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Bachelor thesis

Human geography and planning

The relationship between populist radical right voting and residence in proximity to refugee centres in the Netherlands.

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Abstract

Recent studies have shown how the location of a refugee centre might have an impact on the voting behaviour of nearby neighbourhoods. This study explains how contact theory and the halo effect explain why it is not the people living closest to the refugee centre voting for populist anti-immigrational parties but rather citizens living too far from the refugee centres to experience the effects of immigration and integration. Using a multiple linear regression it is found that all the variables used in the research have a significant impact on voters to vote for an anti-political establishment party. Distance is positively correlated with the percentage of votes populist parties receive in Dutch neighbourhoods.

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1. Introduction

With an ever-rising number of immigrants arriving in Western Europe, because of armed conflicts, climate change, and economic reasons, there is an ever-increasing need for refugee asylums (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, 2021). Simultaneously, a significant increase can be observed in the rise of votes for Anti-Political Establishment Parties (APEP's) (Rooduijn, 2019). Because grievances in migration policies are a main consideration for many voters to vote for APEP's (Ivarsflaten, 2008) and citizens' voting is 34% influenced by migration (KANTAR, 2019) questions arise about whether the two are correlated. In this research, voting behaviour in proximity to refugee asylum centres in The Netherlands is measured. This is because the people living close to asylum centres are the ones who notice an increase in refugees and its consequences in their daily lives. Both groups share amenities and are likely to have a strong opinion on the policies and decision's made by politicians with regard to immigration. As a result, a change in votes for parties that put emphasis on immigration policies might be significantly different in these areas.

The concepts of group threat, contact theory, and halo theory are used to explain possible reasons as to why there is an increase in votes for APEP's in neighbourhoods that are far away from refugee centres. Data from over 10 million votes from over 10 thousand polling stations have been used to see if there is a correlation between the distance from a polling station to the closest refugee centre. Different scholars have found conflicting evidence for such a correlation. In Germany, Denmark, and Italy, researchers found that immigration might be positively correlated with an increase in APEP votes (Stecker & Debus, 2019; Barone et al., 2016; Otto & Steinhardt, 2014; Dustmann et al., 2018; Bratti et al., 2017). However, this is not in line with the contact theory (Allport, 1954) that suggests that frequent and close contact with refugees should dampen prejudices and create a more positive attitude towards these groups. His theory explains that support for anti-immigration parties should decrease in neighbourhoods close to refugee centres. This has been observed in Austria (Steinmayr, 2016) and opens the possibility that the effect that was found in Germany, Denmark, and Italy was actually the halo effect. Furthermore, most researchers who found an increase in APEP votes in high-immigration areas looked at general immigration numbers rather than the increase in actual refugees. Another possibility is that these researchers based their results on the presence of temporary or relatively new refugee shelters. Therefore, meaningful contact between the in- and out-group might not yet have taken place.

This research differs from research done before because it uses voting data from the Netherlands which is a highly urbanized country. Most researchers agree that urban areas are the least likely to change voting patterns due to the presence of a refugee centre (Barone et al. 2016; Dustman et al., 2018). Furthermore, this paper looks only at the existence of refugees in an area rather than the total number of immigrants. Additionally, the exact distance between a polling station and a refugee centre is calculated rather than the distance between a municipality with a refugee centre and one without. This avoids part of the aggregation bias that comes with researching phenomena on a municipality scale.

This paper does not only answer whether such a correlation exists by using large-scale national data sets but can also give insights into regional differences. Additionally, policymakers could use the results to improve regional or national policies. This paper answers the following main research question:

What is the influence of the distance voters live from a refugee centre on voting preferences towards populist parties?

By reviewing the existing literature, it is defined what characteristics constitute an anti-political establishment party. Furthermore, it is important to answer how living near an asylum centre and interacting with refugees might shape or dismantle prejudices.

Lastly, if a correlation between different characteristics of a municipality and a tendency to vote for APEP's exists. It is important to understand how substantial this correlation is. This correlation and the questions that arise are answered by conducting a quantitative research method.

Thesis outline

The first chapter of this research has provided a brief introduction to the research question and methods. The second chapter provides further elaboration on the subject, important theories, and concepts found in other literature. This lays out the framework for this thesis and is used for making a hypothesis. The next chapter, the methodology, discusses how the hypothesis is tested and how the data is ethically used. The methodology is used to realise the results found in chapter four. The results are discussed and conclusions are made in chapter six. Chapter seven shows a list of the literature that was used to structure the paper and is followed by the appendix. The appendix includes code and several models that have been used to gather data and conclusions.

