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# WHO VOTES FOR ANTI-CORRUPTION PARTIES?

The Emergence of a New Party Family

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## ABSTRACT

Corruption and issues related to quality of government are becoming increasingly salient to both voters and parties all around the globe. One indication of that is the steady increase in the number of electoral campaigns in which corruption is politicized by parties and candidates (Bågenholm & Charron, 2014; Curini, 2018). Whereas a lot of attention recently has been paid to the phenomenon of corruption voting, i.e. the extent to which the electorate is holding corrupt politicians and parties accountable by ‘voting such rascals out’, considerably less research has been done on the supply side of this equation, namely the parties that campaign on fighting corruption. Surprisingly enough, even recent research on party categorization has ignored the issue of corruption. This paper aims at filling this gap by asking if - from a voter perspective – valence parties that specifically focus on anti-corruption can be considered a distinct type of party. To answer this question we analyze data from the latest round of the QoG Regional Survey from 2017, which covers 21 European countries, comparing ACP supporters with supporters of other party families. Preliminary results suggest that ACP voters in some respects are distinct both demographically and attitudinally from the voters of other party families, which suggest that it is reasonable to argue that anti-corruption parties are a distinct type of party, or at least not less distinct than parties.

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## Introduction

Corruption and issues related to quality of government (“QoG”) are becoming increasingly salient to both voters and parties all around the globe. One indication of that is the steady increase in the number of electoral campaigns in which corruption is politicized by parties and candidates (Bågenholm & Charron, 2014; Curini, 2018). Whereas a lot of attention recently has been paid to the phenomenon of corruption voting, i.e. the extent to which the electorate is holding corrupt politicians and parties accountable by voting such rascals out, considerably less research has been done on the supply side of this equation, namely the parties that campaign on fighting corruption. Parties that primarily campaign on anti-corruption, which we call “anti-corruption parties” or ACPs, have been around for a long time, but during the past decade and a half they have become increasingly plentiful and electorally successful, sometimes making it all the way to the government (Bågenholm & Charron, 2014; Hanley & Sikk, 2016). Considering the relevance of valence issues in general and the issue of corruption and the parties that politicize it in particular, it is arguably also of interest to profile the supporters of these parties, both demographically and policy-wise and analyze to what extent they differ from supporters of more mainstream parties belonging to other party families.

While much research has gone into identifying new cross-country party clusters on the far right (Mudde 2000; Iversflatten 2008; Rydgren 2005) and green/post-materialist parties (Inglehart 1977; Poguntke 1987), recent research on party categorization has ignored the issue of corruption and its potential as a unifying niche-party issue. This paper aims at filling this gap by asking if - from a voter perspective – valence parties that specifically focus on anti-corruption can be considered a distinct type of party. In short, can we identify patterns in voters of ACPs? To answer this question we analyze data from the latest round of the QoG Regional Survey from 2017, which covers 21 European countries, comparing ACP supporters with supporters of other party families. Preliminary results suggest that ACP voters in some respects are distinct both demographically and attitudinally from the voters of other party families, which suggest that it is reasonable to argue that anti-corruption parties are a distinct type of party, or at least not less distinct than parties. This paper thus contributes to this field of research by, as far as we are aware, being the first that systematically analyzes the supporters of this fairly new type of party. We also argue that comparative party studies will benefit from this research by treating these parties according to their most relevant feature, namely as anti-corruption proponents.

## Previous Research and Theory

Corruption is becoming an increasingly important dimension in party politics, as voters increasingly tend to put corruption at the top of the list of the most salient issues and parties to an increasing extent campaign on anti-corruption policies (Bågenholm & Charron, 2014; Curini, 2018). Anti-corruption as a defining feature of a party has moreover been acknowledged by Nordsieck, who recently added that as a party label, on par with standard categorizations like Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, Liberals, Greens etc., on the website on electoral results, parties and government in Europe since 1945 (Nordsieck, 2017 and [www.parties-and-elections.eu](http://www.parties-and-elections.eu)). However, anti-corruption has so far not been picked up by research on party families and more surprisingly on the research on niche parties, even though parties that more or less solely campaigned on that issue have been extremely successful for the past 15 years in a large number of countries in Europe - much more so than parties campaigning on the “traditional” niche issues such as environment, immigration and regional matters (Bågenholm, 2013). The reasons for the lack of research may be that most parties that we consider to be ACPs also campaigned on other issues, thereby blurring their campaign focus and that some of them changed their orientation somewhat in the following electoral campaign if they were successful enough to make it all the way to the government. This particular type of party is thus more fluid and less stable than others that have been analyzed.

Although corruption seems to be a strikingly common theme for some of the most successful new parties in Central and Eastern Europe during the past 15 years, researchers have tended not to highlight corruption per se, but rather focused on other commonalities like their newness, their ‘anti-establishment’ orientation, populist policies and unorthodox strategies in general, which has resulted in party labels like “Unorthodox Parties” or “Anti-Establishment Reform Parties” (See for example Sikk, 2011; Hanley & Sikk, 2016; Pop-Eleches, 2010).

The ultimate aim with categorizing parties is to enable relevant comparisons, thereby gaining a more general understanding about the relationship in broad terms between parties and voters as well as between parties. There are several ways to categorize political parties, but the party family categorization has been the dominating one (Mair & Mudde, 1998:211). It has traditionally been based on both what parties are and what they do, looking at such things as the origin of parties, their transnational belongings, their ideology and policy positions or the party names (Mair & Mudde, 1998). With an increasing number of democracies around the world the categories, once created to fit a West

European context, has become more difficult to apply, even to politics that are not that different from the west, e.g. Central and Eastern Europe (Kitschelt, 1992, von Beyme, 1994, Waller, 1996). This has led to some confusion over what a party family is, beyond the self-evident ones, such as Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, liberals etc. There is naturally a problem in terms of comparison if the party family becomes too big and particular, but in order to stay relevant it is still necessary that it changes with time and is adapted to the contemporary party politics in at least a similar set of countries.

Recent research has also found that the coherence of party families is becoming weaker, with as large policy variation within families as between them on certain issues such as economic policy (Elff, 2013). Yet Elff still does not consider the incoherence large enough to suggest that the party family concept is irrelevant. There has also been some critique against the way to measure party family membership. Ennser (2012) for instance argue that the Radical right party family is underestimated in terms of its internal homogeneity using the old indicators. Using expert survey data on 17 West European countries he finds, when comparing that party family to four others on six policy dimensions, that the radical right group is as coherent as the most coherent established party families (Christian democrats) and much more so than the least coherent (the liberals).

