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Pro-Social Backlash: The Effect of Far-Right Success on Voluntary Welfare Provision

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Pro-Social Backlash: The Effect of Far-Right Success on Voluntary Welfare Provision

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Abstract

Research has argued that the success of radical parties influences citizens' attitudes, inducing legitimization among supporters while triggering backlash among opponents. Yet, especially for far-right parties, empirical tests of the backlash hypothesis are scant, and limited to shifts in opinions gauged through surveys. Using novel data on volunteering associations, this paper estimates citizens' behavioral reactions to far-right victories in Italian municipal elections. Over a mayoral term, the narrow victory of a far-right coalition is followed by an 11.4% growth in the per-capita number of local NGOs. The effect is driven by social welfare associations, which provide poverty relief and assistance to both natives and immigrants. Individual-level survey data document how the growth in volunteering is driven by left-leaning individuals with positive attitudes towards immigrants. These findings complement our understanding of the consequences of far-right success, showing that − besides shifting attitudes − it may foster behavioral reactions with tangible socioeconomic consequences.

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1 Introduction

After decades of modest electoral performance, radical parties and leaders have recently won executive office at both the national and local level in several developed democracies. This ascent has been particularly steep for the far right (Guriev and Papaioannou, 2022), reshaping policies and shifting citizens' attitudes in many countries. In particular, research has shown how far-right success can encourage polarization and political extremism (Bischof and Wagner, 2019; Valentim, 2021; Hagemeister, 2022), increase hate crimes (Romarri, 2022; Dipoppa et al., 2023), and foster ethnic discrimination (Bracco et al., 2022; Grosjean et al., 2023). Scholars concur that these behavioral shifts stem from a legitimization effect (Bursztyn et al., 2020; Tankard and Paluck, 2016; Bischof and Wagner, 2019), whereby the electoral success of radical parties increases the social acceptability of extremist preferences.

Yet, it has also been argued that radical parties' success should induce backlash among opponents, who wish to further distance themselves from the views of the new majority (Bishin et al., 2016; Bischof and Wagner, 2019). This backlash has been extensively documented among conservative voters, who have been shown to take action against immigrants' access to political office (Zonszein and Grossman, 2022; Grossman and Zonszein, 2021), rising feminist activism and women's political representation (Anduiza and Rico, 2022; Sanbonmatsu, 2008), and the empowerment of ethnic minorities (Bernini et al., 2023; Bustikova, 2014). On the other hand, empirical tests of progressive voters' backlash to far-right victories are scant, and limited to attitudinal shifts measured through electoral outcomes and public opinion data (Bischof and Wagner, 2019; Fahey et al., 2022; Dennison and Kustov, 2023).

However, several recent developments suggest that progressive voters' reactions to far-

right success are not limited to shifts in opinions. Following Donald J. Trump's election to the White House, Americans donated unprecedented amounts to nonprofits assisting immigrants and the poor (Itkowitz, 2016). Also, lawyers provided pro-bono work at airports to assist refugees after the administration's entry ban on target Muslim countries in January 2017 (Engel Bromwich, 2017). Journalistic accounts have documented analogous reactions in other countries, such as France, Hungary, and Italy (Payne, 2013; Kingsley, 2018; Rosano, 2021). Yet, we currently lack systematic, quantitative evidence as to the scale and prevalence of these behavioral reactions to far-right victories.

To bridge this gap, this paper exploits close municipal elections held in Italy between 2005 and 2020 to estimate the causal effect of electing a mayor supported by the far right on citizens' engagement in volunteering associations. To this end, I assemble an original data set with information on more than 37,000 volunteering associations active in Italy since 1991. In this context, support for volunteering associations represents an ideal measure of behavioral backlash to far-right success, as the Italian far right has been promoting welfare chauvinism and regressive fiscal reform at both the national and local level. Consistent with a backlash dynamic, regression discontinuity estimates provide strong evidence of a positive impact of radical-right success on volunteering.

On average − over a mayoral term − the victory of a far-right coalition is followed by an 11.4% increase in the number of volunteering associations in a municipality. The effect is driven by organizations providing social welfare, which assist both immigrants and natives in conditions of poverty, who are frequently targeted by the far right's rhetoric and policy. These results are robust to several alternative specifications and falsification exercises, and are unlikely to reflect strong compensating differentials (Marshall, 2022). Placebo tests confirm that they are specific to the onset of a far-right local government.

Also, the growth in volunteering takes place only when far-right candidates win as challengers, that is, when their success constitutes a stronger political shock for the local community.

To establish what kind of citizens are driving these municipal-level results, I analyze individual-level responses to four waves of the Italian National Election Study (ITANES). In line with a backlash hypothesis, the analyses reveal that left-leaning respondents significantly increase their propensity to volunteer when a far-right coalition is in power in their municipality. Like the municipal-level results, this individual-level effect is limited to social welfare associations. Moreover, among left-leaning respondents, no comparable increase is detected in the propensity to serve in associations of international cooperation. This suggests that, rather than fostering generic solidarity, far-right victories trigger a desire to provide local-level social services. These services directly benefit those who are endangered by the extremist actions of far-right supporters, or by the policies put forward by far-right local governments.

This paper provides three main contributions. First, it improves our understanding of the consequences of far-right success on citizens' behavior, examining the impact of victories of the far right on citizens who are opposed to its rhetoric and political agenda. By doing so, it advances the existing literature on the topic in two important respects. On the one hand, it expands its scope, by showing that − besides shifting their attitudes − far-right victories can also change the behavior of progressive citizens, pushing them to increase their efforts and reshaping the social landscape of their communities. On the other hand, it provides evidence that − in addition to fostering hate and discrimination (Romarri, 2022; Bursztyn et al., 2020; Dipoppa et al., 2023; Bracco et al., 2022) − far-right victories may also increase solidarity among those who oppose the ideas of the

new political majority. This suggests that the net effect of far-right success on citizens' behavior may be more nuanced than previously thought.

Second, this work fits within a broader debate on the social, political, and economic consequences of populist and radical parties' success. Extant studies have demonstrated that populist leadership may undermine international trade and economic growth (Kim and Margalit, 2021; Fetzer and Schwarz, 2021; Funke et al., 2020), bureaucratic quality (Bellodi et al., 2023; Sasso and Morelli, 2021), and even public health outcomes (Bayerlein et al., 2021; Kavakli, 2020). On the political side, the surge of right-wing populists has been shown to cause conservative shifts in mainstream parties' policy positions (Abou-Chadi and Krause, 2020), but also to induce the use of a more positive emotional rhetoric as a strategy of political distancing (Valentim and Widmann, 2023). My findings show that − rather than being specific to elites' strategies and political discourse − these differentiation dynamics also shape behavioral outcomes among ordinary citizens.

Finally, the present article adds to a long-standing literature on the interactions between the state and civil society. Research in this area has highlighted how a structured and reactive civil society is key to preserve democratic institutions (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2020), advance public goods provision and economic development (Dell et al., 2018), and boost state capacity (Bowles and Gintis, 2002). Here, I show that civil society organizations can coordinate the response of certain groups of citizens following a political shock. Furthermore, most extant studies posit that the size of the third sector and the extent to which individuals support each other are the result of long-term factors, such as social capital (Uslaner, 2018; Brown and Ferris, 2007) or former institutions (Guiso et al., 2016; Putnam, 1992). In this paper, I document how they may also respond to sudden changes in incentives, like those generated by political shocks.

2 Citizens' Reactions to Radical Parties' Success

In most of Europe and North America, politics has long been dominated by moderate, mainstream parties on the center-left and center-right of the political spectrum. In this context, the recent rise of radical parties represents a major shock to the existing political, social, and economic equilibrium, which has attracted growing interest among social scientists (see Guriev and Papaioannou, 2022 for an extensive review of this literature). An important strand of this agenda has been trying to pin down the effects that radical parties' electoral success may have on citizens' opinions and attitudes.

Scholars have hypothesized that the victories of radical parties will simultaneously induce *legitimization* and *backlash* effects. Legitimization effects (Bursztyn et al., 2020; Tankard and Paluck, 2016; Bischof and Wagner, 2019) concern supporters of radical parties, who will take electoral success as a signal that their previously stigmatized views are now shared by a large segment of society. This, in turn, will encourage them to voice their opinions in public and to act in line with their political convictions. Empirical tests have provided ample evidence of these dynamics, especially for far-right supporters.

In both an observational and an experimental setting, Bursztyn et al. (2020) find that − when reminded about Donald Trump's success − right-wing individuals become more likely to publicly express xenophobic views. Hagemeister (2022) detects a significant increase in anti-immigration protests in German states following unexpected, positive results of the far-right party AfD. In the UK, Valentim (2021) finds that UKIP supporters are more likely to voice their extremism as their party gains parliamentary representation.

Importantly, these legitimization dynamics have been also documented for Italy, the country considered by this study. Romarri (2022) shows that the election of far-right mayors in Italian municipalities increases the yearly probability of hate crimes by about

5 percentage points. In the same context, Dipoppa et al. (2023) find that attacks against Asians at the onset of COVID-19 were fostered by the presence of a far-right municipal administration. Bracco et al. (2022) estimate that 5th-grade Italian students are significantly more likely to victimize their immigrant peers in municipalities with high support for the League, a prominent anti-immigration party.

Backlash effects, on the other hand, should induce the opponents of successful radical parties to further distance themselves from the new political majority (Bischof and Wagner, 2019). The seminal work of Lipset and Raab (1970) describes backlash as a reaction by the former majority or dominant group to political events that change the status quo. In the empirical literature, tests of the backlash effect abound, but have overwhelmingly concentrated on the opinions and behaviors of conservatives. Strong reactions have been documented, for instance, against immigrants' access to political office (Zonszein and Grossman, 2022; Grossman and Zonszein, 2021), rising feminist activism and women's political representation (Anduiza and Rico, 2022; Sanbonmatsu, 2008), and the empowerment of ethnic minorities (Bernini et al., 2023; Bustikova, 2014).

Yet, the recent rise of radical-right parties poses new questions, calling for an expansion of this research agenda to encompass the reactions of progressive citizens to the onset of conservative and ultra-conservative political elites. Moving a step in this direction, a few recent studies have shed light on the opinion shifts of progressive voters following far-right victories. Using a panel survey of Dutch voters and Eurobarometer data for seventeen countries, Bischof and Wagner (2019) find that progressive respondents react to radical-right electoral success by placing themselves further to the left of the ideological scale. Using high-quality panels of public opinion data from the UK and Germany, Fahey et al. (2022) document how mainstream parties' supporters react to the Brexit referen-

dum and to the 2017 success of the AfD by stating lower satisfaction with the democratic process. Finally, Dennison and Kustov (2023) combine election results and public opinion data for twenty-four European countries, showing that populist radical-right victories induce more positive views of immigration among progressive voters.