2. Literature

2.1 Defining Anti-Political Establishment Party (APEP)

One strand of political parties that have gained in popularity is the so-called anti-political establishment party. By using Schedler's (1996) definitions Abedi (2004) created three criteria a political party must meet to be characterized as an APEP. First, the party must identify itself as a challenger of the political governing instance. Secondly, the party insists an essential difference exists between the political establishment and 'the common people'. Lastly, the APEP challenges significant political- and policy issues. Three currently existing Dutch political parties follow these criteria: the far left Socialistische Partij (SP) and the far right Partij Voor de Vrijheid (PVV) and Forum voor Democratie (FvD) (Rooduijn et al., 2019). Because the SP is not considered as an anti-immigration party to the extent the others are, only the votes for the PVV and FvD will be used in this research because no significant result is expected from the SP.

Anti-political establishment parties create a feeling of an 'us' vs. 'them'; 'the people' against 'the elite' or 'workers vs. the bourgeoisie' (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Thereby exploiting a long-existing theory about existing prejudice and bias against out-groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The separation between the United Kingdom and the European Union shows how APEP's can have a major impact on political geopolitical events even without being in a coalition (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Even without being in a coalition, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) asked for a referendum for Britain to leave the European Union. Whilst only getting 1 seat in the 2015 elections UKIP's referendum received a majority vote and history was made.

2.2 Causes of rising APEP's

Citizens have many different motives for voting for an anti-political establishment party. Many theories, however, suggest that there is a large overarching theme of citizens being discontent with current circumstances (Norris, 2005; Lubbers et al., 2002; Rooduijn et al., 2016). They are either

discontent with certain policies implemented by the national political establishment or the ruling establishment itself.

A few of the factors are described and tested in this paper. However, it is important to note that there are many factors at play and it is not necessarily as black-and-white as suggested in the results. It is known that underlying motivations have a considerable effect on APEP voting. People do not vote APEP because they are male or have lower education, but rather because they have underlying principles that may correspond with their age, or gender (Koeppen et al., 2021).

The factors explaining the success of APEP's can be categorized into three groups (Norris, 2005). The first category is the demand side of public opinion. For example, unsatisfied citizens are displeased with policies implemented by the establishment. The second category is the supply side of the party strategies. Thus, the charismatic populist leaders promise to change and revolt against the establishment (Kitschelt & McGann, 1995). The last factor can be attributed to the rules regulating the political market for fair competition (Lijphart, 1994).

One argument for the supply side factor of the increasing success of APEP's is when feeling threatened, groups or individuals look for authoritarian leaders who promise to protect them against the out-group immigrants or progressive cultures threatening resources and cultural backlash (Inglehart, 2016). Populists have used evidence of growing inequality to argue that the promises of economic or social prosperity, made by traditional establishment parties, are failing (Jay et al., 2019). Populist ideology has increased this way because populist leaders are tapping into the fears of the citizens exacerbated by any witnessed inequality. Their arguments are especially appealing to a far-right audience because they use a non-existing, secure ethnically homogenous definition of national identity (Jay et al., 2019).

The two main theories that explain support for APEP's on the demand-side centre around rising social and economic inequality of the people who have been left behind by globalization. The working class that is most likely to lose their job, and economic and social space in society, because of automatization, a growing importance of human and intellectual capital, and the increasing integration of E.U. policies and legislations (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). This makes the people in this current seemingly descending situation susceptible to anti-immigration, anti-EU, and anti-establishment promises of an old nostalgic life where current day issues seemed non-existing.

The economic inequality theory explains that people throughout history verged towards populistic parties because of fear of this socioeconomic decline (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). It suggests that this fear exists especially in middle-class societies. Among small entrepreneurs, independent farmers, and others that are threatened by the expanding capital from large corporations (Lipset, 1960).

Additionally, the cultural backlash theory argues that the demand for APEP's increases not solely because of socioeconomic reasons but also as a reaction to fast progressive cultural changes. Older generations oppose cultural changes, partially introduced by immigrants, and the replacements of outdated traditions fearing it will change other aspects of their daily life, norms, and values (Wright & Inglehart, 1991). These older generations, who grew up in affluent Western welfare states, are gradually replacing their parents and grandparents who grew up in more uncertain times. Parents who grew up in times of two world wars are now outlived by their children who have not experienced such hardships. Growing up with high levels of insecurity is proven to make a person more open-minded and tolerant. They are more likely to trust and accept diversity (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Norris & Inglehart, 2011).

These traditional values are generally held more firmly by men, because progressive feminist social norms are increasing. Which has an impact on other traditional cultural norms and values too (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). However, there is not a large body of work proving that gender has a significant influence on voting behaviour in favour of APEP's. Nonetheless, men are predominantly present in Dutch APEP parties on the ballot papers. Out of the 25 APEP parliament members, 20 members are male. This is not explained by the fact that Dutch politics are generally dominated by men because for all other parties combined 43 per cent of all parliament members are female. There is a 23 per cent difference in the number of female members between populist and other parties (Tweede Kamer, 2021). This could have an impact on people voting for these parties based on gender.