As noted above, the terrain of party politics has changed quite dramatically only in Europe over the past 25 years, bringing a lot of parties that seemingly do not belong to the old categories to the fore (see Hug 2001:2). A set of these parties have been captured by the concept of *niche parties*, a group of parties that basically is made up of parties that do not immediately fit into the established party family categories, when they emerged. Today there is a bit of overlap though, as Greens and Radical right parties for instance are both considered niche parties, but at the same time belong to distinct party families (Meguid, 2005). Unsurprisingly there is no consensus on the definition of a niche party (Bischof, 2017). Wagner defines them as “parties that de-emphasize economic concerns and stress a small range of non-economic issues” (2012) and Miller & Meyer as a party that “emphasizes policy areas neglected by its competitors” (2015:261). It has moreover been argued that a niche party must be in opposition, which implies that as soon as it enters a government, it loses its niche party status (van de Wardt, 2014:98). Finally a niche party can be new, which van de Wardt calls “Niche Party Challengers” or established (van de Wardt, 2014: 98). As mentioned above, even though ACPs seem to fit the definition of a niche party, previous research has so far not paid any attention to this phenomenon.

A final category that is relevant to this study is that of *valence issues*. Corruption is frequently used as a typical valence issue, i.e. issues on which there is no real competition, and where all parties and voters agree (see Green's handbook chapter, Curini, 2018). Valence refers to performance and competence, in contrast to positional voting, identity-based voting or partisanship and it has arguably becoming more and more important for voters as the ideological differences diminish (Green) and also to an increasing extent affected electoral results (Curini, 2018). Interestingly enough, there is no mentioning in the literature of parties that solely campaign on valence issues, i.e. "valence parties". Rather the studies focus on the extent to which established parties either attack their opponents for being incompetent or dishonest (or corrupt), or boast their own virtues in these respects, but never as the main electoral strategy.

From a party categorization perspective it is naturally challenging to claim that a valence party can be a distinct type as it assumingly focuses on how politics should be carried out rather than what policies to pursue, i.e. by definition placing itself outside the ideological spectrum. As parties are becoming less ideologically diverse and to an increasing extent focused on specific issues, sometimes valence ones, we argue that it is at least hypothetically feasible to add such a party category.

As mentioned above, we have previously argued that ACPs qualify as specific party type in terms of the policies and electoral strategies they pursue. Given that we know that voters care about valence issues in general (Clark, 2009) and about corruption in particular, it is of great interest also to look at this issue from the voter perspective, i.e. the extent to which these voters share certain demographic and attitudinal features that at the same time are distinct from other party family supporters.

As far as we can tell there is not a great deal of comparative studies on the voters of different party families. Green voters have however been profiled in several studies (Franklin & Rüdiger, 1992; Dolezal, 2010). They both unsurprisingly find that supporters of Green parties in Europe, typically are young, well-educated, urban, middle-class, left wing, post-materialists, secular, libertarian and concerned about the environment. Dolezal (2010) claims that the Green party family has stabilized from a voter perspective, with shared attitudes and social characteristics, which makes this study quite unique in terms of using voter characteristics as a base for party family categorization.

It is hard to state any clear expectation about how the typical ACP voter would look like, but some assumptions can still be made. Considering that these parties focus more or less exclusively on anti-corruption it does not seem to farfetched to assume that they care more about corruption, have a higher perception of corruption and are less trusting. Given the definition of a valence party above, one may also expect ACP voters to be centrists on most policy issues, even though a rivaling hypothesis would be that they also pick up on typically populists' traits such as anti-immigration. Other studies have shown that women are less tolerant towards corruption than men, which suggests that female voters would be more eager to support ACPs. Considering that we define ACP as new parties, one can also expect that younger voters, who have still not been socialized into strong partisans, would be more will than older voters to support ACPs. Their level of education and where they live we will refrain guessing about here. But the fundamentally open question still is: Are the ACP voters internally coherent and distinct from other parties' voters?

In terms of identifying testable hypotheses about commonalities of ACP voters across the sample, we anticipate that they will be most likely to be 'system critics' (low political trust, high perceptions/experiences with corruption). However we do not see any reason to believe that ACP voters will stand out in terms of left-right ideology (size of government, market versus state, redistribution issues, etc.) or even the so called 'gal-tan' dimension (Green/Alternative/Libertarian versus Traditional/Authoritarian/Nationalist), which tracks people's attitudes of state control over various social-cultural/ 'post-materialist' issues. As niche parties such as radical/far right and green parties already occupy clear territory along this dimension, any system/establishment critical voters who feel strongly about environmental or immigration issues will have a home with these parties. Thus we test the following individual level hypotheses in the next section

#### **Individual level hypotheses:**

H1: ACP voters are more likely to have negative attitudes about their political system in general - high perceptions of corruption, lower political trust – than voters of other party groups

H2: ACP voters are not likely to stand out ideologically in terms of left-right economic issues

H3: ACP voters are not likely to stand out ideologically in terms of gal-tan cultural/immigration issues

#### **Country level hypothesis:**

H4: ACP voters are most likely in countries with higher corruption, *ceteris paribus*

## Data and Methods

This study relies on newly collected data from the third round of the Quality of Government Institute's 'European Quality of Government Index survey (Charron, Dijkstra and Lapuente 2014; Charron, Lapuente and Rothstein 2013). The survey's primary aim is to build regional indices of quality of government and facilitate multi-level research on governance in EU countries (Charron et al 2015). The questions capture the extent to which citizens' experience and perceive corruption within their local and regional public services and feel their services are of good quality, are treated fairly by local public servants and that services are allocated impartiality to all citizens. The sample is made up of residents of 18 years of age or older, and were contacted randomly via telephone in the local language. Telephone interviews were conducted via both landlines and mobile phones, with both methods being used in most countries. For purposes of regional placement, respondents were asked the post code of their address to verify the area/ region of residence if mobile phones were used. In all, 77,966 respondents were included in 21 EU countries and the survey design selected respondents within 185 regions in these countries, such that design weights are used in all analyses to account for this (see appendix for more details).

We identify an ACP voter based on a predetermined list of parties that a) are new parties, and b) politicize corruption as a main campaign issue.<sup>1</sup> The coding is based on electoral reports in political science journals (see Bågenholm, 2013 for details). In identifying other party families, we make use of the aforementioned compilation on parties and elections in Europe, in which almost all parliamentary parties are categorized according to party family (Nordsieck, 2017). In cases where the ideological position is blurry, we have used the European parliament party faction as a cue. We observe roughly 7.4% of the sample as ACP supporters.

### Other variables

In order to elucidate what types of voters are most likely drawn to the anti-corruption message, we analyze demographic, socio-economic, media consumption, political values, perceptions and experiences of QoG, and various forms of trust. We also take gender, population of residence, and age (four category variable). Socio-economic variables include education (dummy for university or

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<sup>1</sup> An Anti-Corruption Party is defined as one that focus on fighting corruption in the election campaign, either by addressing the issue in general terms, i.e. that corruption is a serious problem that needs to be combated, or more specifically by accusing the opponents, i.e. the established parties for being corrupt. That does not mean, however, that these parties did not bring up other issues as well, only that anti-corruption was a prevalent feature of their campaigns.



higher) and income (three categories – low, middle, high) along with a dummy variable for whether a respondent is unemployed or not. Media consumption asks respondents to list their main source of news – from tv, radio, traditional newspapers (print or online) or social media (such as twitter or facebook). All variables are described in more detail in the appendix.

