actuelle : "autoritarisme des classes populaires", schème de la frustration et du déclassement pour rendre compte des mobilisations en faveur du FN, surtout thèse néoconservatrice de l'ingouvernabilité des démocraties quand elles sont soumises à une surcharge de demandes populaires, exploitée aux Etats-Unis dans les années 1970 pour dénoncer les risques que feraient courir aux sociétés occidentales les "excès de démocratie".(droits syndicaux, liberté de la presse, droit à la grève et à la manifestation). S'opérerait ainsi à travers ses usages du populisme une délégitimation de ceux pour qui le "populaire" est une cause à défendre au profit de ceux pour qui le populaire est un problème à résoudre.

Jörg Flecker
Le résultat du projét SIREN – quelque thèses

En tant que coordinateur du projet SIREN j'aimerais remercier Gabrielle Balazs et ses collègues pour avoir organisé cet atelier. Nous sommes déjà dans la phase finale du projet, phase dans laquelle il y a toujours beaucoup d'incertitudes en ce qui concerne la sélection des résultats les plus importants, la manière de présentation, etc. En outre, dans les projets Européens, on est obligé de développer des recommandations

politiques. C'est plus facile à dire qu'à faire. Pour toutes ces raisons je suis convaincu que les discussions d'aujourd'hui nous aiderons énormément. Je veux seulement présenter les grandes lignes du projet SIREN et annoncer en gros quelques résultats de la recherche.

Comme vous le savez peut être, le but du projet est d'analyser, premièrement, les perceptions subjectives des changements dans le monde du travail et, secondement, les relations entre les changements du travail et de l'emploi et le succès politique de l'extrême droite et du populisme radical. Nous ne supposons pas qu'on trouve les causes les plus importantes de ces développements politiques dans le monde du travail. Et nous ne voulons pas constater l'importance relative des changement dans le monde du travail – en comparaison avec des menace des identités culturelles, par exemple. Le but est plus modeste : Nous voulons surtout comprendre comment ce que les gens éprouvent influence leurs vues politiques.

Très brièvement quelques thèses sur la base de nos résultats, surtout qualitatives:

1. Les changements récents dans le monde du travail menacent la position sociale et l'identité d'une partie des employées. L'insécurité, la frustration des aspirations et les blessures du sentiment de justice sont au coeur des perceptions individuelles. Pour d'autres, qui ne sont pas menacés par un déclassement ou qui ont meme amélioré leurs position sociale, les pressions accrues et la nouvelle organisation du travail ont des conséquences ambigües qui peuvent aliéner les gens dans leur travail.

2. Dans la plus grande partie des cas les changements dans le monde du travail ont un effet sur la subjectivité politique. Mais la direction de cet effet n'est pas uniforme et varie selon les mentalités et les offres politiques. Quant aux réactions autoritaires et exclusivistes qui sont à la base de la mobilisation d'extreme droite, elles sont souvent dues aux frustrations d'expectations légitimes d'inclusion et de mobilité sociale qui mènent à des sentiments d'injustice intensives qui sont exprimés en faisant référence à d'autres groupements sociaux qui soi-disant ne se soumettent pas aux exigences du travail et néanmoins 'vivent bien' ou qui ont des revendications moins légitimes. Cela correspond aux messages politique de l'extreme droite prétendant défendre les gens 'honnetes et appliqués' aussi bien contre les élites que les sous-couches.

3. Une autre cause des réactions autoritaires et exclusivistes est la peur du déclassement en combinaison avec des sentiments d'impuissance politique ou de ne pas etre représentés politiquement. Les individus se percoivent comme victimes des pouvoirs anonymes de l'économie et de développements économiques imprévisibles et incompréhensibles. Le populisme de droite désigne le peuple comme victime passive de pouvoirs surpuissants et en meme temps abandonnés par la classe politique.

4. L'extreme droite ou le populisme de droite en Europe n'est pas uniforme mais très varié quant aux thèmes et stratégies politiques. Les uns proposent un programme néo-liberal, tandis que la cause des autres est la défense de l'Etat social. Mais il y a un noyau ideologique commun qui s'organise autour des thèmes de l'anti-

immigration et la préférence nationale, anti-élitisme et anti-classe politique. Quant à la relation entre le travail et l'emploi et les subjectivités politiques, le manque de reconnaissance par la classe politique aussi bien d'identités collectives que de problèmes est la clé pour comprendre l'attractivité du populisme de droite.

5. Récemment, dans les analyses des succès de l'extreme droite, la thèse de la menace aux identités culturelles est devenue plus populaire que la thèse des victimes de la modernisation. Ce point de vue n'était confirmé que très rarement dans nos entretiens dans les huit pays Européens participants au projet SIREN. A notre avis, ce sont plutot les crises dans le monde du travail qui dévaluent les capitaux culturel et social de divers groupes sociaux, ce qui conduit à menacer l' identité sociale des individus. L'extreme droite n'offre pas seulement la défense de l'identité culturelle contre l'étranger mais aussi la stabilisation des identités par l'ethnisation des conflits de distribution matérielle et symbolique.

Et finalement, nos résultats ont confirmé très clairement la diversité de raisons ou de causes de voter pour les populistes de droite: les uns votent pour les messages xénophobes, les autres malgré ces messages. En Autriche, par exemple, on a trouvé parmi ceux et celles qui avaient voté Haider des gens qui étaient décus par les representants socio-démocrates et s'attendaient à être soutenus par le FPÖ. D'autre part pour quelque cas il était clair que les gens ne voteraient jamais pour Haider quoiqu'ils avaient des orientations assez autoritaires et xénophobes. Cela montre la faute qu'on fait quant on stigmatise les électeurs populistes de droite.

Evelyne Perrin
La précarisation des jeunes des classes populaires

La précarité de l'emploi semble être devenue la nouvelle donne pour les jeunes entrant sur le marché du travail ces dix dernières années, y compris pour une partie des diplômés issus des classes moyennes pour qui l'on peut parler d'un certain déclassement. Les jeunes précaires d'origine populaire, dont nous avons étudié trois figures, l'employé de fast food, l'employé de chaînes de produits culturels, l'emploi-jeune, expriment, à travers des grèves longues et déterminées, des revendications de reconnaissance dans le travail et de progression de carrière; revendications que les syndicats ont du mal à répercuter et généraliser, tant la précarité de l'emploi est un obstacle à la syndicalisation.

*2. Flexible Arbeit, Prekarisierung, Ausgrenzung - Nährboden für rechtspopulistlsche Orientierungen
organised by Forschungsinstitut Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation (FIAB) of Ruhr-University Bochum and the Institute of Political Science at the University of Cologne
16-17 April 2004, Recklinghausen/Germany*

2.1. Programme

FREITAG, 16.04.2004

14.00 - 15.00 Intro

Arbeitserfahrungen, politische Orientierungen, Rechtspopulismus – Gibt es Zusammenhänge?, *Klaus Dörre, Forschungsinstitut Arbeit Bildung Partizipation, Recklinghausen*

Besteht ein Zusammenhang zwischen dem Umbruch der Arbeitswelt und dem Aufstieg des Rechtspopulismus in Europa? Erfahrungen aus dem SIREN-Projekt, *Jörg Flecker, Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt, Wien*

15.00 – 17.00 Themenblock I: Umbrüche innerhalb und außerhalb der Arbeitsgesellschaft
Moderation: Klaus Kraemer

Soziale Exklusion und Prekarisierung, *Martin Kronauer, FHW Berlin*

Globalisierung, Neoliberalismus und Rechtspopulismus, *Christoph Butterwegge, Universität zu Köln*

Tiefendimensionen sozialer Ungleichheit, *Ferdinand Sutterlüty, Institut für Sozialforschung, Frankfurt/M.*

Die alltagsweltliche Rationalität gruppenspezifischer Desintegration, *Uwe H. Bittlingmayer, Universität Münster*

17.00 – 17.30 Kaffeepause

17.30 – 19.00 Themenblock II: Politische Verarbeitungsmuster – Empirische Befunde
Moderation: Frederic Speidel

"Sich quälen gehört zur Veränderung ..." Rechtspopulistische Deutungsmuster bei Beschäftigten im Kontext sozioökonomischer Veränderungen – Erfahrungen aus dem SIREN-Projekt, *Gudrun Hentges, Universität zu Köln*

"Fleiß ohne Preis" – Politische Auswirkungen faktischer Bedrohung und symbolischer Ausgrenzung angelernter Industriearbeiter/innen – Erfahrungen aus dem SIREN-Projekt, *Manfred Krenn, Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt, Wien*