Taken together, these recent contributions indicate that backlash effects do not only play out among far-right supporters. Rather, progressive voters quickly and significantly update their positions on a number of aspects of public life following far-right victories. Nevertheless, given their focus on survey data and electoral results, these novel studies open up important questions for empirical research. Do attitudinal shifts among progressive voters also translate into behavioral reactions? And, if yes, how do these reactions shape the social, political, and economic landscape of our communities? While crucial for fully understanding the overall effects of far-right success on citizens' behavior, these questions have received little attention do date. In fact, extant work on the topic has only studied pre-electoral forms of mobilization, aimed at preventing far-right success rather than counteracting it (Colombo et al., 2022; Vüllers and Hellmeier, 2022).

To bridge this gap, in what follows I study the effects of far-right success on an important aspect of public life, with first-order social, political, and economic consequences: citizens' participation into volunteering associations. While joining NGOs is just one of several possible forms of countermobilization, I argue that it constitutes an ideal measure of behavioral backlash to far-right success. In fact, volunteering associations worldwide − especially those providing social welfare − are at the forefront in supporting immigrants and vulnerable individuals, who are among the most frequent targets of unfavorable policies and hostile rhetoric by far-right elites and supporters. (Schumacher and Van Kersbergen, 2016; Enggist and Pinggera, 2022).

3 Background

3.1 Italian Municipal Politics and the Italian Far Right

Municipal administrations are the lowest tier of government in Italy, with responsibility over several policy areas: basic services, local police, transportation, and a wide array of social welfare services. These include nursery, assistance to the elderly, and public housing for disadvantaged families. Municipal elections are held every five years, with staggered timing both across and within provinces. Citizens directly elect the mayor and the members of the municipal council. On the ballot, each mayoral candidate is linked to lists of candidates to the council. After the election, regardless of the vote margin, the lists supporting the winning mayor are ensured a majority in the council.

In the period analyzed by this paper (2005-2020), there have been several far-right parties active in the Italian political arena. A full list of parties considered as being "far-right" in this study (based on Romarri, 2022) is in Table A1. In my data set, of 30,924 municipality-election observations, at least one candidate supported by the far right was present 20% of times, and won in almost 6% of the cases. These figures are much higher among municipalities above 15,000 inhabitants, where the local political competition mirrors the national one: The far right participated in 76% of these races, winning in 26% of the cases.

The two main Italian far-right parties, which support a large majority of the candidates defined as "far-right" in this study, are The League and Brothers of Italy. Although their positions diverge on some issues, these parties align in terms of both rhetoric and proposals when it comes to economic and immigration policy. On the economic side, the two parties pursue an anti-redistribution agenda, aimed at curbing tax rates on firms

and high-income individuals while cutting welfare provisions for vulnerable groups. This position is well-summarized by the two parties' flagship policy proposals for the 2018 and 2022 national elections: a 15% flat tax rate[1] and the dismantling of the guaranteed minimum income (Emanuele et al., 2020; Improta et al., 2022).

As far as immigration is concerned, both parties share a strong anti-immigration stance (Urso, 2018; Campo et al., 2021). Immigration restrictions are a primary ingredient of their platforms not only at the national, but also at the local level (Pulejo, 2021; Bracco et al., 2022). Several far-right local administrations have indeed tried to discriminate against immigrants when assigning public housing and other in-kind benefits, which have the highest potential for generating inter-group conflict (Cavaille and Ferwerda, 2023). A prominent episode of policy-based discrimination took place in Lodi, near Milan. The League mayor Sara Casanova banned children of foreign parents from the canteens of public elementary schools. The story, featured in the national news for weeks, ended with the condemnation of the municipal administration. The amount of the fine was devolved to local volunteering organizations, with the aim of "contrasting discrimination against both native and foreign children" (Beltrami, 2020).

In addition to promoting exclusionary policies, local far-right politicians have often used hostile rhetoric against immigrants, which has fostered racial hate and discrimination on behalf of ordinary citizens (Bracco et al., 2022; Romarri, 2022; Dipoppa et al., 2023). In the most extreme cases, some far-right representatives even committed acts of intolerance during their campaigns and their tenure in office. The most tragic of these episodes took place in Voghera, southern Lombardy. On July 20, 2021, the League's municipal alderman Massimo Adriatici shot to death Youns El Boussettaoui, a Moroccan immigrant who had

[1]In Italy, income tax rates are progressive, ranging between 23% and 43% as of 2023.

been accused by some shopkeepers of disturbing their customers. The episode triggered the immediate reaction of the town's civil society, and a major protest led − among others − by the representatives of local volunteering associations (Pisanu, 2021).

3.2 Volunteering Associations in Italy

Volunteering associations have historically been fundamental for providing social welfare and defending civil rights in Italy. Once mostly in the orbit of the Catholic Church, volunteering associations have been growing in both numbers and independence since the 1980s (Ranci, 2001). This paper focuses on a subset of the Italian third sector, the one of volunteering organizations (*Organizzazioni di Volontariato* or OdV). The reason is that detailed data on establishment date and municipal location are available for this category of associations. Also, associations active in social welfare − those more relevant for this study − are typically classified as OdV.

Each OdV may operate in one or more of five sectors: social, civil, cultural, healthcare, and environmental. Among the organizations included in my data, the most frequent sector of operation is social welfare (55% of all associations), followed by healthcare (25.8%), civil (15.5%), cultural (11.5%), and environmental (9.3%). While some large associations have a regional, national, or even international scope, a large majority of Italian OdV operate at the municipal level.

The main object of interest in this study are social welfare associations. The reason is that these associations support individuals of low socioeconomic status (SES) and immigrants, which − as outlined above − are the primary targets of the welfare cuts and the hostile rhetoric promoted by Italian far-right parties. While they may differ in their scope and specific activities, most social welfare OdV provide food, housing, and

other forms of material and moral support to disadvantaged individuals.[2] When assisting immigrants and refugees, some of these associations also promote their integration into the host society, by offering − for instance − courses of Italian language, legal counseling, and information about how to access the Italian labor market.[3]

According to the latest figures, 9% of the Italian population participate in the activities of volunteering associations, yielding enormous benefits to their beneficiaries (Istat, 2021). Furthermore, as far as immigrants are concerned, these associations do not only act as providers of goods and services. In fact − echoing findings from other countries (Stoll and Wong, 2007; Baert and Vujić, 2016) − recent studies of first- and second-generation immigrants in Italy have demonstrated that participating as volunteers into OdV is effective at facilitating integration and labor market access for newcomers (Alfieri et al., 2022; Martinez-Damia et al., 2023).

For financing, OdV rely primarily on private sources, but can also receive public funds (Propersi, 2012). These funds may come in the form of direct transfers or as payments for the provision of goods and services. While municipal administrations often perform the final payment for services within their jurisdiction, the identity of the recipients and the amount of public funds accruing to OdV are decided by the central State or by regional governments (Di Costanzo, 2020). Hence, any effect of far-right municipal victories on the number of local volunteering associations is unlikely to be driven by changes in the funds that OdV receive from the municipal administration.

[2]An example of association providing these services is *Banco Alimentare*, which offers food low SES individuals, regardless of their nationality: `www.bancoalimentare.it`.

[3]An example of association providing this type of services is *ANOLF*, promoted by the prominent trade union CISL, which has branches in several towns: `www.anolf.it`.

4 Data

Data for the municipal-level analyses come from three sources. Municipal elections' results (2005-2020) are from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.[4] For most municipalities, they cover four rounds of elections. For each race, I code the presence of one or more mayoral candidates supported by at least one far-right party of those in Table A1. I then compute the margin of victory (or loss) of the most voted far-right candidate, and code a $FRMayor_{it}$ indicator, equal to 1 if she won election t in municipality i, and 0 otherwise.

Next, I assemble a novel panel dataset of Italian volunteering associations (OdV). It contains 389,472 OdV-year records, referred to 27,124 unique OdV active between 1991 and 2020. To this end, I source the most up to date OdV registry of all regions, and use the date of registration of each OdV to define its year of entry. In doing so, I have to discard OdV from four regions, as their registries do not report this date.[5] On top of the name of each OdV, the data records its municipality and sector(s) of operation.[6]

Collapsing at the municipality-year level, I obtain the number of OdV operating at a given year in each of 4,433 unique municipalities from sixteen regions. Merging this with election results yields a panel of 30,924 municipality-election observations, of which 6,188 feature at least one candidate supported by the far right. Finally, I complement the data with municipal census characteristics,[7] mayoral characteristics,[8] and general elections' results.[9] Descriptive statistics for the main variables are in the Appendix, Table A2.

[4] `https://elezioni.interno.gov.it`

[5] Lazio, Puglia, Sardegna, and Veneto.

[6] Not recorded in the registries of Abruzzo, Campania, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

[7] `https://www.istat.it/it/censimenti/popolazione-e-abitazioni`.

[8] `https://dait.interno.gov.it/elezioni/anagrafe-amministratori`

[9] `https://elezioni.interno.gov.it`

5 Identification

5.1 Empirical Strategy

This paper aims to gauge the effect of far-right victories in municipal elections on the net change in the number of local volunteering associations over a mayoral term. Clearly, far-right success depends on many observable and unobservable features of a municipality, that may in turn affect the creation or dissolution of OdV. To address this issue, I follow recent papers on the effects of far-right victories in Italian municipalities (Bracco et al., 2018; Romarri, 2022) and use a Politician-Characteristic Regression Discontinuity (PCRD) design. PCRD is a close-election Regression Discontinuity Design (Imbens and Lemieux, 2008; Lee and Lemieux, 2010), aimed at isolating the effects of a certain characteristic of the winning candidate. My regression equations have the form:

$$\Delta Associations_{i,t} = \beta FRMayor_{i,t} + \gamma f(Margin)_{i,t} + \lambda[FRMayor \cdot f(Margin)]_{i,t} + \\ + \theta Z'_{i,t-1} + \psi X'_{i,t-1} + \tau_t + \phi_p + \epsilon_{i,t}, \tag{1}$$

The parameter of interest is β, i.e., the effect of a far-right victory on the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i over term t ($\Delta Associations_{i,t}$). Given the PCRD setup, the coefficient $\hat{\beta}$ measures this effect at the cutoff of 0 margin of victory of the most voted far-right candidate ($Margin_{i,t}$). That is, $\hat{\beta}$ is estimated by comparing municipalities where a candidate supported by the far right narrowly won to municipalities where a candidate supported by the far right narrowly lost. Equation (1) also has province fixed effects (ϕ_p) and election-year fixed effects (τ_t), so it compares municipalities close to the cutoff within the same province, holding elections

in the same year.