## Estimation methods

We first estimate the individual level correlates of an ACP voter relative to all other parties. As our dependent variable is binary, and as only seven countries are coded as having at least one ACP, we elect to employ a Heckman selection probit model, so as to include all countries and improve the efficiency and generalizability of the estimates. Heckman probit estimation uses two maximum likelihood probit model equations to adjust for sample selection. As voters can only vote for an ACP given that there is an active party running on this issue, we model the ‘supply side’ in the first (selection) equation. In the second, we model whether a respondent supports an ACP or not as a function of demographic characteristics, political views, preferred form of media consumption, various forms of trust, and perceptions and experiences with governance. The model is as follows builds on Van de Ven and Van Pragg (1981). The probit equation estimates the likelihood of an individual expressing support for an ACP party as a function of a vector of individual level characteristics  $X_{ij}$  and country level corruption ( $Corruption_j$ ), as measured by World Governance Indicators ‘control of corruption’ (Kaufman et al 2011).

$$voteACP_{ij} = X_{ij}\beta + Corruption_j + u_{1ij} > 0 \quad (1)$$

The selection equation estimates whether there is an ACP in country ‘j’ as a function of country level corruption ( $Corruption_j$ ).

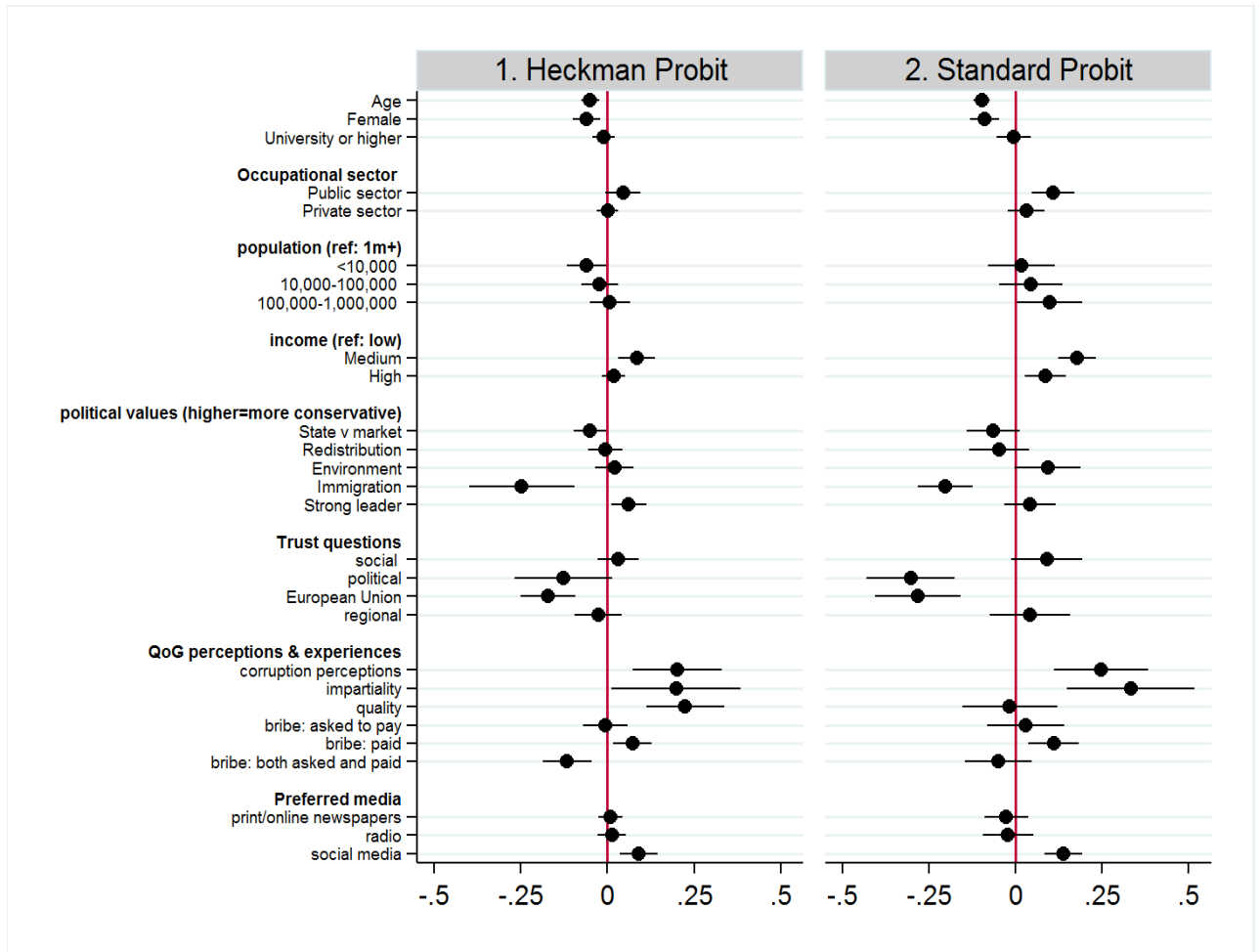
$$ACP_j = Corruption_j + u_{2ij} > 0 \quad (2)$$

The correlation between the error terms in the two models ( $corr(u_{1ij}, u_{2ij})$ ) produces the statistic rho ( $\rho$ ), which, if statistically indistinguishable from ‘0’ shows that the sum of the two log likelihoods in the Heckman two stage estimation equals that of a standard probit model.

In addition to the Heckman probit estimation, we check our results using a standard probit model with country fixed effects for the seven countries that contain an ACP.

The results of the Heckman selection probit model are found in the first model, while model 2 shows those estimated using a standard probit model using country fixed effects. The results reported in Figure 1 are marginal effects of a one-unit change in the independent variables on the probability of voting ACP. In model 1, the Rho statistic in the Heckman model is significant, implying that the Probit model is expected to be biased. However, we find that in general, the two models produce quite similar estimates. First, the picture of a ‘typical’ ACP voter is male, younger than 45, middle income, and a public sector worker, living in a middle size residence. An ACP voter has mainly centrist political opinions on typical left-right issues of redistribution and market-state principles, slightly to the right on the environment (economic growth versus environmental protection), and believes immigration contributes a lot to his/her country, while having low trust in the national parliament and the EU. The voter perceives corruption in the public sector is high, and having direct experience with petty corruption also increases the odds of voting for an ACP. An ACP voter’s preferred source of news is from social media. The figure below summarizes the marginal effects of the variables of the choice to support and ACP.

FIGURE 1, MARGINAL EFFECTS OF VARIABLES ON PROBABILITY OF VOTING FOR AN ACP



*Note:* Marginal effects reported from Heckman selection (left) and standard probit (right) models with 95% confidence interval. Only seven countries included in model 2, while full sample is included in model 1.