Ausgrenzende Integrationsnormen und rechtspopulistische Orientierungen, *Klaus Kraemer, Forschungsinstitut Arbeit Bildung Partizipation, Recklinghausen*

(Anti-)Egalitäre Gesellschaftsbilder – Einstellungen von deutschen Industriebeschäftigten im Vergleich, *Ursula Birsl, ZENS, Universität Göttingen*

SAMSTAG, 17.04.2004

9.00 – 10.00   Fortsetzung Themenblock II
Moderation: Gudrun Hentges

Wer wählt rechts und warum? Eine Übersicht über die Wähler/innen rechtspopulistischer Parteien in Westeuropa, *Tim Spier, Graduiertenkolleg "Die Zukunft des Europäischen Sozialmodells", Universität Göttingen*

Rassismus der Exklusion und Ermächtigungshandeln im Ausbildungsbetrieb, *Susanne Lang, Forschungsplattform "Lebenswelt allochthoner Jugendlicher" der Forschungsstelle für interkulturelle Studien, Universität zu Köln*

10.00 – 10.30 Kaffeepause

10.30 – 12.00 Themenblock III: Gewerkschaftliche Gegenstrategien
Moderation: Jörg Flecker

IG Metall-Jugendarbeit als Handlungs- und Möglichkeitsraum – Schlussfolgerungen aus der IGM-Jugendstudie 2002, *Jan Engelhardt, IG Metall-Vorstand – Frankfurt am Main*

Statt Sozialneid und Rassismus. Gleichbehandlung und Solidarität, *Angelo Lucifero, ver.di Landesbezirk Thüringen*

Rechtsextreme Tendenzen auf deutschen Baustellen und mögliche gewerkschaftliche Gegenstrategien, *Malte Meyer, Universität zu Köln*

12.00 – 13.30 Themenblock IV: Gewerkschaftliche Bildungsarbeit
Moderation: Manfred Krenn

Interkulturelle und antirassistische gewerkschaftliche Bildungsarbeit. Ein Erfahrungsbericht, *Michaela Dälken, DGB Bildungswerk, Bereich Migration, Düsseldorf*

Ansätze und Beispiele der nicht-rassistischen und interkulturellen Bildungsarbeit im gewerkschaftlichen Kontext, *Petra Wlecklik, IG Metall Bildungszentrum Sprockhövel*

Erfahrungen mit dem "Baustein zur nicht-rassistischen Bildungsarbeit". Handlungsorientierte politische Bildung unter den Bedingungen von Verwertungslogik und Fatalismus, *Julika Bürgin/Barbara Schäuble, DGB-Bildungswerk Thüringen*

Ende der Veranstaltung

2.2.   Workshop Review
          (in German, contributed by Gudrun Hentges)

Seit Beginn der 1990er-Jahre tauchte im Kontext der Rechtsextremismus- und Rechtspopulismusforschung immer wieder die Frage auf, ob und in welchem Maße Veränderungen in der Arbeitswelt (Internationalisierung der Produktion, Verlagerung von Produktionsstätten, Flexibilisierung, Prekarisierung, Erwerbslosigkeit) für die Erklärung rechtsextremistischer Konjunkturen von Bedeutung sind. In der Diskussion trafen zwei einander widersprechende Einschätzungen aufeinander: Einerseits wurde argumentiert, dass rechtsextreme Orientierungen (Ideologien der Ungleichwertigkeit und Gewaltakzeptanz) das Ergebnis sozialer Marginalisierung und Desintegration seien (Wilhelm Heitmeyer). Andererseits wandten Kritiker/innen ein, dass die Erfahrungen in der Arbeitswelt in dieser Hinsicht keine große Rolle spielten, sondern rechtsextreme

Einstellungen und Meinungen vor dem Hintergrund der politischen Kultur und Sozialisation zu erklären seien – ein Ansatz, der in der Diskussion unter dem Stichwort "Dominanzkultur" (Birgit Rommelspacher) firmierte.

Die Diskussionen der 1990er-Jahre wurden in der Fachwissenschaft, in sozialen Bewegungen und politischen Initiativen engagiert und polarisiert geführt, sie zeichneten sich jedoch mitunter durch einen Mangel an empirischem Material aus. Seit drei Jahren befassen sich nun zwei Projekte mit der Frage nach dem Zusammenhang zwischen Umbrüchen in der Arbeitswelt, politischen Bewusstseinsformen und rechtspopulistischen Tendenzen: Seit Herbst 2001 geht ein internationales Team, an dem Forscher/innen aus acht Ländern beteiligt sind, der Frage nach dem Zusammenhang zwischen sozio-ökonomischen Veränderungen und der Anziehungskraft der Extremen Rechten nach (SIREN), seit Frühjahr 2002 (?) befasst sich das Forschungsinstitut *Arbeit, Bildung, Partizipation* mit der Frage nach den Auswirkungen von Flexibilisierung und Prekarisierung bei Beschäftigten. Längst überfällig war ein erster Austausch über die Projektergebnisse.

Bei der Auswahl der Interviewpartner/innen orientierte sich das vom FIAB durchgeführte Projekt "Prekäre Beschäftigungsverhältnisse – Ursache von sozialer Desintegration und Rechtsextremismus" am Zonenmodell von Manuel Castel und wählte Personen aus der "Zone der Integration", der "Zone der Entkoppelung" und der "Zone der Prekarität" aus. Bei den Interviewpartner(inn)n handelt es sich u.a. um Beschäftigte im IT-Bereich einer großen in Frankfurt am Main ansässigen Bank und um Leiharbeiter einer großen Zeitarbeitsfirma. In ihrer Vorstellung der Projektergebnisse problematisierten Klaus Dörre und Klaus Kraemer (beide: FIAB) das Castel'sche Zonenmodell. Unter Einbeziehung der Selbstwahrnehmung und subjektiven Deutung der Befragten sei, so ihr Fazit, feststellbar, dass es auch Desintegrationsprozesse in der "Zone der Integration" und Integrationsprozesse in der "Zone der Prekarität" gebe. Bei den Leiharbeitern beispielsweise wirke das desintegrierende Potenzial nicht in gleicher Weise desintegrierend, während Beschäftigte der IT-Branche in ihren Interviews zum Ausdruck brachten, dass vor dem Hintergrund betrieblicher Umstrukturierungen die Prekarisierung in die "Zone der Integration" Einzug halte. Im Spannungsfeld von Erwerbsbiografie, Arbeitserfahrungen und individuellen Integrationsvorstellungen entstehe, so die These der Projektmitarbeiter, der "Problemrohstoff", der unter bestimmten Voraussetzungen zu rechtspopulistischen Orientierungen führen könne.

In eine ganz ähnliche Richtung wiesen auch die Ergebnisse des EU-Projekts SIREN. Jörg Flecker, Manfred Krenn (beide: FORBA, Wien) und Gudrun Hentges (Universität Köln) stellten die Ergebnisse der qualitativen europäischen Studie vor sowie die in Deutschland und Österreich durchgeführten Länderstudien. Im Rahmen dieses interdisziplinär ausgerichteten europäischen Projekts wurden Personen interviewt, die a.) beruflich erfolgreich sind, b.) einen sozialen Abstieg erfahren haben (oder diesen befürchten) und die c.) in prekarisierten Beschäftigungsverhältnissen tätig sind. Die Anlage des Gesamtprojekts sah eine breite Branchenverteilung vor, wobei ein Schwerpunkt im Bereich der nunmehr privatisierten ehemaligen Staatsbetriebe sowie im Bereich der Informationstechnologien lag. Darüber hinaus wurden innerhalb einer jeden

sozialen Gruppe Personen mit und ohne Affinität zum Rechtspopulismus interviewt. Wie die qualitative Studie zeigt, lässt sich kein unmittelbarer Zusammenhang zwischen der Lebenslage und der Übernahme rechspopulistischer Ideologeme feststellen. Vielmehr konnten die Forscher/innen eine Typologie präsentieren, in der sowohl der Rechtspopulismus der Selbstständigen und beruflich Erfolgreichen eingefangen wurde, aber auch der der Arbeiter/innen, die sich in einem hohem Maße mit ihrem Status und den von ihnen erbrachten Leistungen identifizieren und im Gegenzug Anerkennung und Protektionismus einfordern. Herausgearbeitet wurde auch der spezifische Zugang von Frauen zum Rechtspopulismus, deren Lebensalltag durch die "doppelte Vergesellschaftung" (Regina Becker-Schmidt) geprägt ist und die von Seiten des Staates Schutz, Anerkennung und soziale Absicherung erwarten. Soziale Marginalisierung, Ausgrenzung, Armut, Entwertung ihrer Qualifikation, das Gefühl von Bedrohung, kultureller Enteignung und sexueller Belästigung wurden in ihren Deutungsmustern ursächlich mit Einwanderung, Migration und dem Aufeinandertreffen der Kulturen verknüpft. Soziale Probleme wurden ethnisiert.