The vectors $Z_{i,t-1}$ and $X_{i,t-1}$ contain pre-election characteristics of the previous mayor and the municipality,[10] respectively. Finally, $f(Margin_{i,t})$ is a polynomial in the margin of victory of the most voted far-right candidate, also interacted with the indicator for she winning the election ($FRMayor_{i,t}$). Over the paper, I present results using up to a third-order polynomial. The size of the bandwidth around the cutoff is determined through the data-driven approach of Calonico et al. (2014), with a triangular kernel. Robust standard errors are clustered at the municipality level.

5.2 Threats to Identification

The literature on RDD and PCRD (Imbens and Lemieux, 2008; Sekhon and Titiunik, 2012; Marshall, 2022) requires four assumptions to be met in the context of my study:

1. *No Sorting.* The density of the forcing variable ($Margin_{i,t}$) is smooth around 0.

2. *Continuity from Above.* Pre-election municipal characteristics do not different significantly between municipalities that barely elected a mayor supported by the far right and municipalities that barely elected a mayor not supported by the far right.

3. *No Unconditional Confounding/Compounding.* In close races, being supported by

[10]Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; Indicator for provincial capital, Log of distance from regional capital, population, surface, and foreigners per 100 inhabitants; Average age, % with secondary education, % unemployed, % employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council and of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the latest general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held.

the far right is unconditionally uncorrelated with other characteristics of candidates.

4. *PC Irrelevance for Close Races/No Relevant Compensating Differentials.* Either:

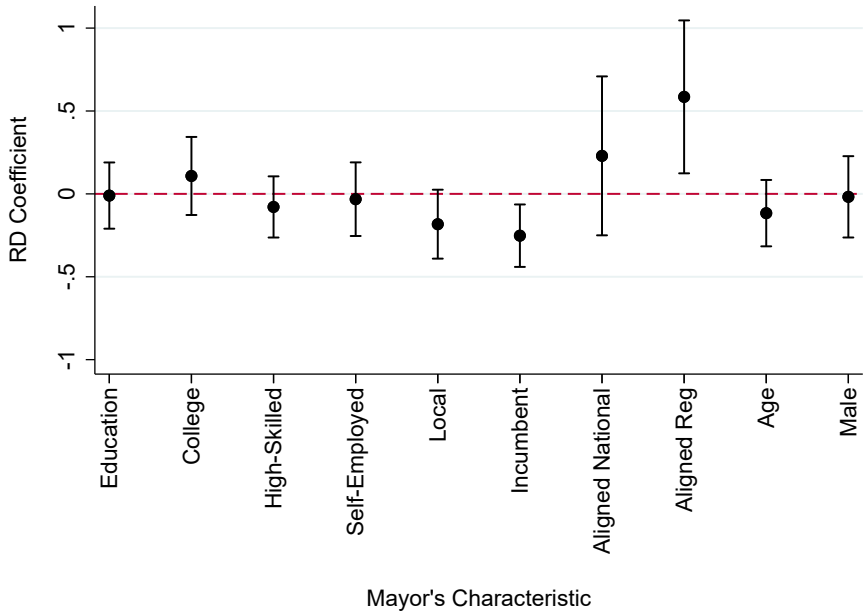
   4.*a.* Being supported by the far right does not affect ($Margin_{i,t}$) in close races, or:

   4.*b.* No other characteristic ensuring that candidates supported by the far right end up in a close race is affecting the net growth of OdV in a municipality.

Assumptions (1) and (2) refer to the general validity of the RDD. I begin by assessing Assumption (1). The margin of victory of the best-performing far-right candidate shows no jumps around 0 (Figure A1), as confirmed by the formal tests proposed by McCrary (2008) and Cattaneo et al. (2018), displayed in Figure A2. To evaluate Assumption (2), I estimate Equation (1) using twenty different covariates as outcome. Table A3 reports the results of these tests: Reassuringly, twenty-eight out of thirty characteristics display no significant discontinuity.

Assumption (3) is particularly relevant to PCRD designs, and it is needed to make sure that $\hat{\beta}$ from Equation (1) is isolating the effect of the characteristic of interest of the elected mayor − here, being supported by the far right − without conflating the effect of other correlated characteristics. To test for it, Figure 1 displays the results of estimating Equation (1) using as outcome each of ten mayoral attributes other than partisanship. Only two outcomes are unbalanced: Narrowly elected far-right mayors are less likely to have run as incumbents (as found by Bellodi et al., 2023 for the generality of populist candidates) and more likely to share partisanship with the regional governor than their narrowly-elected colleagues of different ideologies. While not significant, the coefficient on alignment with the national government is also sizable. I will return to these differences below, when testing for Assumption (4*b*).

Figure 1: Threats to PCRD - Other Characteristics of Far-Right Mayors



Notes: Each dot represents one RD estimate from fitting Equation (1). The dependent variables are standardized to enhance the comparability of coefficients' magnitudes. *Education* is the number of years of schooling of the mayor. *Local* is an indicator for the mayor being born in the municipality. *Aligned National* and *Aligned Regional* are indicators for the mayor sharing partisanship with the Prime Minister and the President of the Regional Executive, respectively. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust, bias-corrected standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

Assumption (4) is specific to PCRD designs, and it has been recently formalized by Marshall (2022). To be satisfied in my context, *at least one* of two conditions should hold. The first − Assumption (4*a*) − is that being supported by a far-right party does not affect candidates' performance in close races. As noted by Marshall (2022), a credible test of this assumption requires exogenous variation in *predicted* competitiveness.

As many elections around the world, Italian municipal races tend to be more competitive whenever the incumbent mayor is *not* running for re-election. The existence of binding term limits[11] provides an excellent source of exogenous variation in whether or

[11]Italian mayors can serve for up to two consecutive terms. In 2014, this number was raised to three for municipalities with less than 3,000 inhabitants.

not the incumbent seeks re-election and, as a byproduct, in the level of competitiveness of the election. To test for Assumption (4*a*), I thus proceed in two steps. First, in Table A4, I demonstrate that elections in which the incumbent faced a term limit are in fact more competitive, as the margin of victory drops by about 5.5 percentage points (25%).

Next, I compile a dataset at the candidate-election level, and use two-way fixed effect regressions to estimate the effect of being supported by the far right on candidates' performances in the 3,975 open-seat elections held during my period of observation. The results, presented in Tables A5 and A6, provide strong evidence that far-right support does not significantly affect candidates' performances in these more competitive elections, as measured by both vote share (Table A5) and probability of winning (Table A6).

Finally, Assumption (4*b*) requires that no other characteristics ensuring that far-right candidates end up in a close race − a so-called *compensating differential* − are affecting the change in the number of associations. It is arguably hard to think of any attribute of a mayor other than ideology that may affect the growth of the volunteering sector. The reason is twofold. First, the creation of new OdV depends on the initiative of citizens, and is not financed through the municipal budget (see Subsection 3.2). Second, the expected growth of the volunteering sector is unlikely to shape the vote choice of citizens in a municipal election. As such, any candidate characteristic that voters may take into account in the ballot box − with the exception of ideology − should not correlate with the future growth of the local volunteering sector.

A way to evaluate the plausibility of Assumption (4*b*) is checking whether the differential characteristics of narrowly elected far-right mayors identified in Figure 1 affect the outcome of Equation (1). To this end, Tables from A7 to A12 in the Appendix show RDD estimates of the effect of narrow victories of incumbent candidates and candidates

aligned to the national or regional government on the change in the per capita-number of volunteering associations (Tables A7, A9, and A11) and social welfare associations (Tables A8, A10, and A12). Reassuringly, all the coefficients are small and insignificant.

Overall, there are both theoretical and empirical reasons to believe that Assumption (4) holds. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that the tests for Assumption ($4a$) are necessarily limited to a subsample of competitive races. Similarly, the mayoral characteristics of Figure 1 cannot be exhaustive, and unmeasurable compensating differentials relevant for the outcome may still play a role. If any such features were to exist, then the results outlined in the following sections should be regarded as a weighted average of their effect and the effect of electing a far-right mayor (Marshall, 2022).

6 Results

6.1 Main Results

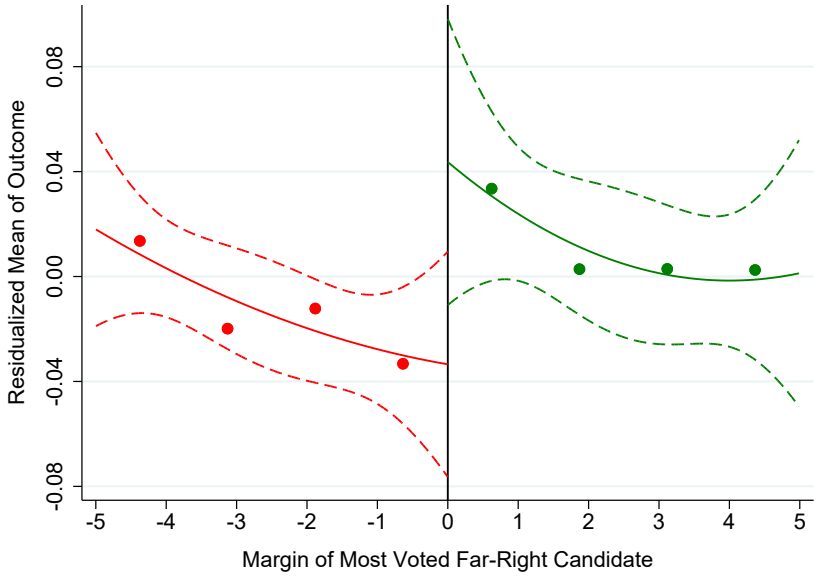
Table 1 reports estimates of $\hat{\beta}$ from Equation (1), using three different polynomial orders. Odd columns present estimates without controls, while even ones include the full battery of pre-election controls. All models strongly support the hypothesis that electing a far-right mayor causes a growth in the number of municipal volunteering associations. According to the coefficient in column (2), a far-right victory triggers an increase of .066 municipal OdV per 1,000 inhabitants, roughly one additional OdV per 15,000 inhabitants. As the average municipality on the left side of the optimal bandwidth has .58 OdV per 1,000 inhabitants, the magnitude of the estimate in column (2) is about 11.4%. A graphical representation of the effect is provided in Figure 2, which shows the clear jump in the number of OdV per 1,000 inhabitants at the RDD cutoff.