## Are voters of Anti-Corruption Parties distinguishable from other party families?

While informative, the above results give us only insights about ACP voters in relation to all other voters. Next, we examine if the results we find in the previous section constitute voter patterns that are unique to ACP's, or whether the voters of these parties are sufficiently similar to voters of other party families such that it is not warranted to label this group of parties a 'family', as well as what types of party families ACP voters most and least resemble in the aggregate.

As opposed to much of the literature on elucidating party families, which focuses on expert level surveys or party manifestos (Adams et al 2006; Wagner 2011), we take a voter centric approach, which to our knowledge, makes this study unique. We code each party as being part of a standard party family – 1. Far left, 2. Social democrat/center left, 3. Green, 4. ACP, 5. Liberal, 6. Center right/Christian democrat, 7. Far/radical right, 8. Regional.

TABLE 1, WEIGHTED SAMPLE MEANS BY PARTY GROUP

variable	far left	center left_SD	greens	ACP	liberal	center right_CD	far right	regional	weighed total
<i>Demographics</i>									
female	0.496	0.512	0.592†	<b>0.456</b>	0.488	0.497	0.454*	0.49	0.497
age	49.17	50.09	46.25	<b>45.60*</b>	49.66	51.15†	47.88	51.08	49.68
university	0.484	0.478	0.637†	<b>0.261*</b>	0.522	0.462	0.316	0.533	0.463
income: low	0.365	0.368	0.338	<b>0.320</b>	0.220*	0.326	0.379†	0.373	0.326
income: middle	0.333	0.313	0.315	<b>0.353</b>	0.345	0.347	0.308*	0.364†	0.334
income: high	0.303	0.318	0.347	<b>0.324</b>	0.435†	0.327	0.312	0.264*	0.340
<10k	0.315	0.338	0.291*	<b>0.316</b>	0.324	0.303	0.394†	0.336	0.323
10k-100k	0.377	0.374	0.357*	<b>0.412</b>	0.397	0.364	0.386	0.428†	0.378
100k-1m	0.221	0.190*	0.234	<b>0.223</b>	0.212	0.239†	0.166	0.166	0.214
>1m	0.075	0.09	0.106†	<b>0.049</b>	0.058	0.071	0.047*	0.064	0.072
unemployed	0.071	0.066	0.052	<b>0.075</b>	0.04*	0.052	0.079†	0.058	0.058
<i>Trust variables</i>									
social trust	0.620	0.654	0.682	<b>0.586</b>	0.648	0.645	0.581*	0.690†	0.640
political trust	0.440	0.487	0.554†	<b>0.321*</b>	0.489	0.518	0.363	0.437	0.477
EU trust	0.430	0.498	0.528†	<b>0.390</b>	0.513	0.470	0.349*	0.459	0.469
regional trust	0.523	0.553	0.600†	<b>0.446*</b>	0.553	0.555	0.46	0.539	0.539
<i>QoG variables</i>									
control of corruption	0.677	0.712	0.742†	<b>0.599*</b>	0.702	0.698	0.626	0.687	0.690
impartiality	0.457	0.486	0.488†	<b>0.459</b>	0.485	0.477	0.438*	0.481	0.475
quality	0.624	0.657	0.667	<b>0.613*</b>	0.648	0.668†	0.62	0.671	0.652
bribe: asked to pay	0.064	0.079	0.033*	<b>0.113†</b>	0.062	0.049	0.082	0.04	0.065

bribe: paid	0.068	0.077	0.034*	<b>0.172</b> †	0.08	0.064	0.114	0.079	0.079
<i>Political values (higher=more 'right')</i>									
State vs. market	0.541*	0.555	0.568	<b>0.624</b>	0.654†	0.625	0.614	0.594	0.604
redistribution	0.319*	0.360	0.326	<b>0.386</b>	0.430†	0.401	0.398	0.366	0.385
environment	0.332	0.359	0.281*	<b>0.392</b>	0.388	0.385	0.407†	0.342	0.372
immigration	0.462	0.453	0.445*	<b>0.539</b>	0.488	0.535	0.661†	0.45	0.508
strong leader	0.663	0.681	0.600*	<b>0.710</b>	0.685	0.730	0.775†	0.697	0.702
<i>Media consumption</i>									
TV	0.370	0.457	0.268	<b>0.493</b> †	0.408	0.435	0.414	0.465	0.425
print/online newspaper	0.237	0.222	0.327†	<b>0.139</b> *	0.246	0.221	0.190	0.169	0.223
radio	0.144	0.121	0.168†	<b>0.086</b> *	0.136	0.135	0.110	0.163	0.129
social media	0.246	0.198	0.233	<b>0.281</b>	0.207	0.207	0.283†	0.201	0.221

*note: means reported by party family, country level weights used. †indicates highest among all party families \*indicates lowest mean among all party families.*

To show the characteristics of the ACP supporters in relation to other party families, Table 1 presents weighted means of several blocks of survey questions - demographic, trust, QoG related issues and political values, and highlighting the differences across party families. The table shows several interesting features about ACPs from a voter perspective. First, they have the youngest supporters across the sample, followed by the green block. Yet these two families diverge substantially when it comes to education – ACPs have the lowest proportion of college graduates, while the greens have by far the highest. Similar to the far right block, the ACPs tend to attract a greater proportion of males and have higher rates of unemployment. Neither income nor population or residence distinguishes ACP voters from other party families however.

Next, on issues of political values, we find that voters of ACPs tend to go from centrist to center right on most issues. While on opinions regarding the role of market versus the state and preferences of redistribution they rank slightly on the right side of the spectrum in relation to the sample, they are slightly to the left of the liberal, center right/Christian democrats and far right on both of these items. They appear to be center right on issues of the environment, attitudes on immigration and

preferences for a strong leader – resembling most that of center right/Christian democrat supporters. It is also worth noting that while ACP supporters appear to be similar to far right voters on issues of trust and QoG, on immigration, they distinguish themselves clearly from the supporters of the far right parties, which as a group is roughly a half a standard deviation to the right than the mean of ACP supporters.

We observe that ACP voters are most distinguishable on questions of trust and QoG items. For example, ACP voters are on average the *least* trusting when it comes to political trust among all party families – at both regional and national level – while their average social and EU trust only exceeds that of the far right family block. On QoG related variables, we observe that respondents who support ACP's perceive *and* experience greater levels of corruption in their public services than other groups of party families. And while they do not stand out with respect to perception of impartiality, their perception of public service quality is lowest among all groups.

Finally, looking at the ways in which parties differ with respect to consuming news via various media outlets, we find that ACP supporters are overwhelmingly more included toward TV or social media. They rank lowest in both traditional/online newspaper consumption as well as listening to the radio.