Die These, dass man sich bei Erforschung der Entstehungsbedingungen rechtspopulistischer Bewusstseinsformen keineswegs auf die sog. Modernisierungsverlierer konzentrieren kann, bestätigt auch die im Rahmen des Projekts durchgeführte repräsentative Untersuchung, als deren Ergebnis festzuhalten ist, dass sowohl Gewinner der Umstrukturierungsprozesse als auch Verlierer auf jeweils unterschiedliche Weise dem Rechtspopulismus anhängen können. Nicht zuletzt ist bei der Erforschung des Phänomens die politisch breite Angebotspalette in den verschiedenen Staaten zu berücksichtigen, die in jeweils unterschiedlicher Weise und mit spezifischer Akzentuierung auf verschiedene gesellschaftliche Probleme Bezug nimmt und z.T. widersprüchliche Lösungsangebote präsentiert.

Vertieft wurden diese Fragestellungen in weiteren Beiträgen: Martin Kronauer (FHW Berlin) diskutiert in seinem Beitrag die Verhältnisbestimmung zwischen Erwerbsarbeit und sozialen Rechten – insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund der Tatsache, dass die nach dem 2. Weltkrieg vollzogene Integration in den Arbeitsmarkt – die faktische Vollbeschäftigung – und die daraus abgeleiteten sozialen Rechte der Beschäftigten eine historisch einmalige Situation war. Die neue Herausforderung, vor der die Demokratie heute steht, mache es erforderlich, über die Erweiterung der Kriterien von Teilhabe und Ausschluss nachzudenken. Kronauer arbeitet in seinem Beitrag heraus, dass Erwerbsarbeit und soziale Rechte aufeinander verweisen und eng miteinander verknüpft sind. Vor dem Hintergrund der Umbrüche in der Erwerbsarbeit werden zwar die Bürgerrechte nicht entzogen, aber sie verlieren an Substanz. Kronauer wirft die Frage auf, ob sich Erwerbsarbeit und soziale Rechte auf neue Weise miteinander verbinden lassen. Kritisch diskutiert er das Modell der Grundsicherung, das seiner Meinung nach jedoch keinen Sinn ergibt, da neben dem Aspekt der über Erwerbsarbeit vermittelten materiellen Absicherung Erwerbsarbeit in unserer heutigen Gesellschaft nach wie vor das zentrale gesellschaftliche Integrationselement ist. Die Diskussion über "Soziale Exklusion und Prekarisierung" – so der Vortragstitel – dreht sich um die Frage, ob eine

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(relative) Abkopplung der Erwerbsarbeit von der Teilhabe an sozialen Rechten nicht die adäquate Antwort auf die gesellschaftlichen Herausforderungen der Zukunft sein könne.

Christoph Butterwegge (Universität Köln) wandte gegen Dörres These vom "reaktiven Nationalismus" ein, dass Nationalismus – abgesehen von wenigen historischen Ausnahmen – immer reaktiv aufgetreten sei. Butterwegge vertrat in seinem Vortrag die These, dass bedingt durch Globalisierung – oder präziser: aufgrund der neoliberalen Modernisierung – neben den völkisch-traditionalistischen Nationalismus ein Standortnationalismus trete. Diese an die neuen Bedingungen angepasste Ideologie legitimiere die technologische Aufrüstung und werte den eigenen Wirtschaftsstandort auf. In der Ideologie eines modernisierten Nationalismus bildeten nicht Volk, Nation und Familie die rechte Wertetrias; diese werde abgelöst durch Markt, Profit und Konkurrenzfähigkeit des jeweiligen Industriestandortes.

Die hier von Butterwegge vertretene These provozierte eine lebhafte Debatte und berührte die Kernfragen: Welche Rolle spielen Konkurrenz, Wettbewerb und die Verteidigung des eigenen Standorts bei der Herausbildung des Rechtspopulismus? Legt das Prinzip der Konkurrenzfähigkeit des jeweiligen Industriestandortes rechtsextreme Denk- und Handlungsweisen nahe? Unter welchen Bedingungen wird die Konkurrenz zwischen den Standorten unter Rekurs auf rechtsextreme Ideologien ausgetragen?

Ursula Birsl (Universität Göttingen) stellte ein vor kurzem abgeschlossenes Projekt vor, welches (anti-)egalitäre Gesellschaftsbilder und Einstellungen von deutschen, britischen und spanischen Industriebeschäftigten zum Gegenstand hatte. Diese empirische Studie, die u.a. in der deutschen Automobilindustrie durchgeführt wurde, kam zum Ergebnis, dass zur Erklärung der Entstehung von Gesellschaftsbildern weitere Faktoren wie öffentlicher Diskurs oder politische Partizipationschancen einbezogen werden müssen, um einen Zusammenhang zwischen Gesellschaftsbildern und der Verarbeitung von Arbeits- und Lebenserfahrungen herstellen zu können. Insbesondere mit Blick auf die in Spanien und Großbritannien geführten Interviews wurde deutlich, so Birsl, von welcher Bedeutung öffentliche Diskurse und die gesellschaftstypische Einbindung von politischen Einstellungen sind.

Anknüpfend an die von Birsl geäußerte Feststellung, dass sich Fremdenfeindlichkeit nicht oder nur schwer in den Interviews erheben und mit Arbeitserfahrungen verknüpfen lasse, stellte Susanne Lang (Forschungsplattform Allochthone Jugendliche, FIST Köln) die von ihr durchgeführte qualitative Studie zur sozialen Repräsentation von Jugendlichen vor. Ausgangspunkt dieser Studie war die Evaluation eines Antirassismusprojekt, das im Rahmen der gewerkschaftlichen Bildungsarbeit durchgeführt wurde. Sie kam in ihrer Untersuchung (Gruppendiskussionen, teilnehmende Beobachtung) zum Ergebnis, dass keine klassenspezifische Artikulation des Rassismus zu erkennen sei. Die von ihr befragten Jugendlichen leugneten die Hierarchisierungen und Abgrenzungsbewegungen innerhalb der Ausbildungsgruppen. Diese Leugnung ging jedoch, so die Feststellung von Lang, damit einher, dass die Jugendlichen bei der Selbst- und Fremdbeschreibung auf Mythen rekurrierten, z.B. auf den Mythos des barbarischen Fremden.

Eine deutlich andere Perspektive nahm Ferdinand Sutterlüty (Institut für Sozialforschung, Frankfurt am Main) ein, der in seinem Beitrag "Tiefendimensionen sozialer Ungleichheit" kategorial-exkludierende Klassifikationsmuster bzw. Ungleichheitssemantiken vorstellte, die zwischen Angehörigen der Mehrheitsgesellschaft und Migranten eine Rolle spielen. Durchgeführt wurde die ethnographisch ausgerichtete Studie in einem Stadtteil des Ruhrgebiet, der dadurch zu charakterisieren ist, dass die vorwiegend türkischen Migranten u.a. durch Immobilienbesitz gesellschaftlich aufgestiegen sind und als "avancierte Fremde" von der Mehrheitsbevölkerung wahrgenommen werden. Diese Ungleichheitssemantiken beruhen, so das Ergebnis seiner Untersuchung, auf einer Semantik der ethnischen Zugehörigkeit nach Blutsverwandtschaft und auf der Vorstellung von "dreckig sein, sauber sein".

Abschließende Beiträge befassten sich mit Gegenstrategien: Angelo Lucifero (Ver.di Landesbezirk Thüringen) berichtete von Beispielen aus der Praxis: Die Bürgerinitiative gegen "Billiglohn und Sozialabbau – für Gleichbehandlung" sorgte beispielsweise für Furore, als sie den Norma Lebensmittelfilialbetrieb (Zweigbetrieb Mittelhausen) mit der "Goldenen Nase" auszeichnete. Diese fragwürdige Auszeichnung wurde dem Filialleiter überreicht, weil die Beschäftigten dazu gezwungen sind, von Montag bis Samstag die Verkaufsstellen alleine zu betreiben und sich demnach keine Pausen leisten können. Ohne jede Kompensation absolvieren sie eine Wochenarbeitszeit, die häufig 50 Stunden überschreitet.