Table 1: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Volunteering Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.063*** (.017)	.066*** (.018)	.061*** (.020)	.074*** (.022)	.067*** (.023)	.074*** (.025)
Mean Depvar[a]	.081	.081	.086	.083	.084	.083
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	876	858	1436	1155	1849	1505
Bandwidth	11.49	11.62	19.74	16.10	26.99	21.93
N Left	477	466	822	649	1090	865
N Right	399	392	614	506	759	640

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Controls: See footnote 10. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

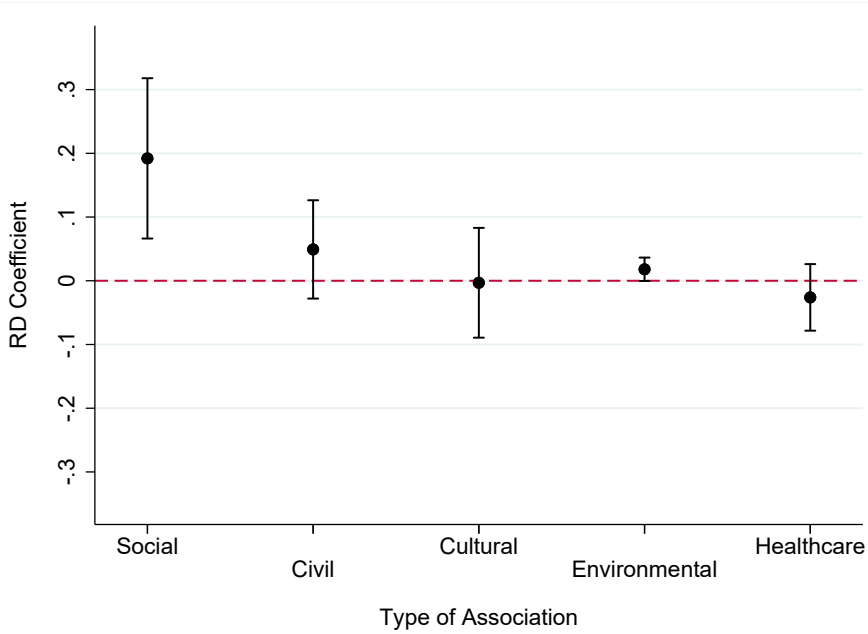
Figure 2: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Volunteering Associations, RDD Plot



Notes: Each dot is the average residualized change in the number of municipal volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants over a mayoral term, for a given bin of margin of victory of the most voted candidate supported by the far right. The solid lines are quadratic polynomials in the margin of victory of the best-performing candidate supported by the far right, fitted separately on each side of the cutoff. The dashed lines are 95% confidence intervals.

Is this effect a form of backlash against the far right, as hypothesized in Section 2? To shed more light on this, I conduct two additional tests. First, I re-estimate Equation (1) using as outcome the net change in the number of OdV within each sector. Consistent with a backlash dynamic, Figure 3 shows that the effect is driven by OdV providing social welfare, that is, organizations supporting low SES individuals and immigrants. Full results for these associations are reported in Table A13. The effect is positive and significant across all models, and the magnitude in column (2) is of 11.1%.

Figure 3: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Volunteering Associations, by Sector

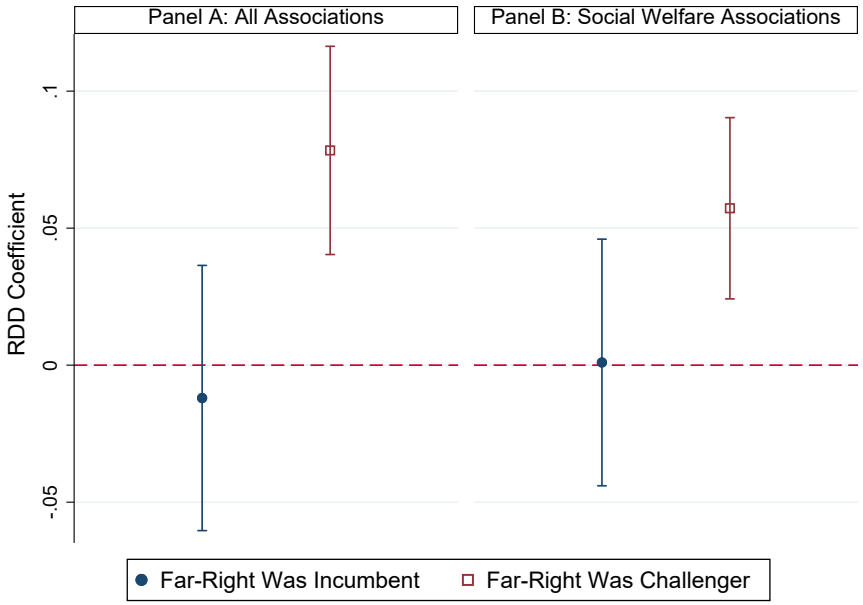


Notes: Each dot represents one RD estimate from fitting Equation (1) with the full set of controls, for associations of the type indicated on the horizontal axis labels. The dependent variables are standardized to enhance the comparability of coefficients' magnitudes. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust, bias-corrected standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

Also, the literature posits that backlash effects should unfold when elections determine a change in the status quo, with the onset of a new majority (Lipset and Raab, 1970). In my setting, this is only the case when − rather than being confirmed after a previous

term in office – a candidate supported by the far right defeats the incumbent mayor. Figure 4 indeed shows that, both for the generality of associations (Panel A) and for those providing social welfare (Panel B), the estimate of β from Equation (1) is positive and significant only when the winning far-right candidate was a challenger.

Figure 4: Heterogeneity by Far-Right Incumbency



Notes: Both panels plot estimates of the RDD coefficient for electing a far-right mayor. In Panel A, the dependent variable is the change in the number of OdV per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i over a mayoral term. In Panel B, the dependent variable is the change in the number of OdV in the social welfare sector per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i over a mayoral term. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

6.2 Alternative Explanations

The backlash hypothesis posits that the growth in OdV documented in Table 1 is a reaction to the victory of a far-right mayoral coalition. An alternative possibility is that volunteering associations simply grow whenever a national party wins office over an

independent local list. This could be the case if, for instance, major parties strategically target public funds from the central or regional governments to specific volunteering associations that they aim to use as political machines (Urvoy, 2020). To assess whether this is the case, I repeat the estimation of Equation (1), using the margin of victory of mayoral candidates backed by a left-wing and center-right coalition as outcome variables. Reassuringly, Figure A3 in the Appendix shows that no significant change in the number of local volunteering associations is detected for narrow victories of left-wing or center-right mayoral candidates.

Another alternative interpretation of the results in Table 1 is that the growth in volunteering associations is simply a byproduct of a broader mobilization of left-wing political forces in view of the next election. This kind of electorally-motivated mobilization has been documented, for instance, in Colombo et al. (2022) and Vüllers and Hellmeier (2022). Yet, Tables from A14 to A17 in the Appendix show that municipalities that narrowly elected a far-right mayor are neither more politically active nor more likely to support left-wing candidates at the following election. This is consistent with the growth in social welfare OdV being driven by a genuine desire to support vulnerable individuals, as opposed to being instrumental to a generalized mobilization for electoral purposes.

6.3 Robustness Checks

Before analyzing the individual-level mechanisms underlying the main results, I provide additional checks on the validity of the estimates presented thus far. I begin with two tests of the suitability of the RDD adopted. First, as proposed by Lee (2008), I run a falsification test that re-estimates Equation 1 using as outcome the change in the number of OdV in the term *prior* to the onset of a far-right mayor. Detecting a significant effect

on these lagged dependent variables would undermine the validity of the RDD approach. Reassuringly, for both the universe of OdV (Table A18) and those providing social welfare (Table A19) the data show no evidence of anticipated effects.

Second, I check that no significant effects are detected at irrelevant cutoffs of the forcing variable. To this end, I re-estimate Equation (1) forty times for each of my outcomes of interest, using a different value of ($Margin_{i,t}$) as a falsified criterion to assign the treatment at each iteration. As shown in Figure A4 − with only one exception out of eighty replicates − there are no significant effects at these irrelevant cutoffs on the number of volunteering associations (Panel A) and on the number of social welfare associations (Panel B).

Next, I perform three exercises testing the stability of the main result. I begin by making sure that the coefficients are not strongly dependent on the choice of the estimation bandwidth. Figure A5 proves robustness to the use of a wide range of symmetric bandwidths, both smaller and larger than those yielding the results of Tables 1 and A13. Next, I check whether the effect of far-right victories remains similar when expressing the dependent variables as the percentage change in the number of OdV over a mayoral term. The RDD coefficients − presented in Table A20 for all associations and Table A21 for social welfare associations − remain positive and significant, with effects ranging between 13.5 and 22.3 percentage points.

Finally, following up on the tests for the PCRD assumptions presented in Subsection 5.2, I assess whether the estimates are significantly affected by the inclusion of indicators for the winning mayor being the incumbent and being aligned to the regional government. For both of my outcomes of interest, the results remain essentially unchanged, as shown in Tables A22 and A23 in the Appendix.

7 Who Volunteers after a Far-Right Victory?

The backlash hypothesis illustrated in Section 2 implies that the observed increase in the number of volunteering associations should be driven by citizens who oppose the far right. To investigate whether this is the case, I analyze responses from four waves of the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES) survey. As ITANES questionnaires from 2001 to 2013 asked respondents about their participation and membership into different categories of volunteering associations, they are suitable to test which types of citizens may be driving the municipal-level results.