While informative, these mean scores only reveal party of the story. As the numbers reported above are weighted averages, they do not take into account country level factors or show the effects of these factors under control for other individual level traits. For example, not all countries have ACP's or Green parties – and the presence of absence of these types of parties tend to be highly correlated with the level of corruption in a country. In the figure below, we move to a multinomial logit analysis, where choice of party family (total of eight categories) is the dependent variable. As ACP family is that of primary interest, such voters are used as a baseline group in reference to all other party families. Alongside seeing if there are significant differences in the coefficients for the variables in the summary table above, we also perform a Wald test of irrelevant alternatives, which is a post-test that shows whether all coefficients except intercepts associated with a given pair of alternatives are equal to '0' (e.g., whether certain party families can be combined). To account for the fact that corruption at the country level is highly related to the presence of ACPs (as well as others such as the Greens), we include the WGI 'control of corruption' in the model as a country level effect, and cluster the standard error by country.

FIGURE 2, MULTINOMIAL LOGIT RESULTS – LEFT LEANING FAMILIES VERSUS ACP

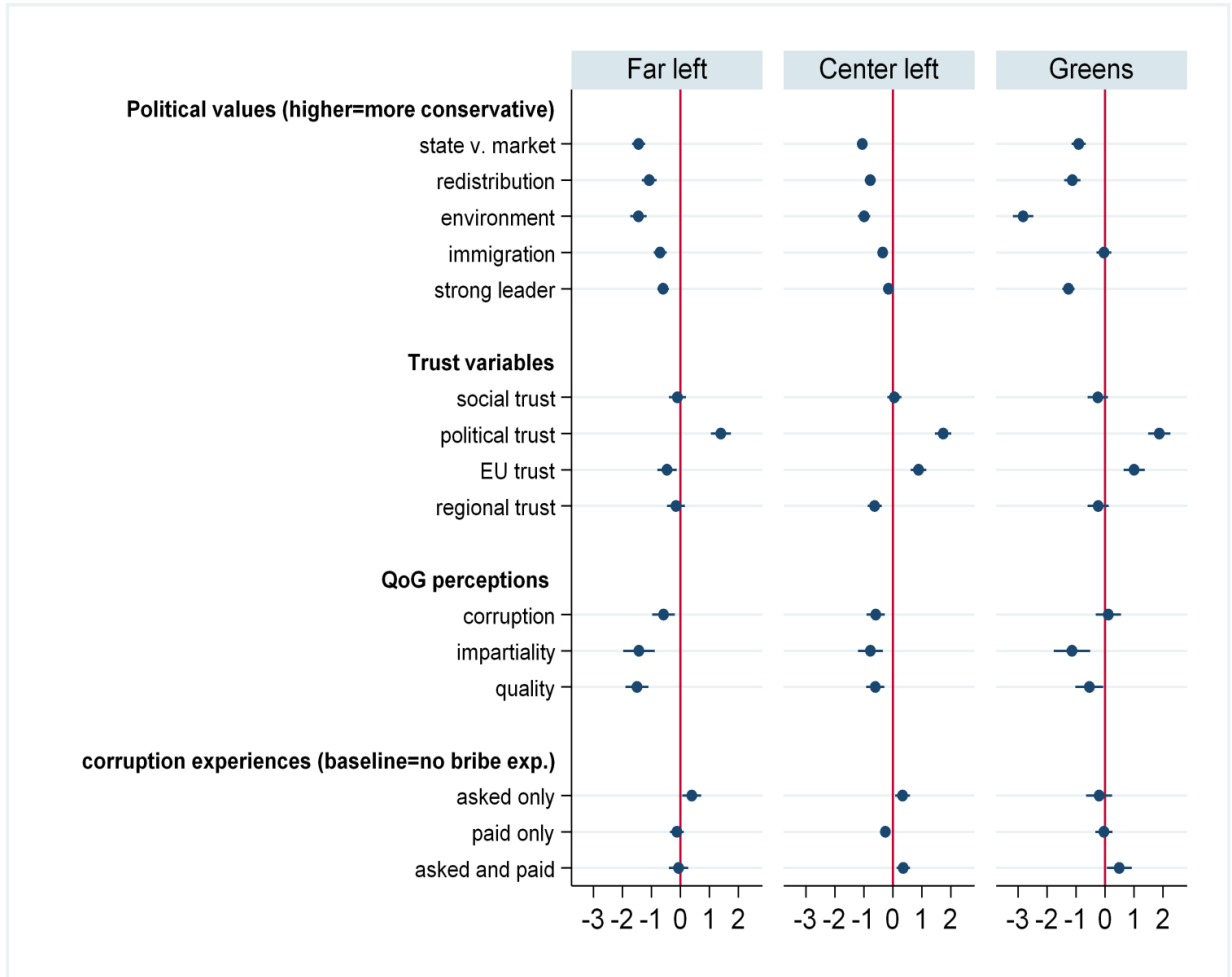
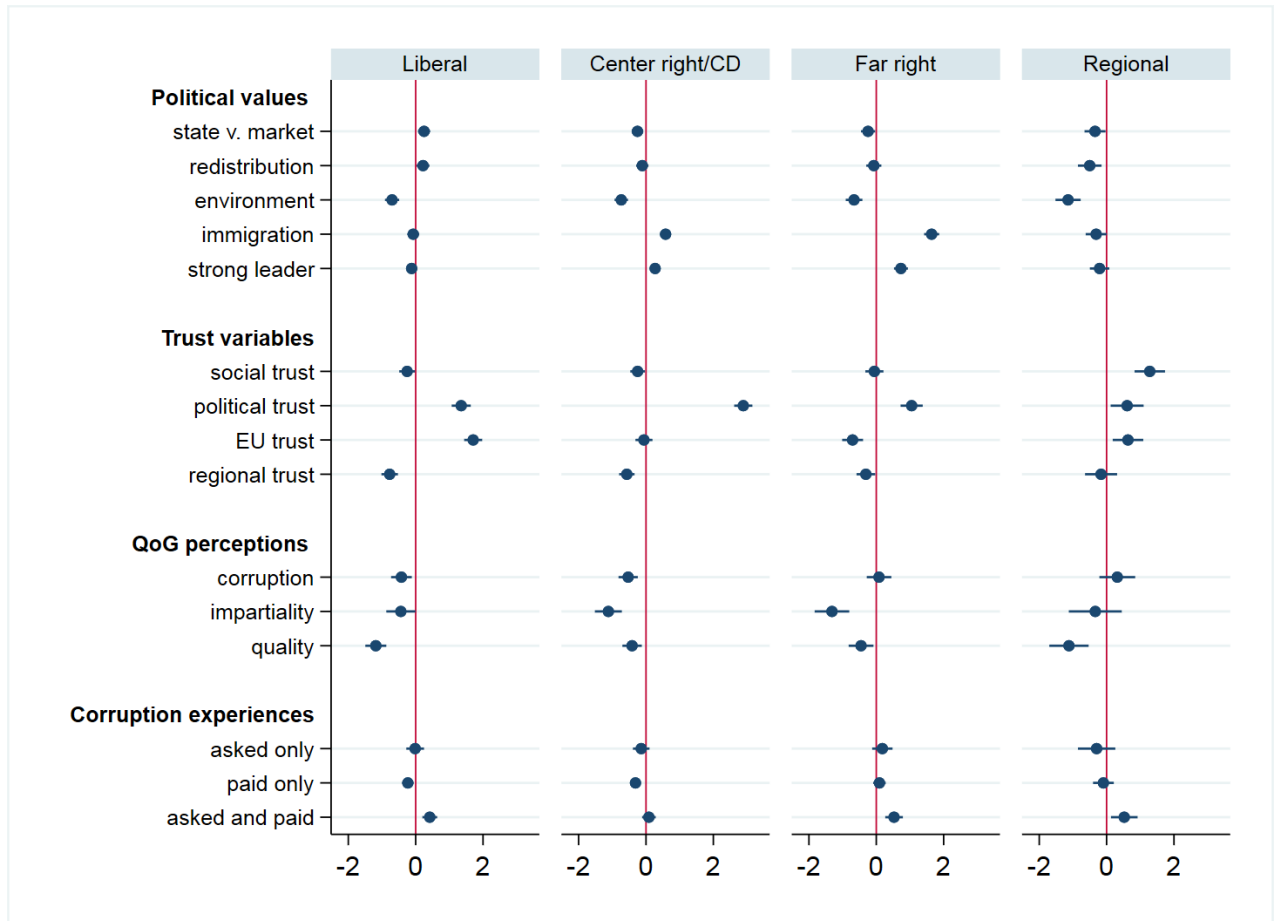