Für heftige Kontroversen sorgte der Beitrag von Malte Meyer (Universität Köln), der sich mit rechtsextremen Tendenzen auf deutschen Baustellen befasste. Meyer kritisierte in seinem Vortrag insbesondere die IG Bau Agrar Umwelt, die – so seine Einschätzung – aufgrund der von ihr gemeinsam mit der Polizei durchgeführten Razzien und der von ihr protegierten protektionistischen Zuwanderungspolitik eher diesen rechtsextremen Tendenzen Vorschub leistete als sie wirkungsvoll zu bekämpfen. Er forderte abschließend, dass die IG Bau Agrar Umwelt – statt Kollegen am rechten Rand zu organisieren – den politischen Kontakt zu Initiativen wie "Kein Mensch ist illegal" suchen und Illegalisierte organisieren solle, um wirksam deren Interessen vertreten zu können. Die sich daran anschließende grundsätzliche Debatte drehe sich um das Verständnis von Gewerkschaften. Ist es ihre originäre Aufgabe, wie Bodo Zeuner (FU Berlin) anmerkte, die Einhaltung des Tarifvertrags zu sichern, oder ist eine gewerkschaftliche Politik nur dann zukunftsfähig wenn sie sich als internationalistische versteht und als solche agiert?

Der abschließende Diskussionsblock befasste sich mit der gewerkschaftlichen Bildungsarbeit. Michaela Dälken (DGB Bildungswerk, Bereich Migration), Julika Bürgin (DGB Bildungswerk Thüringen) und Petra Wlecklik (IG Metall Bildungszentrum Sprockhövel) stellten die entsprechenden Institutionen des DGB und der IG Metall vor und reflektierten vor dem Hintergrund der bislang geführten Debatte die Bedeutung gewerkschaftlicher Bildungsarbeit. Als Antwort auf die Frage, wie man Kontinuität in der antirassistischen Bildungsarbeit schaffen könne, schlug Petra Wlecklik vor, Antirassismus und Interkulturalität nicht (nur) in gesonderten Seminaren zu behandeln, sondern diese Themen zu einer Querschnittsaufgabe zu machen, um sie in allen

Seminaren thematisieren zu können, beispielsweise auch in jenen Angeboten, die sich mit Konflikten am Arbeitsplatz befassen. Julika Bürgin verwies auf den soeben (in 2. überarbeiteter Auflage) erschienenen "Baustein zur nicht-rassistischen Bildungsarbeit", der die Bildungsarbeit des DGB in den letzten Jahren maßgeblich geprägt hat. Sie erinnerte daran, dass antirassistische Bildungsarbeit – und auch ihre Akteure – oft die problematischen Bedingungen vergessen, unter denen Bildungsarbeit betrieben wird und plädierte für einen emanzipatorischen Bildungsbegriff. Man könne mit den Teilnehmern diskutieren, müsse jedoch den Anspruch aufgeben, sie durch diese Bildungsarbeit verändern zu wollen. Im Mittelpunkt dürften nicht die Teilnehmer als Problem stehen, sondern die Probleme der Teilnehmer. In der Bildungslandschaft beobachtet sie zwei Wendungen der politischen Bildung: Einerseits die konstruktivistische Wende – das Reden darüber, wie Menschen die Wirklichkeit deuten, nicht wie die Verhältnisse sind – und die modernistische Wende, die nur noch oder fast ausschließlich gewerkschaftliche Bildungsarbeit im Kontext von Management-Strategien ("Diversity Management") sieht. So sehr es auch zu begrüßen sei, dass antirassistische Bildungsarbeit über Programme wie ENTYMON gefördert worden sei, so müsse man jedoch kritisch festhalten, dass zeitgleich die Mittel für politische Bildung erheblich reduziert wurden.

3. *Political attitudes, life situations and the appeal of radical ideologies organised by the Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*
27 April 2004, Budapest/Hungary

3.1. *Programme*

Political Attitudes, World of Work and the Attraction to Extreme Ideologies

Conference Program

27. April, 2004 Budapest

10.00 h **Opening**
Dr. Michael Ehrke, FES, leader of the local agency

10.10 h **Changes in working life and attraction to populism**
Yves deWeerdt, HIVA, Leuven University, Belgium

10.30 h **The populist gap – changes in working life and the reactions of mainstream politics**
Jörg Flecker, Forba, Austria

10 50 h **"I am a desperado for Germany": Right-wing populist orientations in Germany**
Gudrun Hentges, Köln University

11 10 h **Workers and politics from socialism to post socialism**
Mark Pittaway, Open University UK

11.30 h   **Political and economic changes, frustrated national identity, aversion and attraction to populist political programs**
András Tóth and István Grajczár, MTA, Institute of Political Sciences

12.00-13.00 h   **Lunch**

13.00 h   **Family socialization factors in the influence of the success in the Hungarian labour market**
Katalin Tausz, ELTE, Institute of Sociology

13.20 h   **Xenophobia in international comparison**
Antal Örkény, ELTE, Institute of Sociology

13.40 h   **The renaissance of popularism in Hungarian politics**
Ervin Csizmadia. MTA Institute of Political Sciences

14.00 h   **Theories of populism, populism inside and outside democratic barrier**
András Bozóki, CEU Politikatudományi Tanszék

14.20 h   **Chance for Everyone?**
Imre Szekeres, MEH, political under-secretary

14.35 h   **Discussion**

4.   *Roads to right-wing extremism – and back: The policy implications of the SIREN research findings, 24 May 2004, Brussels/Belgium, organised by HIVA, KU Leuven*

4.1.   Programme

International Trade Union House, Brussels

A workshop of the project "Socio-economic change, individual reactions and the appeal to the extreme right" (SIREN), IHP-Programme, European Commission, DG Research

Morning Session

11:00-11:15   **Welcome and aim of the workshop**
Giulia Amaducci (European Commission, DG Research), Jörg Flecker (FORBA)

11:15-11:45   **Socio-economic change and roads to right-wing extremism – Findings of the SIREN project**
Patrizia Catellani (Catholic University of Milan), Hans De Witte (KU Leuven), Gudrun Hentges (University of Cologne)

11:45-12:10   **Social opportunities and political freedoms in Europe: recent dynamics**
Elena Saraceno (EC, Group of Policy Advisors)

12:10-13:00   **Lunch**

Afternoon sessions

Chair: Hans De Witte (KU Leuven)

Input on policy implications of the SIREN findings for each session: Jörg Flecker (FORBA)

13:00-14:00 **Work Organisation and Working Conditions**
Opening address by Lars Erik Andreasen (EC, DG Employment and Social Affairs)

14:00-15:00 **Racism and Discrimination**
Opening address by Catelene Passchier (ETUC European Trade Union Confederation)

15:00-15:30 **Break**

15:30-16:30 **Older Workers**
Opening address by Anne Sophie Parent (AGE European Older People's Platform)

16:30-17:00 **Roundup**

ANNEX 8:   SIREN International Conference (Deliverable 8)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Changes in working life and the appeal of right-wing populism in Europe

17-18 June 2004, Vienna

Renner-Institut
Hoffingergasse 26-28
1120 Wien

Working life in Europe has been subject to radical change in recent years, not only affecting people's economic and social status but also the personal and social identities of individuals as well as political orientations. Based on recent research findings from the EU-funded project "Socio-economic change, individual reactions and the appeal of the extreme right" (SIREN) as well as the views of leading experts in both working-life research and the study of right-wing populism and extremism in Europe, the conference addresses these questions:

- How do people cope with the impact of the transformation of work and employment?
- What strategies do they develop to come to terms with the growing insecurity in working life?
- What are the political reverberations of recent transformations of the labour market?
- Is there an interplay between these transformations and the growing support for right-wing populist and -extremist parties and movements that Europe has experienced in recent years?