I proceed in two steps. First, after pooling the 11,733 responses from the four waves, I use background questions to identify each respondent's political leaning. Namely, as routinely done in the public opinion literature, I consider the item asking interviewees to self-place on a 1-10 ideological scale, where 1 indicates being strongly left-wing, and 10 strongly right-wing. I define as "left-leaning" respondents with a score of 5 or less, and as "right-leaning" the others.[12]

Next, I match each respondent to her mayor's political affiliation, based on the municipality of residence at the time of the interview. It is important to note that not all Italian municipalities are represented in the ITANES pool. Across the four waves I use,

[12]In the Appendix, I show that very similar results hold when categorizing respondents based on their attitudes towards immigration. To this end, I compute the mean score for each respondent on two items, asking how much they agree with the following statements: *(i)* "*Immigrants are a threat to our culture*", and *(ii)* "*Immigrants are a threat to Italians' employment prospects*". Responses are on a 4-point scale, from "*Not at all agree*" to "*Very much agree*". I code a respondent as being "pro-immigration" if her average for the two scores is smaller or equal than 2, and as being "anti-immigration" otherwise.

ITANES respondents span 1,802 municipalities, roughly 22.5% of the total. However, as represented towns tend to be relatively bigger and more urbanized, they are more likely to have at least one far-right candidate competing.[13] As a result, ITANES data cover a relevant portion (46%) of the sample that contributed to the municipal-level results in Section 6. Descriptive statistics for the main variables in the ITANES sample are in Table A24 in the Appendix.

Since ITANES does not cover enough municipalities to adopt an RDD, I exploit the panel structure of the data and fit two-way fixed effect models of the form:

$$Volunteer_{i,j,t} = \rho FRMayor_{j,t} + \lambda Z'_{i,t} + \psi X'_{j,t-1} + \alpha_t + \delta_j + \epsilon_{i,j,t}, \tag{2}$$

via OLS, separately for pro- and anti-immigration respondents. The parameter of interest is ρ, the differential propensity of respondent i from municipality j to serve in an OdV in years in which her municipality is governed by a far-right mayor, holding constant individual ($Z_{i,t}$) and municipal features ($X_{j,t-1}$). Standard errors are clustered by municipality-term, the level at which the treatment − having a far-right mayor − is assigned. Following the discussion above, the expectation is that $\hat{\rho}$ should be positive and significant, but only for models fit on left-leaning respondents.

Before presenting the results, it is important to clarify that they come with a caveat. While ITANES interviews are anonymous, measures of respondents' ideology and attitudes towards immigration may still suffer from post-treatment bias. This would be the

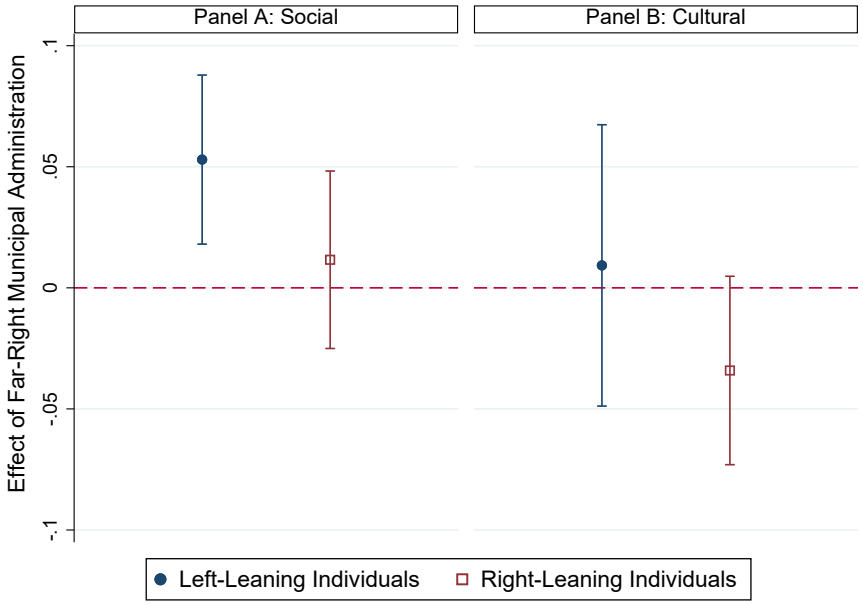
[13]Specifically, 70% of the municipality-year observations refer to a municipality where at least one candidate supported by the far right competed in the previous municipal election.

case if − as found for instance in Bischof and Wagner (2019) − the legitimization and backlash effects produced by far-right success induce polarization among respondents. While Table A25 shows only mild evidence that this might be the case, the ideal test would require having information on respondents' attitudes both before and after the onset of a far-right administration in their municipality. Unfortunately, this is not possible in my setting, as ITANES waves are repeated cross sections that interview each respondent at only one specific point in time.

With this in mind, Figure A6 displays estimates of coefficient $\hat{\rho}$ from Equation (2), using indicators for volunteering in social welfare (Panel A) and in cultural associations (Panel B) as outcome variables. As shown in Panel A, left-leaning respondents significantly increase their propensity to volunteer in social welfare associations when a far-right mayor is in power in their municipality (by 5.3 percentage points, a 69% boost). Consistent with the backlash hypothesis, no comparable effect is detected for right-leaning individuals. More detailed results from estimating Equation (2) are in Table A26.

Furthermore, as shown in Panel B of Figure A6, there is no similar effect on the likelihood of volunteering for cultural associations. These associations, that do not focus on assisting vulnerable individuals, have no potential role in counteracting the far right's rhetoric and policies, and thus constitute a placebo category in the context of this study. This confirms that the advent of a far-right mayor triggers a desire to provide social welfare to vulnerable individuals, rather than generically joining the non-profit sector. Figure A6 in the Appendix shows that very similar conclusions hold when splitting respondents by their attitudes towards immigration. This is particularly important since the linear correlation between left-leaning identification and pro-immigration attitudes is positive but far from perfect among ITANES respondents, at 0.136.

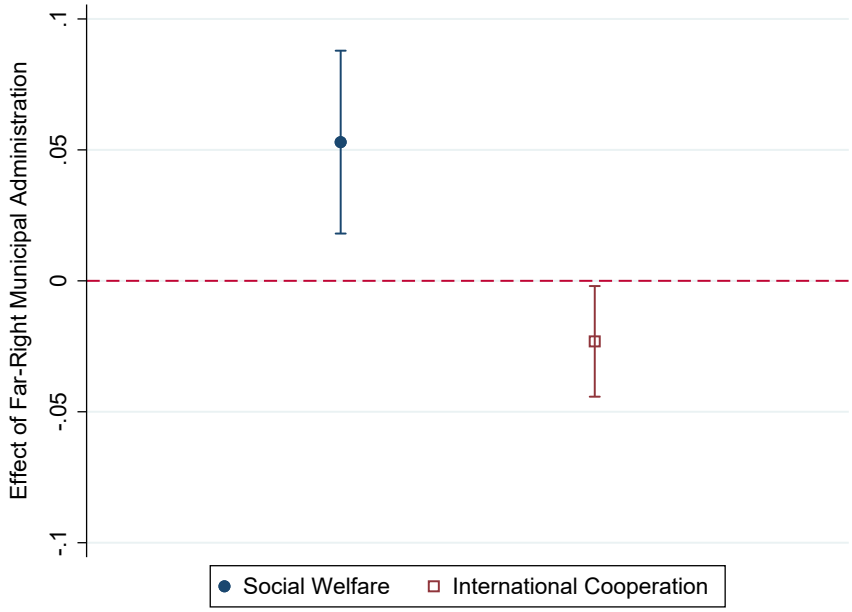
Figure 5: Individual-Level Effect of Far-Right Victories on Propensity to Volunteer in Social Welfare and Cultural Associations, by Respondent's Ideology



Notes: Both panels plot estimates of coefficient $\hat{\rho}$ from Equation (2). In each panel, the dependent variable is an indicator for respondent i declaring to be a member or participant into a volunteering association of the type specified in the panel's title. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level.

Still, one may contend that citizens should be more willing to assist individuals within their community, that could be meaningfully endangered by a surge in far-right power in the municipality. They should not instead react to appeals to help people living abroad, whose conditions are unlikely to be affected by Italian local election results. As ITANES asks respondents whether they participate into organizations of international co-operation and foreign aid, I can test for these dynamics. As shown in Figure A7, left-leaning citizens do not increase their propensity to serve in this kind of OdV. This corroborates the interpretation that my results are determined by local-level factors, meaningfully attributable − among other things − to the ideology of the mayor.

Figure 6: Far-Right Victories and Propensity of Left-Leaning Respondents to Serve in Social Welfare versus International Cooperation Associations



Notes: The coefficients displayed are two separate estimates of $\hat{\rho}$ from Equation (2). The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent i declaring to be a member or participant into a volunteering association of the type specified in the plot's legend. Both coefficients refer only to respondents that declare to be ideologically left-leaning. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level.

8 Discussion and Conclusions

A long-standing literature in the social sciences has argued that the success of radical parties may shift citizens' opinions and behaviors, as a result of both legitimization and backlash effects. Backlash effects have indeed been extensively documented among conservative voters following the success of progressive parties and candidates. Backlash to radical-right victories has received much less attention, and existing empirical studies have overwhelmingly centered on opinion shifts.

This paper has investigated the effect of far-right victories in Italian municipal elections on the growth of the local volunteering sector. To this end, I have assembled an

original panel data set following more than 27,000 Italian volunteering associations over thirty years. According to RDD estimates, far-right victories lead to the creation of one additional association per 15,000 inhabitants over a mayoral term, an 11.4% growth. Consistent with a backlash hypothesis, this result is entirely explained by associations providing social welfare, and driven by places where a far-right candidate won as a challenger. Individual-level survey data document that the aggregate effects are determined by the choices of left-leaning individuals with positive attitudes towards immigrants. These findings complement our understanding of the effects of far-right success on progressive voters, showing that − besides shifting opinions − far-right victories may induce behavioral reactions with tangible consequences.

How generalizable could these results be? Methodologically, this article has hinged upon a regression discontinuity design, comparing towns where a far-right candidate narrowly won to those where a far-right candidate narrowly lost. In addition to maximizing internal validity, this approach is particularly suitable to study citizens' reactions to election outcomes, which are best gauged when elections determine a sudden change in the status quo. RDD is indeed the standard strategy in the literature on both backlash and legitimization effects. However, as radical parties across the world solidify and perpetuate their power, future scholars may evaluate the use of alternative identification strategies.

Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first empirical study of the effect of far-right success on the behavior of progressive individuals. As such, future scholarship should investigate behavioral backlash effects across other contexts and using different outcome variables. Also, given the key role played by opinion shifts in driving mobilization, the collection of more fine-grained survey data is necessary to better characterize the causal chain linking far-right success, individuals' attitudes, and behavioral outcomes.