FIGURE 3, MULTINOMIAL LOGIT RESULTS – LEFT LEANING FAMILIES VERSUS ACP



Note: results from the previous two figures are from multinomial logit estimation with log odds coefficients with clustered standard errors in parentheses. Each column represents the relative logged odds of supporting a party from such party family relative to the ACP group. The model also includes gender, age, income, education, population of residence and country level corruption.  $N=49,293$ . Model Chi2 ( $p$ -value)=0.0000. \*  $p<0.05$ .

The above two figures summarize the results for the main variables from the multinomial logit estimates. For presentation sake, due to the number of categories being large in the dependent variable (eight), the party families are split into left of center and right of center plus regional parties and only questions pertaining to political values, QoG perceptions and experiences and trust are shown. The reference group in all cases is ACP supporters. Each column represents the party family with which



ACP supporters are being compared and the dots in the graph represent marginal effects of the probability of voting for any of the party families relative to the ACP based on a change in the variables listed (with 95% confidence intervals). If the dot or confidence interval cross the '0' line, this indicates that the variable in question does not distinguish the party family in question with ACP voters.

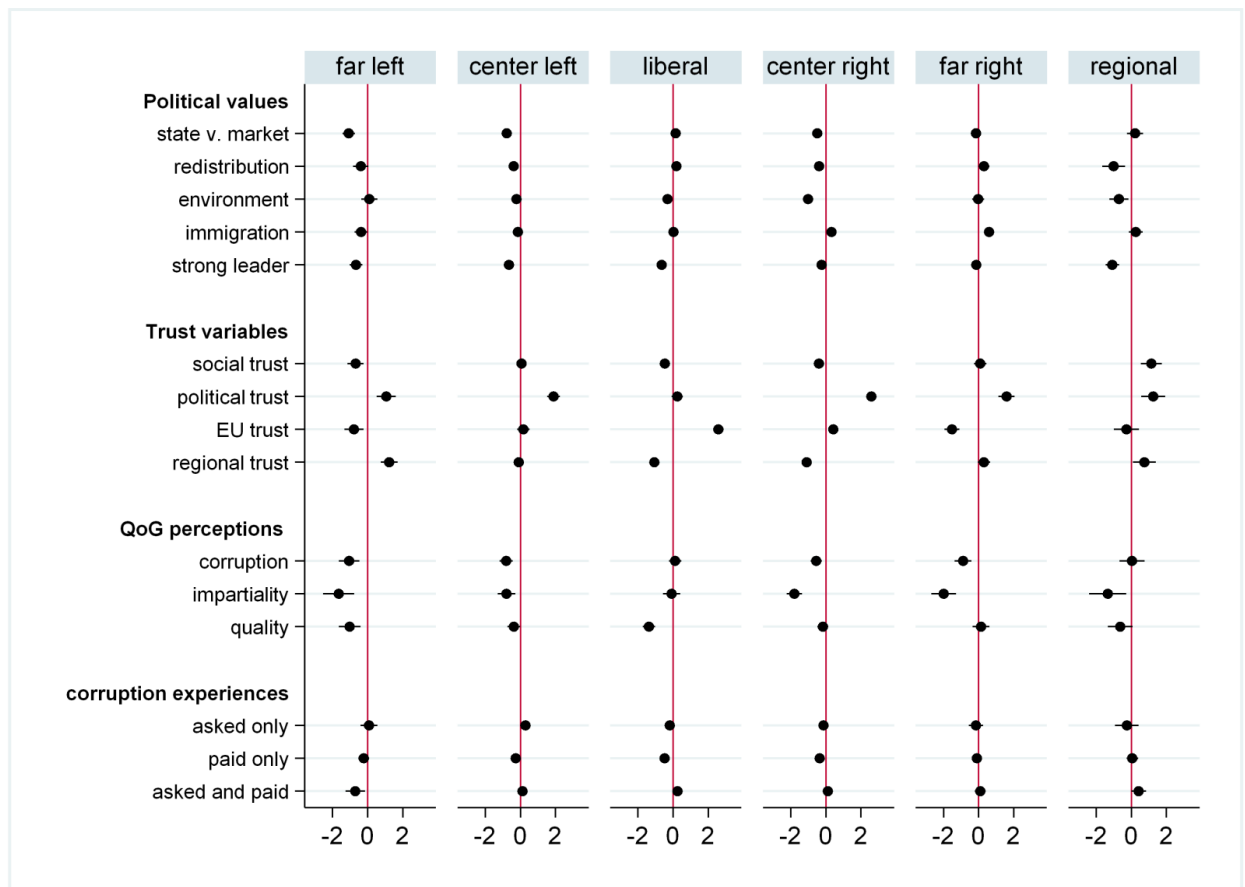
Variables are categorized into four categories. First, we look at political values, of which there are traditional left-right dimensions ('state v. market' and 'redistribution'), and gal-tan dimension ('environment', 'immigration' and 'strong leader'). We see that increases to the right (conservative) on the five value items decreases the likelihood of voting for a far left, center left or Green party (save immigration) relative to ACP, thus we can conclude that ACP voters are politically to the right of the typical voter from these three party families on average. Compared with right leaning parties and regional parties, we see more mixed results, as right-leaners on more traditional economic left-right issues (market v state and redistribution) are more likely to vote liberal than ACP and less likely to vote regional, while the ACP voters are just to the right of the far-right and center right on market-state questions, but undisguisable on redistribution. On the more gal-tan items, we see that ACP voters are to the right of all parties on the environment, yet to the left of the center-right and far-right when it comes to immigration and 'strong leader' items, where we observe a large gap in views on immigration between the ACP voter and the far right votes.