Organised by:

Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA)   in cooperation with
Renner-Institut

Supported by:

Wissenschaftszentrum Wien (WZW)
Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur
Gewerkschaft der Privatangestellten

PROGRAMME

09:30   *Registration*   Anmeldung

10:00   Erich Fröschl, Renner-Institut, Wien
Welcome
Begrüßung

Giulia Amaducci, European Commission, DG Research, Brussels
Jörg Flecker, Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Wien
Introduction to the SIREN project and to the conference
Einführung in das SIREN-Projekt und die Konferenz

10:45   Guy Standing, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Geneva

Economic insecurities in a great transformation

Wirtschaftliche Unsicherheiten in Zeiten des Umbruchs

11:30   Cas Mudde, Universiteit Antwerpen

The study of the extreme right: Looking back and ahead

Untersuchungen über die extreme Rechte: Rückblick und Vorschau

12:15   *Lunch*   *Mittagessen*

13:45   **Plenary session: The findings of the SIREN project**
Plenum: Forschungsergebnisse aus dem Projekt SIREN

Gudrun Hentges, Universität zu Köln, Jörg Flecker, FORBA,
and Gabrielle Balazs, Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, Noisy le Grand
Rechtspopulistische Konjunkturen in Europa – Ergebnisse der qualitativen SIREN Untersuchung
Right-wing populist trends in Europe: Findings of the qualitative SIREN research

Patrizia Catellani, Università Cattolica di Milano, Hans de Witte, K. U. Leuven, Yves de Weerdt, Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA), and Patrizia Milesi, Università Cattolica di Milano
Perceived socio-economic change and right-wing extremism: The SIREN survey among European workers
Wahrnehmungen von sozioökonomischem Wandel und Rechtsextremismus: die SIREN-Befragung von europäischen ArbeitnehmerInnen

Discussion   *Diskussion*

15:10   *Tea & Coffee*   *Kaffee- und Teepause*

15:40   **Plenary session: Research findings: right-wing extremism, xenophobia and anti-discrimination**
Plenum: Forschungsergebnisse zu Rechtsextremismus, Fremdenfeindlichkeit und Antidiskriminierungsmaßnahmen

Michaela Köttig, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen
Junge Frauen und Rechtsextremismus in Deutschland
Young women and right-wing extremism in Germany

Peter Fleissner, Technische Universität Wien
Fremdenfeindliche Haltungen gegenüber MigrantInnen und Minderheiten in einer erweiterten Europäischen Union
Xenophobe attitudes towards migrants and minorities in the enlarged European Union

John Wrench, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Wien

Discrimination of minorities and anti-discrimination policies in a European context
Diskriminierung von Minderheiten und Antidiskriminierungsmaßnahmen in Europa

Discussion   *Diskussion*

17:30   End of Day 1   Ende des ersten Tages

Friday, 18 June 2004   Freitag, 18. Juni 2004

9:00-12:30   **Parallel Workshops: Varieties of right-wing populist attraction: the situation in European countries**
Parallele Workshops: Varianten rechtspopulistischer Anziehung: Die Situation in europäischen Ländern

Workshop A: Belgium, Italy, Hungary and Switzerland
Workshop A: Belgien, Italien, Ungarn, Schweiz

Yves de Weerdt, Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA) and Hans de Witte, K.U. Leuven
The public-private divide and receptiveness to right-wing extremism in Flanders
Unterschiede zwischen öffentlichem und privatem Sektor und die Empfänglichkeit für Rechtsextremismus in Flandern

Patrizia Milesi and Patrizia Catellani, Università Cattolica di Milano
Two psychological routes to right-wing extremism: How Italian workers cope with change
Zwei psychologische Wege zum Rechtsextremismus: Wie italienische ArbeitnehmerInnen den Wandel in der Arbeitswelt verarbeiten

Discussion   *Diskussion*

10:30-11:00 *Tea & Coffee*   *Kaffee- und Teepause*

András Tóth and Istvàn Grajczjar, Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest
Contrasting routes towards right-wing extremism and the importance of working life: the Hungarian case
Verschiedene Wege zum Rechtsextremismus und die Bedeutung der Arbeitswelt: der Fall Ungarn

Francesca Poglia and Fabrice Plomb, Université de Neuchâtel
Individual expressions of right-wing extremism: Understanding the affinity to radical populism in observing the changes in the work field – the case of Switzerland
Individuelle Ausdrucksformen von Rechtsextremismus: Empfänglichkeit für Rechtspopulismus und Veränderungen im Arbeitsleben am Beispiel der Schweiz

Discussion   *Diskussion*

Workshop B: Germany, France, Denmark and Austria
Workshop B: Deutschland, Frankreich, Dänemark, Österreich

Malte Meyer and Gudrun Hentges, Universität zu Köln
"Ein ganz schöner Druck von oben": Veränderungen in der Arbeitswelt und Rechtspopulismus in Deutschland
"It's an enormous amount of pressure which is coming from above ...": Changes in the world of work and right-wing populism in Germany

Gabrielle Balazs, Jean-Pierre Faguer, Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, Noisy le Grand, and Pierre Rimbert, MSH, Paris
Widespread Competition and Political Conversions in France
Ausgedehnter Wettbewerb und politische Konversion in Frankreich

Discussion   Diskussion

10:30-11:00 *Tea & Coffee*   *Kaffee- und Teepause*

Eva Thoft and Edvin Grinderslev, Center for Alternativ Samfundsanalyse, Copenhagen
The welfare state under pressure: The Danish case
Der Wohlfahrtsstaat unter Druck: Das Beispiel Dänemark

Sabine Kirschenhofer, Jörg Flecker, Manfred Krenn and Ulrike Papouschek, Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Vienna
Varianten rechtspopulistischer Anziehung in Österreich
Variants of right-wing populist attraction in Austria

Discussion   *Diskussion*

12:30	*Lunch* *Mittagessen*

13:30   **Plenary session: Policy implications of research findings**
Plenum: Politikempfehlungen aufgrund der Forschungsergebnisse

Hans Georg Zilian, Büro für Sozialforschung, Graz
Gleichheit in einer globalisierten Welt
Equality Begins at Home

Christoph Butterwegge, Universität zu Köln
Vom Wohlfahrtsstaat zum nationalen Wettbewerbsstaat – und mögliche Gegenstrategien
From the welfare state to the national competition state – and possible counterstrategies

Franz Schultheis, Université de Geneve
Der neue Geist des Kapitalismus und die Entpolitisierung des Politischen
The new spirit of capitalism and the depoliticization of the political

15:00   *Coffee & Tea*   *Kaffee- und Teepause*

15:30   **Panel: The policy agenda**
Podium: Die politische Agenda

Caspar Einem, Member of the Austrian Parliament, Vienna
Möglichkeiten eines sozialen Europa
Possibilities for a social Europe

Ortrun Gauper, Verdi, Berlin
Ein anderes Europa ist möglich – Wege zu einem sozialen und beschäftigungsreichen Europa
Another Europe is possible – Pathways towards a social, job-creating Europe

Asbjörn Wahl, For velferdsstaten, Oslo
The brutalisation of work: The breakdown of the social pact and its political consequences for the labour movement
Brutalisierung der Arbeit: Der Zusammenbruch des Sozialpakts und seine politischen Auswirkungen auf die Gewerkschaftsbewegung

Discussion   *Diskussion*

17:30   *End of the Conference*   *Ende der Konferenz*

ABSTRACTS

Gabrielle Balazs, Jean-Pierre Faguer (Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, Noisy le Grand) and Pierre Rimbert (MSH, Paris)

Widespread Competition and Political Conversions in France

Using interviews with inhabitants of previously steel-industry based areas that industrial restructuring has devastated and with employees of a multi-national computer company established in the "French Silicon Valley", this contribution provides a description of how working and living conditions in France have deteriorated, first for the working classes and second – because of economic crisis getting worse – for the skilled middle classes, and how this entails the social downgrading of a whole part of the wage-earning population. The contribution attempts to explain the processes that shape representations and the political involvement of individuals who suffer from social and economic insecurity.

Christoph Butterwegge (Universität zu Köln)

From the welfare state to the national competition state – and possible counterstrategies

What is currently on the political agenda of many Western industrial countries is not as much *less* state but *a different* state. Rather than the liquidation of the welfare state, it is about its reorganisation along neoliberal lines based on a reduction of benefits and the re-individualisation of social risk. The welfare state is being turned into a "nationally *competitive* state", with policies designed to foster the economic competitiveness of the "own" country in a global market. Social welfare no longer has any intrinsic value. According to the neoliberal logic of competitive nationalism, welfare must be subjected to political and economic interests. The privatisation of public services, far-reaching deregulation of social security provisions and the increasing flexibilisation of employment thus do not result from economic necessity but the rationale of powerful interest groups. At the same time globalisation is more than purely ideological, as it calls for alternative democratic and social concepts that so far have not been sufficiently discussed.

Patrizia Catellani (Università Cattolica di Milano), Hans De Witte (K.U. Leuven), Yves De Weerdt (Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA)) and Patrizia Milesi (Università Cattolica di Milano)

Perceived socio-economic change and right-wing extremism: The SIREN-survey among European workers

Starting from the results of the qualitative research and the review of the literature, a telephone survey was carried out in early summer of 2003 among about 5.800 employed respondents of the SIREN countries: Austria, Belgium (Flanders only), Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and (the three regions of) Switzerland.