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Appendix

Additional Tables

Table A1: Parties Coded as "Far-Right"

Alleanza Nazionale
Alternativa Sociale Mussolini
Azione Sociale Mussolini
Casapound Italia
Fiamma Tricolore
Forza Nuova
Fratelli d'Italia
La Destra
Lega Nord
Lega Salvini Premier
Movimento Sociale Tricolore
Movimento Sociale Italiano - Destra Nazionale
Noi Con Salvini

Table A2: Summary Statistics, Whole and Effective RD Sample

	Whole Sample		*Effective Sample*	
Variable	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Volunteering Associations	10.85	28.93	13.31	36.03
Social Welfare Associations	6.53	17.71	8.60	24.51
Far-Right Administration	.26	.44	.45	.50
Far-Right Margin	-19.55	29.45	-9.25	7.29
Surface (km^2)	43.31	66.86	37.71	60.79
Provincial Capital	.07	.25	.07	.26
North	.75	.43	.85	.36
Center	.10	.30	.06	.24
South	.15	.36	.09	.28
Population	21,429	64,446	23,803	80,479
% Foreign Residents	4.92	7.25	5.77	4.26
Average Age	42.75	3.33	42.36	2.61
Unemployment Rate	8.24	7.09	7.32	5.60
% Employed Agriculture	5.01	5.42	3.87	3.98

Notes: Observations are at the municipality-election year level. The whole sample comprises 4,725 observations, i.e. all those where the far right competed and for which there is information on the number of municipal OdV. The effective RD sample only includes the 981 observations employed in the regression of Table 1, Column 1.

Table A3: Balance Checks for Relevant Covariates at Cutoff

Dependent Variable	*Log of Surface*	*Log of Longitude*	*Log of Latitude*	*Log of Elevation*	*Province Capital*
Far-Right Victory	.013 (.068)	-.000 (.002)	.000 (.000)	-.034 (.091)	.013 (.021)
Dependent Variable	*Log Distance Capital*	*Log of Population*	*Log Foreign 100 Inhab.*	*Had SPRAR*	*Opened SPRAR*
Far-Right Victory	.021 (.043)	.013 (.093)	-.015 (.032)	-.017 (.033)	-.020 (.037)
Dependent Variable	*Average Age*	*% High School*	*Unempl. Rate*	*Youth Unemprate*	*% Agriculture*
Far-Right Victory	.725*** (.208)	.004 (.005)	-.001 (.002)	.001 (.005)	-.006 (.004)
Dependent Variable	*% Industry*	*Incumbent Age*	*Incumbent Male*	*Incumbent Education*	*Incumbent Local*
Far-Right Victory	-.002 (.008)	1.919 (1.243)	-.020 (.036)	.015 (.230)	-.070 (.060)
Dependent Variable	*Incumbent NatParty*	*Incumbent AlignNat*	*Incumbent AlignReg*	*Incumbent Far Right*	*Incumbent Left*
Far-Right Victory	-.027 (.008)	-.021 (1.243)	-.008 (.036)	-.044 (.230)	-.017 (.045)
Dependent Variable	*Council Size*	*Board Size*	*Runoff* [a] *System*	*Turnout* [b] *Rate*	*% Center* [b] *Right*
Far-Right Victory	.462 (.551)	.161 (.154)	.098** (.045)	-.001 (.003)	-.005 (.006)

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014), obtained from fitting Equation (1) using a first-order polynomial. The outcome variable of each model is listed in each column's title. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. [a]Indicator for population above 15,000, which implies a runoff is held if no mayoral candidate reaches an absolute majority of votes in the first round. [b]These outcomes are referred to the most recent parliamentary election. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A4: Term Limits and Election Competitiveness

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Incumbent Faces Term Limit	-.054***	-.053***	-.054***	-.054***	-.057***	-.056***
	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.004)	(.005)	(.005)
Observations	12,399	12,110	12,384	12,095	12,131	11,839
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election-Year FES	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Region x Year FEs	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Province x Year FEs	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Regressions at the municipality-election level. In all columns, the dependent variable is the margin of victory of the winning mayoral candidate in municipality i at election t. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A5: Far-Right Candidates' Vote Share in Open-Seat Elections

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	-.000	-.002	-.000	-.002	.000	-.002
	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)	(.008)
Observations	11,391	11,190	11,389	11,188	11,383	11,222
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election-Year FES	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Region x Year FEs	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Province x Year FEs	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Regressions at the candidate-election level, including only observations for elections in which the incumbent mayor faced a binding term limit. In all columns, the dependent variable is the vote share of candidate i in municipality j at election t. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A6: Far-Right Candidates' Winning Open-Seat Elections

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.010	.006	.010	.006	.010	.005
	(.021)	(.021)	(.021)	(.021)	(.022)	(.022)
Observations	11,391	11,190	11,389	11,188	11,383	11,222
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Election-Year FES	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Region x Year FEs	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Province x Year FEs	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

Notes: Regressions at the candidate-election level, including only observations for elections in which the incumbent mayor faced a binding term limit. In all columns, the dependent variable is an indicator for candidate i winning mayoral election t in municipality j. Controls: Average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election; Age, gender, and level of education of the previous mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A7: Victories of Incumbent
Mayoral Candidate and Volunteering Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Incumbent Candidate	.017	.024	.021	.016	.018	.002
	(.028)	(.030)	(.028)	(.030)	(.029)	(.031)
Mean Depvar[a]	.114	.119	.114	.113	.112	.112
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	4520	3477	4463	4415	5517	5244
Bandwidth	21.88	16.60	21.45	22.32	29.36	28.82
N Left	1240	1011	1234	1191	1369	1297
N Right	3280	2466	3229	3224	4148	3947

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A8: Victories of Incumbent
Mayoral Candidate and Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Incumbent Candidate Victory	-.021 (.019)	-.027 (.020)	-.021 (.021)	-.019 (.020)	-.027 (.023)	-.039 (.027)
Mean Depvar[a]	.067	.064	.067	.066	.066	.067
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	3147	2490	4670	4778	5583	4312
Bandwidth	14.09	11.33	22.88	24.95	30.02	21.60
N Left	956	783	1260	1245	1380	1177
N Right	2191	1707	3410	3533	4203	3135

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A9: Mayors Aligned with
National Government and Volunteering Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Aligned Candidate Victory	.018 (.025)	.015 (.028)	.008 (.033)	.013 (.034)	.000 (.038)	.017 (.040)
Mean Depvar[a]	.096	.095	.095	.096	.091	.095
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1966	1501	2386	1880	2742	2143
Bandwidth	23.91	17.75	30.65	23.61	37.26	27.64
N Left	1108	831	1385	1058	1627	1231
N Right	858	670	1001	822	1115	912

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A10: Mayors Aligned with
National Government and Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Aligned Candidate	.004	-.000	-.002	-.006	-.009	-.004
Victory	(.026)	(.026)	(.030)	(.032)	(.037)	(.038)
Mean Depvar[a]	.067	.067	.062	.067	.061	.065
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1832	1497	2565	1946	2661	2118
Bandwidth	21.84	17.66	33.66	24.67	35.75	27.29
N Left	1020	828	1510	1104	1573	1217
N Right	812	669	1055	842	1088	901

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A11: Mayors Aligned with
Regional Government and Volunteering Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Aligned Candidate	.036	.028	.029	.024	.019	.021
Victory	(.035)	(.035)	(.039)	(.041)	(.046)	(.047)
Mean Depvar[a]	.118	.112	.118	.121	.115	.119
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1293	1071	1926	1523	2189	1871
Bandwidth	19.94	16.12	34.35	25.33	42.82	33.44
N Left	708	576	1090	844	1255	1058
N Right	585	495	836	679	934	813

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A12: Mayors Aligned with
Regional Government and Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Aligned Candidate	.013	.004	.006	-.001	-.002	-.000
Victory	(.033)	(.032)	(.039)	(.038)	(.045)	(.044)
Mean Depvar[a]	.085	.083	.083	.084	.079	.083
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1295	1085	1750	1577	2061	1725
Bandwidth	19.97	16.36	30.12	26.40	38.09	29.93
N Left	710	581	982	871	1171	967
N Right	585	504	768	706	890	758

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A13: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.046*** (.015)	.046*** (.015)	.054*** (.018)	.059*** (.019)	.054*** (.020)	.071*** (.023)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Mean Depvar[a]	.059	.060	.059	.059	.054	.058
Polynomial Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	928	933	1327	1242	1895	1396
Bandwidth	12.10	12.61	17.95	17.21	27.85	19.83
N Left	508	511	754	705	1121	798
N Right	420	422	573	537	774	598

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A14: Alternative Explanations: Far-Right Success and Number of Competitors in the Next Election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.231 (.196)	.035 (.200)	.124 (.239)	.001 (.223)	.165 (.247)	-.451 (.313)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1518	1363	1955	2103	2819	1712
Bandwidth	14.87	13.91	20.07	23.13	31.88	17.87
N Left	851	754	1099	1193	1664	960
N Right	667	609	856	910	1155	752

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of lists competing in municipality i between municipals election at t and $t+1$. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Mayor controls: age, gender and level of education. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A15: Alternative Explanations: Far-Right Success and Number of Left-Wing Competitors in the Next Election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.045 (.077)	-.017 (.084)	.002 (.100)	-.063 (.109)	.006 (.105)	-.044 (.117)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1734	1462	1993	1675	2784	2341
Bandwidth	17.33	14.91	20.61	17.47	31.35	26.59
N Left	970	820	1124	938	1636	1359
N Right	764	642	869	737	1148	982

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of left-wing lists competing in municipality i between municipal elections at t and $t+1$. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A16: Alternative Explanations: Far-Right Success and Turnout in the Next Election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	-.002 (.004)	.004 (.005)	.003 (.006)	.003 (.005)	.003 (.006)	.006 (.007)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1910	1155	1874	2139	2600	1842
Bandwidth	19.89	11.75	19.45	24.21	29.24	19.95
N Left	1072	633	1053	1225	1512	1035
N Right	838	522	821	914	1088	807

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in turnout in municipality i between municipal elections at t and $t+1$. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A17: Alternative Explanations: Far-Right Success and Left-Wing Performance in the Next Election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	-1.137	-1.177	-1.539	-.950	-1.330	-.821
	(1.632)	(1.818)	(2.045)	(2.139)	(2.473)	(2.493)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1736	1326	2191	1940	2579	2450
Bandwidth	17.37	13.49	23.06	20.92	28.39	28.09
N Left	972	734	1241	1096	1496	1427
N Right	764	592	950	844	1083	1023