On issues of trust, while we find mainly negligible or small differences in the party families on social and regional trust, ACP voters stand out in their low political trust. We see that a unit increase in political trust significantly increases the odds that a voter will support any other party family than ACP. Further, in most cases, the ACP voters have lower trust in the EU, save the far right and far left family voters.

Another set of questions that distinguishes the ACP voters are those of quality of government (QoG). Here we observe that as citizens believe that corruption is more prevalent (e.g. increase in corruption perceptions index), they become more likely to vote ACP relative to all parties but far right, greens and regional, ACP supporters appear to also believe that their public service are of good quality and allocated impartiality, showing a degree of optimism despite low political trust and higher corruption perceptions. Surprisingly, contrary to what the bivariate means table 1 might suggest, when holding constant all other factors, we observe little effect in corruption experiences on the likelihood of voting ACP.

Finally, the next figure limits the sample to only those seven countries with an ACP. As there is no green party represented in this sub-sample, the number of categories in the dependent variable drops to seven. We see that come of the results from the means table and the previous two figures were mainly confirmed, while others are somewhat different with this limited sample here.

FIGURE 4, SUMMARY OF MULTINOMIAL LOGIT ESTIAMTES AMONG SUB-SAMPLE OF COUNTRIES



Note: Marginal effects reported from multinomial logit estimates with 95% confidence intervals, where ACP is the baseline reference group. Sample includes only seven countries with and ACP. The model also includes gender, age, income, education, population of residence and country level corruption.  $N=21,494$ . Model Chi2 (p-value)=0.0000. \*  $p<0.05$ .

First, the political values questions confirm largely that the ACP voter is mostly a center-right person in the European context. We see that the ACP voters is either to the right or indistinguishable from other party families on most value items, with the exception of redistribution (versus liberal and far right), and immigration (versus center right and far right). Again, what distinguishes the ACP voter is levels of trust – mainly lower levels of political trust than the other party families. EU trust and regional trust become a bit more nuanced, as ACP supporters appear to have greater EU trust than far left and far right, yet less than liberals and center right. They have greater regional trust than liberals and center right, yet less than far left and regional party supporters. Social trust is highest again among regional party supporters, and lowest among left party supporters, while indistinguishable among all other blocks. The results of QoG perceptions are supported as well in this subsample, showing that ACP supporters perceive higher levels of corruption *and* impartiality than all family blocks save liberal.

Finally, Table 2 shows the Wald posttest of combining alternatives shows clear evidence that the ACP supporters are distinct from other party family supporters -at least along the lines of the factors included in our model. The null hypothesis is that the pairs in question are not distinct enough and can thus be collapsed into a single group. The Chi square statistics shows that the ACP group is most distinct from the Green block, while most similar to the far right – yet statistically distinct from all other groups. For example, the multinomial logit test shows that the far right and ACP clearly are different along certain issues of political values, namely the environment and immigration. While when controlling for the country level corruption variable, ACP voters are in fact most to the right on the environment/growth continuum, they are significantly to the left of the far right family block on immigration. It is worth noting that other family groups are more related according to these parameters than the ACP and far right – for example, the far left and center left are the closest two family groups ( $\text{Chi}^2=306.1$ ), and the center right and center left are even closer linked than the ACP to any other group ( $\text{Chi}^2=468.5$ )

TABLE 2, WALD POSTTEST FOR COMBINING ALTERNATIVES

<u>pair comparison</u>	<u>df P&gt;chi2</u>	<u>d.f.</u>	<u>p value</u>
ACP vs. Far left	718.96	29	0.0000
ACP vs. Center left	830.32	29	0.0000
ACP vs. Greens	1075.73	29	0.0000
ACP vs. liberal	809.41	29	0.0000
ACP vs. center right	840.06	29	0.0000
ACP vs. far right	539.59	29	0.0000
ACP vs. regional	870.85	29	0.0000

## Discussion

The results from the analysis should be interpreted cautiously, but at this preliminary stage they still suggest that the ACPs indeed have a distinct voter base that is different from the supporters of other party families. Our preliminary conclusion is thus that there are good reasons to perceive them as a distinct type of parties and perhaps even as a new party family member and it is our view that future comparative research would suffer unless this distinctness is taken into account when analyzing countries and party systems containing ACPs.

As expected, the ACP voters turned out to be younger, but contrary to expectation dominated by men. The ACP voters thus mirror the ACP leadership which so far has been exclusively male and in many, although not all cases, young. Female voters may be less tolerant towards corruption and to a higher extent vote the rascals out, but it seems that ACPs are not their main channel for such electoral behavior. We are not entirely surprised by the fact that they also are lowly educated and have a higher unemployment rate, as these factors should have an impact on the more relevant attitudinal issues, such as political trust and dissatisfaction with the political system

Our first hypothesis was that ACP voters would be more likely to have negative attitudes about their political system in general - high perceptions of corruption, lower political trust – than voters of other party groups. This is a crucial test whether ACPs should be considered a distinct party. Unsurprisingly the hypothesis was confirmed. As Green voters tend to have strong opinions on the environment, ACP voters should be expected to perceive higher levels of corruption, leading to a greater distrust for political institutions and a greater dissatisfaction with the political system in general. That voters holding such opinions are supporting ACPs is also logical from the perspective that those parties are new, lacking any track record and thus suggest that those voters have lost trust in the established parties and now seek for a completely new alternative. It is worth noting that ACP voters, a bit counter-intuitively, at the same time consider the public services to be of good quality and that impartiality is high in public administration, suggesting that it is political corruption, and not petty or everyday corruption, that is the key factor behind this vote choice.

As expected ACP voters also place themselves close to the center in terms of economic issues, thereby also confirming hypothesis 2. It makes perfect sense for a valence party not to stick their neck out and distinguish themselves by taking radical policy positions as there are more voters to be won in the middle of the political spectrum, voters who are fed up by corrupt politicians and look for someone else to do the same thing as the mainstream established parties fail to accomplish. Lack of distinctiveness on this dimension is thus what to be expected from a purely valence party.

Finally also hypothesis 3, which says that ACP voters are not likely to stand out ideologically in terms of gal-tan cultural/immigration issues, is confirmed. This is a very interesting and important finding, as this group's demographic and attitudinal similarities to the supporters of Radical right parties, is not reflected in a similar attitude towards immigration, where ACP voters tend to be much more centrist. Their discontent is apparently of another kind and accordingly channeled through a completely different type of party, which moreover suggests that their alleged populist traits should be cast in more systematic doubt.