First, we discuss the experienced socio-economic changes. Overall, no clear trend is apparent: workers perceive some negative changes (e.g. an increase of workload, a slight decline in job security), but also some positive changes (an increase in autonomy and income). The evaluation of the actual situation also reveals mixed findings: whereas (on average) respondents experience little job insecurity and evaluate their income in a positive way, most of them also feel subjectively deprived. Some differences according to background characteristics will be discussed. Second, we focus on two aspects of right-wing extremism. First, five attitudes assessed as relevant for the "receptiveness" for right-wing extremism were analysed: prejudice against immigrants, chauvinism (an aspect of nationalism), authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and political powerlessness. Next, the evaluation of the national extreme right-wing party was measured ("affinity" towards right-wing extremism). Differences according to background characteristics are reported, and the association between the receptiveness attitudes and the evaluation of an extreme right-wing party is analysed. The latter is strongly associated with prejudice against immigrants, and to a lesser degree with authoritarianism. Chauvinism (nationalism), political powerlessness, and a social dominance orientation are less important.

Finally, the analysis of the link between socio-economic change and right-wing extremism is reported, and the role of social identification processes in this is highlighted. The analysis reveals the presence of two main psychological routes leading to a preference for a right-wing extremist party. In the first ('winners') route, people perceiving a positive change in their job conditions and expressing a strong identification with their organisation, develop a high social dominance orientation. This, in turn, strengthens a specific set of extreme right-wing attitudes (chauvinism, prejudice against immigrants and authoritarianism). These attitudes foster the preference for an extreme right-wing party. In the second ('losers') route, people perceiving a negative change in their job conditions develop a strong feeling of deprivation. If combined with distrust in politics, this feeling also leads to the preference for a right-wing extremist party. Typologies of workers who are more likely to follow one or the other route to right-wing extremism are described.

Yves De Weerdt (Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA)) and Hans De Witte (K.U. Leuven)

The public – private divide and receptiveness to right-wing extremism in Flanders

The results of the qualitative analyses suggested some differences between workers in the public and the private sector. Regarding changes in their job conditions, it seemed that there was still room for rationalization and intensification of work in the public sector. Workers in the public sector realized that they probably had to work harder (i.e. increase in workload) or in a different way, if their (state-owned) enterprise was to maintain a competitive position in an increasingly broadening European market. The workers in the private sector had always experienced such an economic environment. As a consequence, they perceive rationalization as a continuous – though intensified – process. Due to the already high workload, however, they only perceived little room for a further increase in work pressure. We can also assume that workers in both sectors

exhibit different political attitudes, because their relationship with the government is quite different. For workers in the public sector, the government is their employer. As a consequence, a liberal government promoting privatisation of state enterprises and giving financial impulses to private companies, will probably receive a different appreciation from workers in the public sector compared to workers in the private sector.

In this contribution we will further explore the public-private divide in relation to three topics: (a) the perception of socio-economic change, (b) extreme right-wing receptiveness and voting intentions, and (c) the relationship between both series of variables. We will do so on the basis of both the qualitative and the quantitative (survey) data that were gathered in this part of Belgium. Results from the large-scale survey do indeed indicate that there are significant differences between workers from the public and private sector on a number of variables, such as changes in the amount of work, increase in job security, perception of current job insecurity, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and political powerlessness.

Caspar Einem (Member of the Austrian Parliament, Vienna)

Possibilities for a social Europe

At least two aspects are central to the development of a social Europe:

- the new constitution for the European Union, which, by June 17, 2004, will either have been agreed on or failed. The European Constitution shall, and will, tackle the structural deficit that, at present, it is mainly national interests that are being negotiated. It will do so by giving the citizens of Europe the last word through the European Parliament they elect.

- and committed political work that helps the EU to develop from an economic organisation into a political instrument in the interest of its citizens. This Europe will be a social Europe if it concerns itself with the life interests of its citizens: peace; employment providing sufficient income to live on; social security and non-discriminatory access to all services of general interest; a healthy environment.

From today's perspective both have excellent chances.

Peter Fleissner (Technische Universität Wien)

Xenophobe attitudes towards migrants and minorities in the enlarged European Union

Attitudes towards migrants and refugees in the "old" and the "new" member states of the European Union are compared with each other. Besides dealing with the usual socio-economic and demographic variables there is a focus on the relationship between xenophobic/xenophilic attitudes and the self-placement of the interviewees on a political left-right scale. As a – not really surprising – result, people are the more reluctant to accept migrants the more they see themselves as right-wingers. But also on the utmost left one can find increased values of intolerance against migrants. In the four new

member states there are smaller levels of acceptance of migrants than in the traditional members of the EU (France not included). In general refugees are preferred to immigrants. The presentation uses the results of the European Social Survey of 2002/2003, covering 14 "old" member states of the European Union (without France) and four accession states. The dataset was published on the Internet this spring.

Gudrun Hentges (Universität zu Köln), Jörg Flecker (Forschungs- und Beratungsstelle Arbeitswelt (FORBA), Wien), and Gabrielle Balazs (Centre d'Etudes de l'Emploi, Noisy le Grand)

Right-wing populist trends in Europe: Findings of the qualitative SIREN research

In recent years right-wing populist parties and movements were able to attain remarkable success at elections in (almost) all European countries. The interdisciplinary and comparative research project SIREN investigated these developments in Austria, Belgium/Flanders, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Switzerland. In these countries a total sum of approximately 300 qualitative interviews with employees of different sectors were carried out and analysed. When gaining and analysing data the main focus were the subjective perceptions and individual reactions to changes in working life, their assessment and political interpretation.

This contribution intends to present the central results of the qualitative project phase. In a first step the methodical approach of the project partners will be sketched. The main part of the contribution will be structured as follows: First the subjective perceptions of the changes in working life will be presented, second the differing political interpretation patterns and manners of coping. Finally, taking some of the typologies brought out of the qualitative analyses, it will be illustrated under what conditions and how socio-economic change can lead to right-wing extremist orientations.

Ortrun Gauper (Verdi, Berlin)

Another Europe is possible – Pathways towards a social, job-creating Europe

A more competitive Europe needs a different economic policy

The past years have been characterised by poor economic growth within the European Union. Today approx. 13m people in the EU are unemployed. In order to revive the economy, policies rather one-sidedly relied on structural reforms, liberalisation and a stable Euro. These policies have led to Europe falling behind considerably the US over the past decade.

Full employment and social cohesion within an enlarged European Union

A regulation of economic policy and stable growth rates are the prerequisites for social security and adequate employment. Work is the best form of protection against social exclusion and poverty. Unemployment is a waste of knowledge and impairs people's productivity.

A European social model requires different policies

Seen against the backdrop of EU enlargement, we need minimum social standards whose definition employees have a say in. The same is true for the design of social security systems, contractual autonomy and European company law (participation).

Europe badly needs additional investments – especially into infrastructure, education and further training measures to modernise its economy. An improved coordination of tax policies in member states, rather than national competition, is also required.

It is the social question that determines the future of Europe and not the polarisation of winners of losers in a free play of market forces.

Sabine Kirschenhofer, Jörg Flecker, Manfred Krenn, and Ulrike Papouschek (FORBA, Wien)

Variants of right-wing populist attraction in Austria

The starting point for the construction of the types to be presented were right-wing populist orientations against the background of the subjective perception and interpretation of changes in the world of work. In the course of analyzing the qualitative interviews a diversity of constellations of attraction was discovered, which on the one hand mirrors the changeability and inconsistency of right-wing populist rhetoric, aims and objectives, but on the other hand also shows that regarding social milieu the widely diverse attraction can only be understood within the context of a society shaped by neoliberal capitalism, whose Social-Darwinist norms give impetus to right-wing populist currents. Within the Austrian SIREN-interviews five variants or types of right-wing populist attraction were constructed that can be differentiated via the following elements: different ideological elements the interviewees are responding to, social milieus (family and social background as well as current life situation) including their concrete experiences with changes in the working world as well as gender and thereby differing life contexts and experiences of discrimination.

Michaela Köttig (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen)

Female adolescents and young women in the context of right-wing-extremism in the Federal Republic of Germany – a qualitative study by biographical case reconstructions

Since the beginning of the Nineties, alarming images from the Federal Republic of Germany have been going around the world: pictures of right-wing teenagers raiding homes of refugees and attacking foreigners; brutal attacks, frequently with fatal results. By now, independent sources have registered about 100 fatal incidents of right-wing violence. Media and also academic research reports on these events have focused exclusively on male youths, so the impression arose that girls and women aren't involved in the right-wing scene. Following the media, authorities and researchers, girls and women with this background are not seen as actively contributing, as they are not as frequently involved in violence, compared to boys or men. However, this widely held view is specific to an orientation which diminishes female participation in right-wing extremism, leading to a misinterpretation and trivialization of their actual involvement.