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the total vote share of left-wing lists competing in municipality i between municipal elections at t and $t+1$. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A18: Placebo with Lagged Outcome, All Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right	-.018	.006	.012	.050*	.036	.036
Victory	(.021)	(.022)	(.025)	(.028)	(.030)	(.032)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	697	631	848	685	979	642
Bandwidth	16.03	14.22	20.02	15.90	23.71	14.49
N Left	409	365	500	400	592	371
N Right	288	266	348	285	387	271

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term $t-1$, i.e., the one prior to the onset of the mayor in office at term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A19: Placebo with Lagged Outcome, Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.015 (.018)	.019 (.018)	.019 (.021)	.021 (.020)	.021 (.022)	.004 (.025)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	677	667	954	876	1241	608
Bandwidth	15.29	15.27	23.00	21.17	32.11	13.68
N Left	398	390	572	519	793	352
N Right	279	277	382	357	448	256

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term $t-1$, i.e., the one prior to the onset of the mayor in office at term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

Table A20: Robustness to Dependent Variable as Percentage Change, All Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.135*** (.044)	.180*** (.049)	.156*** (.057)	.165*** (.056)	.158** (.062)	.169** (.071)
Mean Depvar[a]	.221	.225	.227	.229	.225	.226
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Effective N	1034	822	1222	1266	1646	1090
Bandwidth	14.85	12.12	17.94	19.43	26.03	16.57
N Left	577	444	688	716	957	609
N Right	457	378	534	550	689	481

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the percentage change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A21: Robustness to Dependent Variable
as Percentage Change, Social Welfare Associations

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.156*** (.050)	.194*** (.051)	.169*** (.058)	.223*** (.067)	.165*** (.062)	.193** (.077)
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Mean Depvar[a]	.225	.221	.221	.226	.213	.225
Bandwidth	12.10	10.21	18.18	10.78	27.95	12.60
Effective N	806	673	1161	706	1636	812
N Left	433	356	641	375	934	435
N Right	373	317	520	331	702	377

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the percentage change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A22: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Volunteering Associations, Controlling for Incumbency and Alignment of Mayor and Regional President

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right	.081***	.065***	.074***	.073***	.075***	.091***
	(.018)	(.017)	(.021)	(.021)	(.023)	(.026)
Mean Depvar[a]	.059	.059	.059	.060	.055	.058
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Bandwidth	12.13	13.16	17.43	17.17	26.91	19.35
Effective N	910	961	1267	1220	1791	1350
N Left	498	532	720	690	1060	768
N Right	412	429	547	530	731	582

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects, and control for an indicator equal to 1 if the current mayor was the incumbent candidate at the last election, and an indicator equal to 1 if the current mayor has the same political ideology as the regional president. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A23: The Effect of Far-Right Victories on Social Welfare Associations, Controlling for Incumbency and Alignment of Mayor and Regional President

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right Victory	.059*** (.016)	.055*** (.016)	.067*** (.019)	.069*** (.019)	.064*** (.020)	.081*** (.024)
Mean Depvar[a]	.059	.060	.059	.059	.054	.059
Polyn. Order	First	First	Second	Second	Third	Third
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Bandwidth	13.91	12.98	18.89	16.47	28.37	19.16
Effective N	1,030	949	1,353	1,166	1,858	1,341
N Left	572	524	770	655	1,108	764
N Right	458	425	583	511	750	577

Notes: Bias-corrected RD estimates with robust variance estimator (Calonico et al., 2014). In all columns, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. All regressions include election-year and province fixed effects, and control for an indicator equal to 1 if the current mayor was the incumbent candidate at the last election, and an indicator equal to 1 if the current mayor has the same political ideology as the regional president. Previous mayor controls: Age, gender, and level of education. Municipality controls: Log of longitude, latitude, and elevation; indicator for provincial capital, log of distance from regional capital, log of population and of surface in squared kms, log number of foreign residents per 100 inhabitants, average age, % people with secondary education, unemployment rate, % people employed in agriculture, size of the municipal council, size of the municipal executive, turnout and share of the center-right coalition in the most recent general election, and an indicator for whether a runoff was held to elect the mayor. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipal level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1. [a]Mean of dependent variable for observations to the left of the RDD cutoff and within the selected optimal bandwidth.

Table A24: Summary Statistics, ITANES Sample

Variable	Mean	SD
Volunteers in Social Welfare	.07	.25
Left-Leaning	.54	.50
Pro-Immigration	.42	.49
Has High-School Diploma	.45	.50
Male	.50	.50
Married	.59	.49
Age	49.60	17.32

Notes: Observations are at the individual respondent level. Interviews are from 4 different waves: 2001, 2006, 2008, and 2013.

Table A25: Far-Right Mayor and
Polarization of Attitudes on Immigration and Politics

	Immigration Attitudes			*Political Attitudes*		
	Polarized	Strong Favor	Strong Against	Polarized	Strong Left	Strong Right
Far-Right	-.021	-.002	.014	.030	.049*	-.019
	(.028)	(.022)	(.020)	(.034)	(.027)	(.023)
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	8,800	8,800	8,800	8,573	8,573	8,573

Notes: For immigration attitudes, respondents are defined as "polarized" if their combined immigration score is smaller or equal than 3 or greater or equal than 7. Respondents are defined strongly in favor of immigration if their combined immigration score is smaller or equal than 3. Respondents are defined strongly against immigration if their combined immigration score is greater or equal than 7. For political attitudes, respondents are defined as "polarized" if their self-placement on the left-right scale is smaller or equal than 3 or greater or equal than 8. Respondents are defined strongly left-wing if their self-placement on the left-right scale is smaller or equal than 3. Respondents are defined strongly right-wing if their self-placement on the left-right scale is greater or equal than 8. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

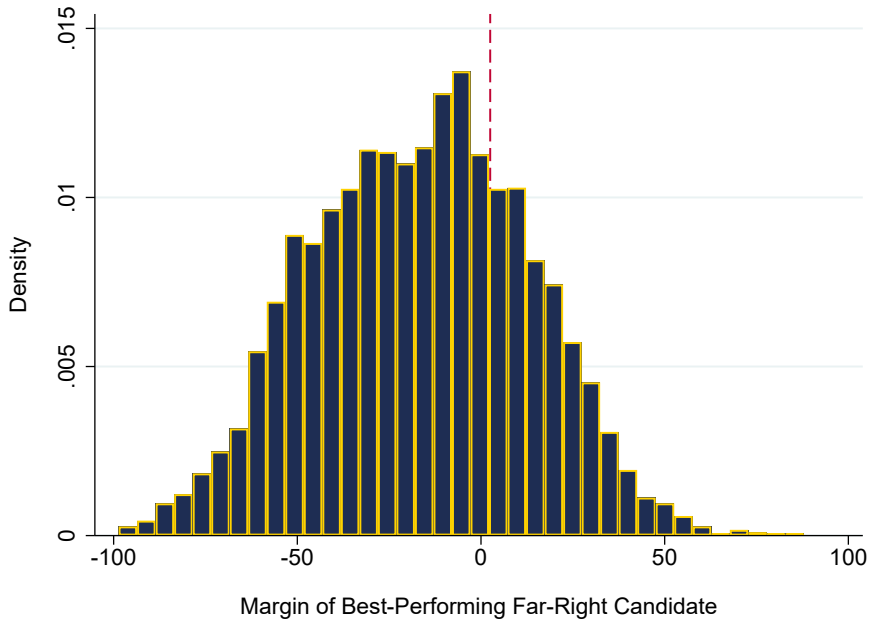
Table A26: Far-Right Mayor and Propensity to Volunteer in Social Welfare OdV, by Ideology

	Left-Leaning Respondents			*Right-Leaning Respondents*		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Far-Right	.057***	.058***	.053***	.014	.015	.012
	(.018)	(.018)	(.018)	(.022)	(.022)	(.019)
Municipality FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respond. Controls	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Municip. Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Observations	4,649	4,640	4,441	3,877	3,866	3,698

Notes: In all columns, the dependent variable is an indicator for respondent i declaring to be a participant or member into a volunteering association in the social welfare sector. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level in parentheses. *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1.

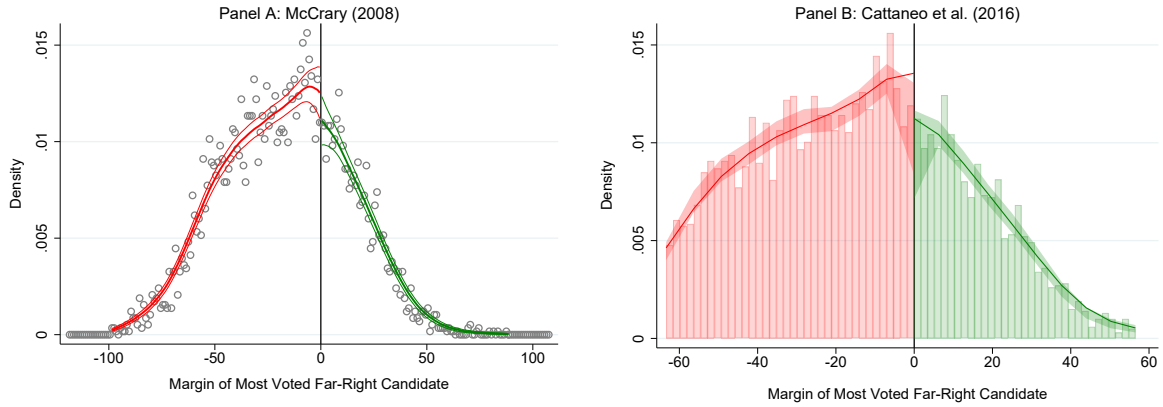
Additional Figures

Figure A1: Histogram of Far-Right Margin of Victory



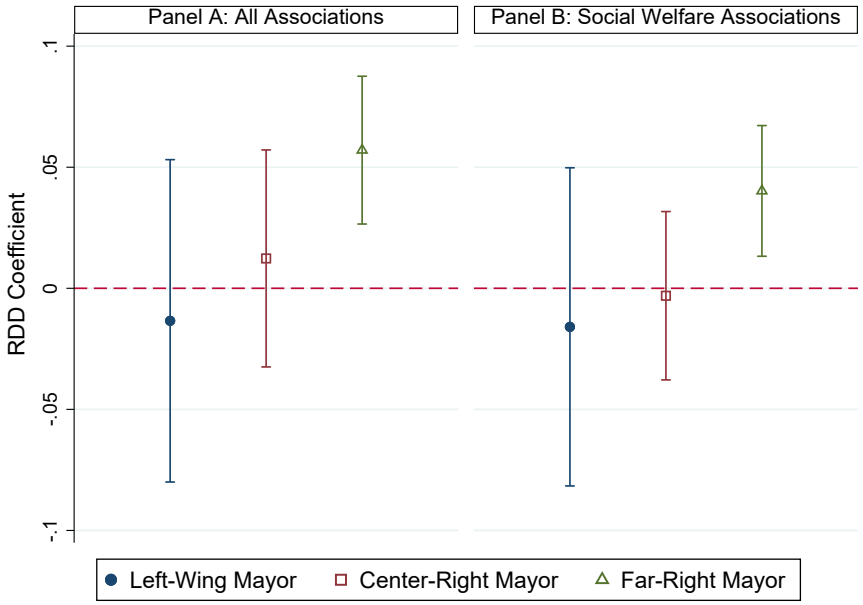
Notes: The height of each bar represents the density of the margin of victory of the best-performing candidate supported by the far right for the corresponding bin.