If these results are to be believed, it would thus be highly misleading to categorize this type of parties, by their ideological party family belonging (EP group, party name etc), as it is obvious that those sets of questions are not what make these parties distinctive in the eyes of the voters. Just like Green or Radical right parties they should be categorized by the feature that is the most prominent, in this case anti-corruption. What makes the ACPs a unique type of parties is that they solely rely on a valence

issue, but which still only a small number of parties credibly can exploit, as previous bad track records in that respect would ruin the chances to campaign on such an issue. Being new is perhaps not a prerequisite, but a great asset in this different type of policy dimension, which is not focused on the policy position on the issue (as everyone agrees that corruption is bad and should be combatted), but rather on the intensity by which a party can campaign on it.

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## Appendix 1: Questions used in the analysis

1. corruption perceptions index (1-10, all re-scaled so that higher values=more corruption perceptions). Additive index, rescaled 0-1.

“Corruption is prevalent in my area’s local public school system”

“Corruption is prevalent in the public health care system in my area”

“Corruption is prevalent in the police force in my area”

“People in my area must use some form of corruption to just to get some basic public services”

“Corruption in my area is used to get access to special unfair privileges and wealth”

“Corruption is NOT present in elections in my area.”

2. Impartiality perceptions index (1-10 and 1-4 scaled questions, all re-scaled so that higher values=more impartiality perceptions). Additive index, rescaled 0-1.

“Certain people are given special advantages in the public education system in my area.”

“Certain people are given special advantages in the public health care system in my area.”

“The police force gives special advantages to certain people in my area.”

“all citizens are treated equally in the public education system in my area”

“all citizens are treated equally in the public health care system in my area”

“all citizens are treated equally by the police force in my area”

“The tax authorities in my **area** treat all people equally”

3. quality perceptions index (1-10, all re-scaled so that higher values=more quality perceptions). Additive index, rescaled 0-1.

**The following 3 questions deal with your opinion of the quality of services in your area, please rate the following from (1-10, with '1' being very poor and '10' being excellent quality)**

How would you rate the quality of public education in your area ?

How would you rate the quality of the public health care system in your area?

How would you rate the quality of the police force in your area?

**4. Corruption experiences** – four categories, 1=none, 2=asked to pay a bribe for public service (but didn't pay), 3=paid a bribe for public serve (but wasn't asked), 4=was asked to, and paid bribe for public service. (services = education, health care, police, and 'other').

5. Political value questions – all re-scaled so that higher values = more conservative

*Please rate how strongly you agree with the following statements, with '1' being strongly disagree, and '10' being strongly agree.*

**Market v. state** – “You prefer the free market over state intervention in the economy in most cases”

**Redistribution** - The government in YOUR COUNTRY should take measures to reduce differences in peoples' income.

**Environment** – “Protecting the environment should always take priority, even at the cost of economic growth”

**Immigration** – “Immigrants contribute a lot to YOUR COUNTRY.”

**Strong leader** – “We need a strong leader with the willingness to punish those who don't behave properly.”

#### **6. trust questions**

On a 1-10 scale, with '1' being 'don't trust at all', and '10' being 'complete trust', how much do you personally trust the following?

a. other people in your area (social), b. COUNTRY's parliament (political), c. the European Union parliament (EU), d. your regional or local parliament (regional)

#### **Media consumption**

“From which of the following do you most often get your news?”

a. in a print or online newspaper , b. on the radio , c. on television , d. a social networking site (such as Facebook or Twitter) , e. don't know

TABLE A1: FULL RESULTS FROM HECKMAN AND PROBIT MODELS

variable	1. Heckman Probit	2. Standard Probit
<b>demographic/education</b>		
Age	-0.0502*** (-3.81)	-0.0975*** (-8.11)
Female	-0.0614** (-3.04)	-0.0886*** (-4.09)
University or greater	-0.00969 (-0.59)	-0.00529 (-0.21)
<b>Occupation (ref: not employed)</b>		
Public sec.	0.0455 (1.77)	0.109*** (3.40)
Private Sec.	0.000641 (0.04)	0.0310 (1.15)
d/k, refused	-0.168 (-1.63)	-0.0395 (-0.18)
<b>Population (ref: 1m+)</b>		
<10k	-0.0601* (-2.07)	0.0174 (0.36)
10k-100k	-0.0223 (-0.81)	0.0442 (0.94)
100k - 1m	0.00750 (0.25)	0.0995* (2.07)
d/k, refused	-0.0406	-0.160

	(-0.78)	(-1.68)
<b>Income (ref: low)</b>		
Middle	0.0847**	0.178***
	(3.15)	(6.46)
High	0.0181	0.0870**
	(1.05)	(2.89)
d/k, refused	-0.165*	-0.245***
	(-2.23)	(-3.93)
<b>Political valus (higher=more conservative)</b>		
Market_st~10	-0.0508*	-0.0648
	(-2.11)	(-1.66)
redistrib~10	-0.00658	-0.0468
	(-0.26)	(-1.07)
environ10	0.0204	0.0930
	(0.73)	(1.92)
immigrati~10	-0.247**	-0.203***
	(-3.19)	(-5.01)
stronglead10	0.0621*	0.0421
	(2.40)	(1.11)
<b>Trust variables (higher=more trust)</b>		
social trust	0.0313	0.0902
	(1.04)	(1.71)
political trust	-0.127	-0.302***
	(-1.77)	(-4.65)
EU trust	-0.171***	-0.281***
	(-4.26)	(-4.47)
Regional trust	-0.0267	0.0419
	(-0.78)	(0.71)
<b>QoG perceptions</b>		
corruption	0.201**	0.246***
	(3.07)	(3.56)
impartilaity	0.199*	0.333***

	(2.09)	(3.53)
quality of services	0.225***	-0.0168
	(3.94)	(-0.24)
<b>Corruption experiences (ref: no experience)</b>		
asked to pay bribe	-0.00638	0.0295
	(-0.20)	(0.52)
paid bribe	0.0720**	0.110**
	(2.59)	(2.95)
asked to & paid bribe	-0.117**	-0.0493
	(-3.21)	(-0.99)
<b>Preferred media source of news (ref: TV)</b>		
print/online newspaper	0.00877	-0.0264
	(0.49)	(-0.82)
radio	0.0130	-0.0212
	(0.62)	(-0.57)
social media	0.0899**	0.138***
	(3.21)	(4.95)
d/k, refused	-0.395	-0.816***
	(-1.76)	(-3.34)
WGI corruption	1.317***	
	(11.69)	
<b>Country fixed effects</b>		
	no	yes
Constant	-0.361***	-1.652***
	(-5.37)	(-14.19)
<b>Selection model</b>		
<hr/>		
ACP in countryj		
WGI corruption	-2.038***	
	(-162.51)	
<hr/>		
constant	1.228***	

	(95.73)	
athrho	-1.862*	
	(-2.51)	
rho	0.952	
Obs (censored)	74348 (44732)	29616

*Note: t-statistics in parentheses from robust standard errors.*

*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$*