The involvement of girls and young women in the right-wing scene will be dealt with here.

In this presentation I will introduce a biographical study on the participation of girls and young women in the right-wing scene of the Federal Republic of Germany. Using a narrative approach the interviewees are invited to tell their life stories and their family histories. Interviews are analysed according to the method of biographical case reconstruction; the biographical themes and family attributions and assignments that foster an attraction to right-wing values are reconstructed. On the basis of case reconstructions and a contrastive comparison the empirical findings come to the conclusion that the right-wing orientation and action reservoir of these girls and young women, which is essentially produced by the intergenerational transmission of 'unsolved' family problems, are rooted in the National Socialist era. Furthermore, there appears to be an interdependence between the familial and biographical experiences and the themes of their right-wing orientation these girls and women are attracted to. I will explain the results of the study by an empirical example. The presentation focuses on the socio-economic changes for the eastern German interviewees after 1989.

Malte Meyer and Gudrun Hentges (Universität zu Köln)

"It's an enormous amount of pressure which is coming from above ..." – Changes in the world of work and right-wing populism in Germany

The public debate on the social origins of right-wing extremist attitudes has so far focused primarily on those people who considered themselves as losers in the so-called modernisation processes. Qualitative research, however, can demonstrate that the respective interrelations are far more complicated. Right-wing extremist currents in their overt as well as in their more subtle expressions address conformist and rebellious moods at the same time, and appeal to people from various social milieus and political factions. Thus the neo-liberal constellation of these different social forces – chiefly legitimated in terms of competitive nationalism – has to be examined to understand its right-wing extremist implications.

Patrizia Milesi and Patrizia Catellani (Università Cattolica di Milano)

Two psychological routes to right-wing extremism: How Italian workers cope with change

Qualitative interview analyses of a sample of Italian workers shows how change in work conditions, perceived either positively or negatively, may lead people to develop extreme right-wing attitudes. Two different psychological routes leading to right-wing extremism are highlighted, according to whether the change people have been experiencing at work is perceived as positive or negative. In both routes, identification processes appear to play a relevant mediating role. In particular, few possibilities of identification with meaningful social categories (e.g. group-work) appears to increase workers' insecurity and, as a consequence, the development of ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes.

Cas Mudde (Universiteit Antwerpen)

The Study of the Extreme Right: Looking Back and Ahead

Over the past two decades, the Extreme Right has become one of the most studied topics in the social sciences in general, and political science in particular. Unfortunately, the study of the Extreme Right so far excels mainly in quantity rather than quality. There is a huge literature, but within it there are great disparities. Consequently, much needs to be done. The vast majority of existing studies concern only a few topics: most notable, Extreme Right political parties, their voters, and studies in the tradition of 'the authoritarian personality.' Additionally, many studies present (rather than test) one grand theory, i.e. variations of the modernization theory (e.g. globalization, post-industrialism), in which right-wing extremism is the ideological defence mechanism of "modernisation losers". In terms of methodology and data the quality and variety is disappointing too: most studies are descriptive and non-comparative, using secondary sources (e.g. general elections studies and surveys). Finally, in terms of geographical scope, the bulk of studies focus exclusively on Western Europe or a few countries in Western Europe (Austria, Germany, France).

What needs to be done? There are at least five major contributions to be made: conceptualization, categorization, explanation, differentiation, and focus. First of all, far more attention and elaboration needs to be given to terminology, definitions, and operationalisations. Second, we have to construct good methods and indicators to categorize right-wing extremists. In other words, who and what are we talking about? Third, we need to develop clear hypotheses to test explanations of Extreme Right success and failure. This means that we need more hypothesis-generating, but also hypothesis-testing studies. Fourth, we need more differentiation in the level of analysis, i.e. at the micro-, meso-, and macro-level. Fifth, we need a far broader range of topics and foci. For example, we should not just study the successful political parties, but also the non-successful ones, non-party organizations and sub-cultures, and individual 'right-wing extremists.' More attention should be paid to the right-wing extremist actors themselves. Finally, we need a broader range of approaches. More specifically, research should be more comparative, but less normative. Moreover, there should be more integration of research from other (social) sciences.

Francesca Poglia Mileti and Fabrice Plomb (Université de Neuchâtel)

Individual expressions of right wing extremism: Understanding the affinity to radical populism in observing the changes in the work field – the case of Switzerland

This contribution aims at presenting a variety of individual expressions of right-wing populism and at discussing their link with the changes affecting the work system. The individual appropriation of right-wing extremist ideology is part of the process of "generalisation" and "normalisation" of what is today called radical right-wing populism. While numerous theories try to explain the causes of this phenomenon, theoretical approaches are rare that explore these processes at the individual level and provide empirical data to support them. We will show that radical discourses expressed

by individuals are embedded in these people's "political subjectivity", i.e. the way in which they explain the social world for themselves and how it should be. This generic concept comprises political subjects as well as all kinds of activities, attitudes and social relations of everyday life. For working people political subjectivity is strongly related to the way they are linked to their work and the meaning they attach to it. If the workfield is subjected to far-reaching change – as has been the case over the past ten years – "political subjectivity" is affected and consequently the way people explain the changing society.

Our attempt to provide an explanation of individual affinity to radical populism in integrating working conditions is based on the study of the Swiss case. Following developments in other European countries, Switzerland has seen a dramatic rise in support of what observers call right-wing (radical) populism. Specifically, this refers to the success of the Swiss People's Party in the national elections of October 2003, and the election – for the first time – of a second representative of the SVP in the seven-member Federal Council: Christoph Blocher – one of its radical leaders defending neo-liberal economy, the autonomy of Switzerland towards Europe and anti-immigrant policies. Rather than focussing on a political approach to the phenomenon (which is relatively well-researched) or attempting to find an answer to the "why" or the "who" questions (addressed by numerous researchers and theories), this contribution aims to describe processes that can make people attracted to extremist ideas in considering at once structural changes and individual experiences.

Franz Schultheis (Université de Geneve)

The new spirit of capitalism and the depoliticization of the political

Populism is the opposite of politics. It is not analyses, points of view, arguments or reasoning that count but resentment. That is what makes it so hard to even enter into a dialogue with right-wing populism. The populisms of all shapes and sizes emerging – of all times – in the era of the "reflexive modernism" conjured up by post-modern theorists and of the formation of a Europe without borders raise the following question: Where do they derive their amazing potential? The SIREN research provides empirically sound answers to this Europe-wide societal question, answers from which, with all due caution, conclusions can and must be drawn.

The moment of populism arises when politics abdicates. A lot speaks for Pierre Bourdieu's thesis presented on the occasion of an anti-Haider demonstration here in Vienna on 31 March 2000, i.e. that right-wing populism can be understood as a direct consequence of a depoliticization of the political. Following on from this idea, one might say that neoliberalism's road to victory, which began in the 1980s and which has seen a massive increase since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, has directly resulted in a profound and sustained shock dealt to the political plausibility structures of European democracies. The neoliberal worldview based on a blind belief in market forces, unrestrained utilitarianism and universal competition has completely done away with the historical compromise achieved in a laborious collective learning process since the

19th century: i.e. the chance for everyone to partake in economic and social achievements. It calls for and fosters the withdrawal of the state from its key function as a guarantor of justice in social distribution and thus makes the status of the worker – hitherto guaranteed by labour and social rights – increasingly precarious by allowing precarious – and up to now atypical – employment to gradually become normal.

Faced with a massive growth in insecurity and uncertainty about their status and their *status quo,* and at the same time deprived of traditional forms of protection and solidarity, today's workers are no longer the "children of freedom" (Beck) but have become "orphans of a halved modernity", whose disorientation, powerlessness, existential fear and fear of the future make them easy prey for demagogues. This contribution wants to shed light on the ideology of the neoliberal worldview and to address the question to what extent neoliberalism isn't populist in itself?

Guy Standing (International Labour Organisation (ILO), Geneva)

Economic Insecurities in a Great Transformation

This contribution will highlight the aspects of globalisation that have created great economic insecurities, the forms that the economic insecurities have taken and the failure of regulations, social protection and distribution policies to address them or provide necessary bases of social solidarity, in which the emerging global system can function equitably and well.

Eva Thoft and Edvin Grinderslev (Center for Alternativ Samfundsanalyse, Copenhagen)

The Welfare state under pressure: The Danish Case

The contribution will comprise the following elements:

The abandoned workers and citizens: Some of the accounts given by our research support the thesis that changes in working conditions have a marginalizing effect. A contributory factor appears to be whether one feels protected and supported by social institutions in relation to the negative consequences of changes. Those who express pronounced xenophobic-populist attitudes often say they feel let down by unions, the workplace or other elements of the system.