Figure A2: Tests of No-Sorting Assumption



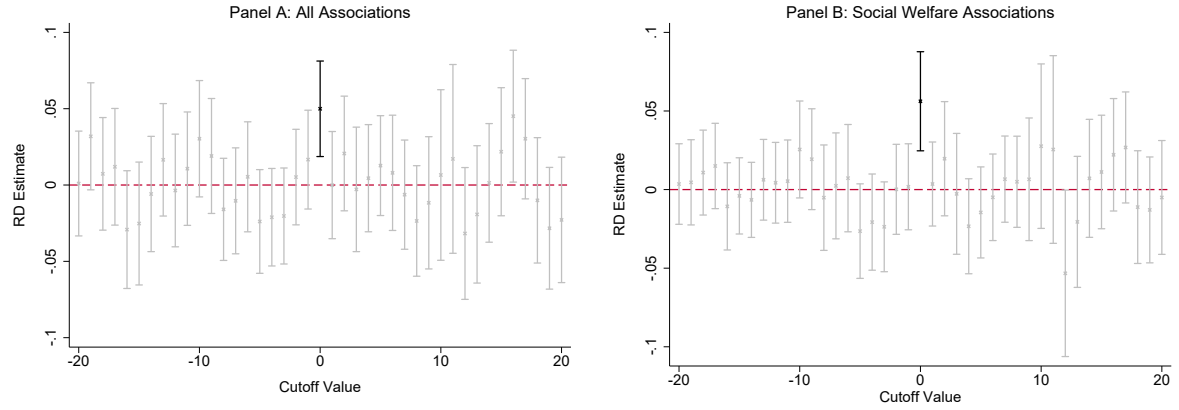
Notes: In Panel A, each dot represents the density of the margin of victory of the best-performing candidate supported by the far right for the corresponding bin. In Panel B, the height of each bar represents the density of the margin of victory of the best-performing candidate supported by the far right for the corresponding bin. In each panel, the curves represent kernel approximations of the density, fitted separately on each side of the cutoff, with the relative 95% confidence intervals.

Figure A3: Winning Mayor's Ideology and Change in Municipal OdV



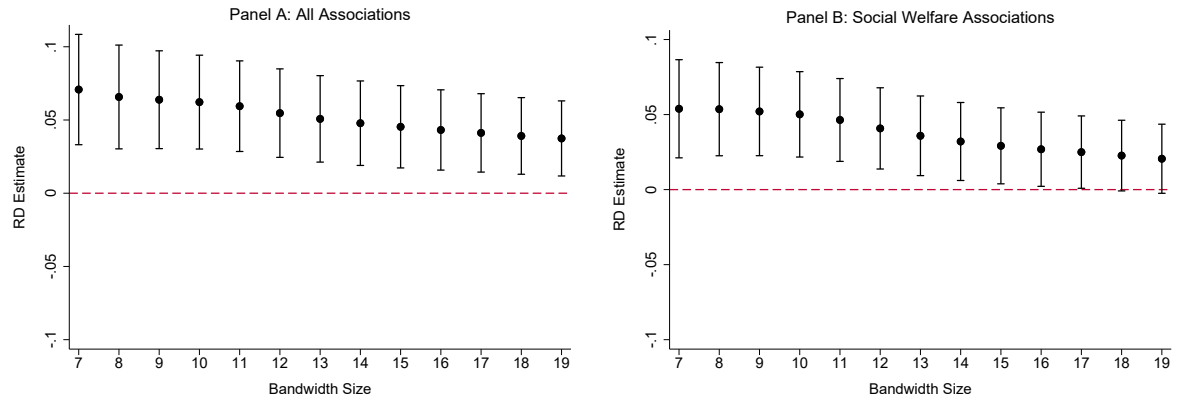
Notes: Both panels plot estimates of the RDD coefficient for electing a left-wing, center-right, and far-right mayor. In Panel A, the dependent variable is the change in the number of OdV per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i over a mayoral term. In Panel B, the dependent variable is the change in the number of OdV in the social welfare sector per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i over a mayoral term. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level.

Figure A4: Placebo Test, Irrelevant Cutoffs of Running Variable



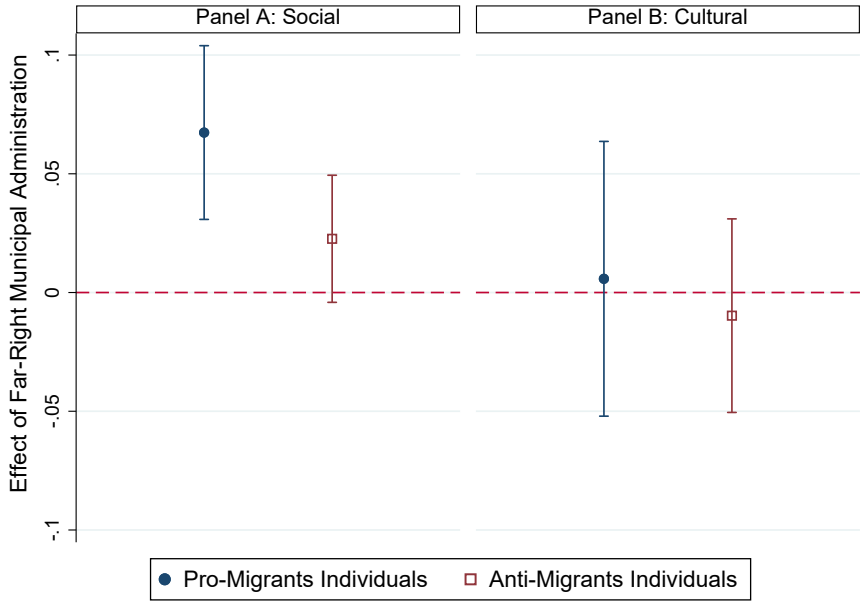
Notes: Each cross represents one RD estimate from fitting Equation (1) with the full set of controls, using the cutoffs for the running variable (margin of far-right candidate) indicated on the horizontal axis. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust, bias-corrected standard errors clustered at the municipality level. In Panel A, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. In Panel B, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. In each panel, the black estimate refers to the real cutoff of 0. Thus, for Panel A it corresponds to the first estimate of column (2) of Table 1, whereas for Panel B it corresponds to the first estimate of column (2) of Table A13.

Figure A5: Robustness to the Use of Alternative RDD Bandwidths



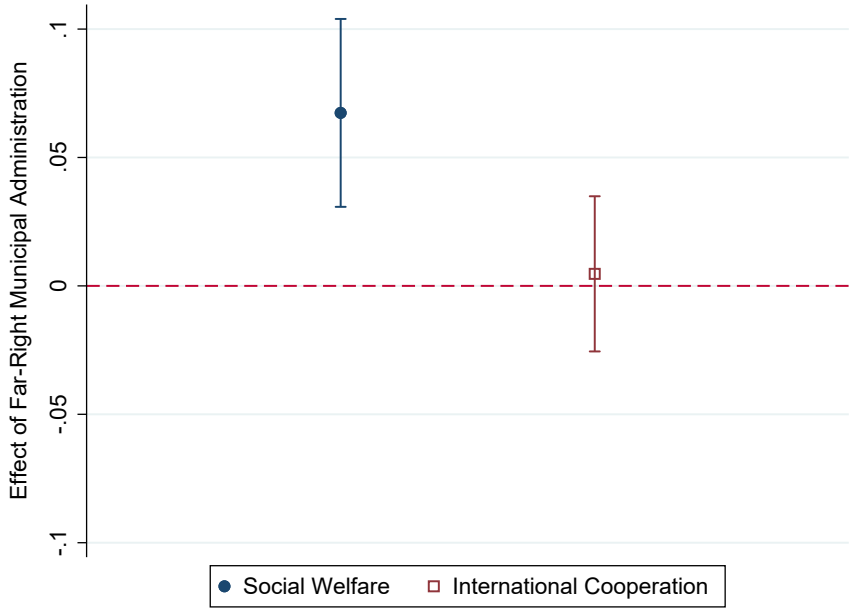
Notes: Each dot represents one RD estimate from fitting Equation (1), using a bandwidth (on each side of the cutoff) of the size indicated on the horizontal axis. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level. In Panel A, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t. In Panel B, the dependent variable is the change in the number of volunteering associations operating in social welfare per 1,000 inhabitants in municipality i during term t.

Figure A6: Individual-Level Effect of Far-Right Victories on Propensity to Volunteer in Different Associations, by Respondent's Attitudes Towards Immigrants



Notes: Both panels plot estimates of coefficient $\hat{\rho}$ from Equation (2). In each panel, the dependent variable is an indicator for respondent i declaring to be a member or participant into a volunteering association of the type specified in the panel's title. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level.

Figure A7: Far-Right Victories and Propensity of Pro-Immigrant Respondents to Serve in Social Welfare vs. International Cooperation Associations



Notes: The coefficients displayed are two separate estimates of $\hat{\rho}$ from Equation (2). The dependent variable is an indicator for respondent i declaring to be a member or participant into a volunteering association of the type specified in the plot's legend. Both coefficients refer only to respondents that declare to see immigration as neither a cultural nor an economic threat. Vertical bars are 95% confidence intervals, based on robust standard errors clustered at the municipality-year level.