Privatisation and rationalisation in the public sector – the employee perspective: In the public bus transport sector changes are predominantly considered to have been bad, since they led to increased work pressure and fewer benefits. In the home care sector, the predominant feeling is that the changes have generally been for the worse, resulting in increased pressure and poorer services for the elderly and vulnerable.

Changes in the welfare state – the citizen perspective: There is widespread concern among people about the state of the welfare system. Several feel that it is not working, at least not in the sector of health service and care for the elderly. The degree to which the system is perceived to be fair varies. Crime and immigration are mentioned also as arenas of significant change in society. Some focus on the costs of immigration, others on the failure of integration measures.

András Tóth and Istvàn Grajczjar (Institute of Political Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest)

Contrasting routes towards right-wing extremism and the importance of working life: the Hungarian case

The Hungarian situation is unique in the group of countries covered by the SIREN project. As opposed to the relatively peaceful post-war development of Western European countries, Hungary has had a very different history due to its communist legacy. Probably no other country in the SIREN project has experienced similar political, societal and economic shifts in the past decade, or even in the last fifty years. Hence in no other country in the SIREN project a similar status inconsistency can be observed.

Based on the qualitative interviews, an interpretative model has been constructed of the influences on the degree of attraction to right-wing extremism, which takes into account both the historical aspects and the influence of current socio-economic changes. In this interpretative scheme the political socialization in the family plays a decisive role in shaping one's basic political attitudes. Nonetheless, personal life history, career path, and the perception of one's current social and employment status also influence political beliefs and voting behaviour. The interviews suggested that the (threat of) decline in living standards and precariousness is reinforcing or mobilizing prejudices that might have been acquired during the family socialization phase. Frustration and the consequent reinforcement and mobilization of prejudices might lead to voting for a right-wing extremist party. The qualitative survey further cleared the role of the world of work in becoming attracted to the siren songs of right-wing extremist parties. Three distinct groups of attractedness emerged: a) A group of people with authoritarian and nationalist views, but with a strong attachment to their workplaces and to their communities. People belonging to this group are typically older blue collar workers. b) A group of people with authoritarian and strong anti-immigrant views, who are feeling politically powerless and who do not feel attached to their workplaces and to their communities. People belonging to this group are typically younger blue-collar workers. c) A group of young white-collar and service sector employees, whose economic conditions are average, but who do not find their place in the society. They do not – like the people of the second group – feel politically powerless, but they don't trust politics and politicians. Their workplace experiences are contributing to their anomy: on the one hand they feel that their job security is good and their autonomy is increased, on the other hand they are increasingly suffering from stress and do not feel committed towards their workplaces. These people typically long for order in society, which would re-establish cultural integrity.

Asbjørn Wahl, (For velferdsstaten, Oslo)

The brutalisation of work: The breakdown of the social pact and its political consequences for the labour movement

The post-W.W.II period was characterised by the historic compromise between labour and capital. On one hand, this resulted in great social, economic and democratic

progress. The welfare state was developed and working conditions were gradually improved. On the other hand, the social pact between labour and capital also contributed to the depolitisation and deradicalisation of the labour movement. The historic role of the social democratic parties became to administer this social compromise.

In most of the labour movement the welfare economy was understood as a "capitalism without crises", which consistently developed to the benefit of everybody. However, the deep economic crises of the 1970s, combined with the deradicalisation of the labour movement, resulted in an offensive from capitalist interests, who gradually withdrew from the social pact and started to attack labour laws, agreements and power positions which were won during the welfare economy.

The trade union and labour movement were taken by surprise by this development. The shift from consensus to confrontation on the side of capital was incomprehensible within the consensus-oriented policy of the labour movement. This therefore led to a political and ideological crisis in the social democratic parties and a move towards neo-liberalism. The ideology of the social pact is able neither to explain this development nor to develop counter-strategies against it.

In this situation, a great part of the workers feels betrayed by their political representatives. It has become the role of the right-wing populist parties to exploit this discontent, political perplexity and increasing feeling of powerlessness. They offer simple solutions, and they canalise workers' discontent against other social groups – such as "those who take our jobs" (immigrants), "those who are a burden on society" (lonely parents, people on welfare) and "those who impose ever higher taxes" or "pursue their own privileges" (politicians).

John Wrench (European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC), Wien

Discrimination of minorities and anti-discrimination policies in a European context

Recent evidence collected by the EUMC provides a picture of the continuing and widespread existence of racial and ethnic discrimination in employment in EU countries, showing the different ways that it can be identified and the various forms it takes. European trade unions are increasingly beginning to address this phenomenon, but there are national differences between trade unions within the EU on the character of their anti-discrimination activity. In this paper a comparison is made of trade unions in the UK and Denmark on the extent of their awareness of and activities against racism and discrimination in employment.

Anti-discrimination and equal opportunities activities can be categorised in the following way:

The *equal treatment approach*. With this approach it is believed that equal opportunities follows on from making sure that all are treated the same, regardless of ethnicity or colour. This is the classic 'colour-blind' approach.

The *'level playing field' approach.* This recognises the need to remove some unfair barriers (of, for example, racism or discrimination) which operate in the labour market, so that all have a fair chance at the opportunities which are available.

The *equal opportunities approach.* This aims for longer term proportional representation of minorities by a range of organisational measures, such as ethnic monitoring and targets. It might include ethnic record keeping, and elements of 'positive action' to overcome the effects of past inequalities.

The *equal outcome approach.* This uses quotas and 'positive discrimination' to achieve a much shorter-term proportional representation of minorities. It is the most controversial type, seen by many to be in breach of natural justice.

British unions, after an initial "equal treatment" phase, moved on to the second phase in the 1970s and by the 1980s they had embraced the third phase of "equal opportunities" activities, with special policies and positive action. British unions have a wide range of anti-discrimination measures, and British union activists exhibit a strong awareness of issues of racism and discrimination and the need to combat them. In Denmark, the unions have held on much longer to an "equal treatment" view. Many Danish union activists explicitly reject British style anti-discrimination measures; cases of union support for members in discrimination cases are rare, and the general state of awareness of issues of anti-racism and anti-discrimination at work is relatively low. It is argued that one factor which inhibits stronger anti-discrimination action by Danish activists is the character of the dominant political discourse on immigration in Denmark, and in particular the influence of the populist and nationalist *Danskfolkparti,* which has a great deal of support amongst ordinary grass-roots union members.

Hans Georg Zilian (Büro für Sozialforschung, Graz)

Equality Begins at Home

The rise of right-wing populism was driven by well-documented developments within modern society – globalisation, international migration, unemployment, and the steadily deepening division between the affluent and the impoverished. All this is troublesome enough, but the success of "populists" at the ballot box in a variety of European countries compounds these difficulties. Commentators have succumbed to the temptation to accuse those voters who still take part in elections of falling victim to a simple-minded version of social reality and to endorsing equally simple-minded political recipes. Stupidity and greed are, on this view, at the bottom of the kind of protest support for "populists" is taken to be.

The present paper will argue that one might equally well claim that the shoe is on the other foot. The cosmopolitans seem to be too stupid to appreciate that the realities of the labour-market seen from the point of view of people working at the bottom of the status-configuration look totally different from how they present themselves to the members of the elites, who have – for example – nothing to fear from large-scale immigration. The cosmopolitans are also fairly busy with improving their own position within modern society – they partake of the collapse of public-mindedness the last few

decades have seen and are profiteers of the deepening social divisions they deplore but fail to do anything about. It is thus unclear why the cosmopolitans unthinkingly adopt the pose of the intellectually enlightened and the morally superior.

The cosmopolitans dedicated to left-wing liberalism and to Social Democracy have abandoned the struggle for a larger degree of equality within the developed societies, while pretending to work towards equality on an international scale (and occasionally actually going beyond pretence). This retreat from internal egalitarianism harbours the seeds of self-destruction. Solidarity and generosity have to be rooted in a sense of material and symbolic security. As long as we let the divisions within our own society deepen and broaden, the majority (or at least a biggish part) of the electorate will consist of people threatened by poverty and lacking a secure sense of self-esteem. Short of withdrawing the right to vote from them, there will be little that can be done to curb the attraction of "populism". A higher degree of equality within our society will thus be a prerequisite of a progressive political strategy at the international level. If we are unable to secure support for an unconditional basic income for all the citizens of our society, the project of achieving this aim on a global scale will be doomed to failure, if not just laughable.