According to Inglehart and Norris (2016), a combination of both the economic inequality and cultural backlash theory is likely to have an impact on the demand side of the growing APEP support. This feeling amongst citizens is strengthened because people identify with other ideas of the populist parties they support. They become more critical and less trusting towards the ideas and policies of establishment parties and more favourable towards populist opinions they did not have earlier (Lubbers et al., 2002). On the other hand, income might surprisingly be negatively correlated. Inglehart and Norris (2016) suggest that people who have an above-average income are more likely to vote APEP's than the people who have the lowest income and discontent is fed by a fear of disappearing cultural norms and values. However, it is important to note that total income is not always directly correlated with discontent. As long as basic needs are met a person with a low income is not necessarily more discontent, but it is rather a change in relative income changes that can have an effect on someone's perception of discontent (Kaun, E., 2005).

In general, people with lower education tend to have aligning principles that allow them to agree with these populist ideas (Anduiza, 2018). Because citizens with a lower level of education are more likely to identify themselves as 'the people'. People with fewer resources are more likely to identify with a homogeneous group comprised of 'ordinary men', as opposed to richer people with higher education with access to more resources (Aslanidis, 2016). This is partially in contradiction with the findings from Inglehart and Norris (2016) who suggested that it would be more likely for richer people to vote APEP. Furthermore, people with less wealth or education are more attracted to the simplistic messages conveyed by APEP's (Bischof and Senninger, 2018). This aligns with the idea that the traditional establishment parties cannot keep promises that are not directly noticeable in practice and therefore are failing. Because these promises can be wordy or hard to grasp and agreeing with populist ideas can help to make sense of politics, lower-educated people are stimulated to engage more with politics (Marx & Nguyen, 2018). Political participation is further increased in neighbourhoods where the average educational level and income is lower because these areas are the focus of populist, political campaigns (Hakhverdian et al., 2012).

2.3 Group threat theory

The phenomenon where a majority in society is felt threatened by a growing minority, seemingly competing for resources, is a long-existing theory called the 'group threat hypothesis' (Blalock 1957; Williams, 1964). The perceived competition reinforces the feeling of in-group identity and increases repugnance towards the competing out-group (Dülmer & Ohr 2008). Immigrants are seen as such a threat as they compete for social rent, welfare benefits and jobs requiring lower education (Halla et al. 2017). The feeling of group threat is highly influenced by the media when confronting citizens with the topic of immigration (Valentino &Nardis, 2013).

Hence why not only economic status is an important factor because both well-off and economically less fortunate voters choose for APEP's if their in-group is exposed to changes (Bergmann et al., 2017).

Even though group threat undoubtedly influences APEP voting, it cannot be the only factor. Lubbers et al. (2002), found that even though anti-immigrant perspectives are very consistent throughout Europe, representative votes are not. This indicates that the characteristics of the APEP are crucial as well. Furthermore, people who already have negative feelings towards immigrants have a higher probability to vote for an APEP as the political salience of immigration increases (Valdez, 2014). This explains why APEP's are more popular in specific areas, especially in countries in north-western Europe compared to other European countries, even though negative feelings towards immigrants are equal. Research showed that political salience and votes for APEP's increased in areas where immigrants are visible in day-to-day activities (Valdez, 2014). This supports the hypothesis that APEP votes are higher in voting districts close to refugee asylums.

However, economic or cultural inequality is found to reduce social cohesion and increase feelings of group threat (Kinnval, 2004). People tend to identify more with their in-group to provide a stronger sense of physical security with further segregation as a result (Jay, 2019). This creates a negative feedback loop where because people identify more with their peers, negative feelings towards other groups increase and they identify more and more with different characteristics of their own group.

This is amplified by the assumption that threatening actions towards others who share the same in-group have consequences for individuals who are not affected by the threat themselves (Branscombe et al., 2002).

2.4 Contact theory & halo effect

Contact theory suggests that prejudice between groups will decrease when these groups interact where both parties have equal status and work towards a common goal (Allport, 1954). Meaningful interactions between groups could be one of the most effective ways to decrease discrimination, stereotyping, and prejudices if the out-group member is perceived as a representative of their group, or the interactions are intimate enough for individual traits to suppress group identity (Miller & Brewer, 1984). Alternatively, intergroup indifferences can be reduced if an overarching identity that both groups share is presented (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Once prejudices are reduced, stereotypes and xenophobia towards other out-groups may be reduced even if there has been no contact (Pettigrew, 2009)

Living close but not next to ethnically heterogeneous neighbourhoods has been proven to increase anti-immigrant voting in Sweden (Van der Waal et al., 2013). Rydgrer and Ruth (2013) attribute this difference to the imagination people have of these immigrants instead of the actual experience they have. These perceived images are prone to be influenced by populist anti-immigration speeches because, regardless that it might not be epistemologically justified, the decisive factor is the extent to which a voter believes that immigration has an impact on their social situation (Golder, 2003).

Related to the contact theory is the halo effect. This theory could explain why it is not the people living closest to refugee asylums voting for APEP's, but the people in the neighbouring towns (Rydgren & Ruth, 2013). Voters fear the unknown and feel group threat because of insufficient direct contact with the immigrants (Kestilä & Söderlund, 2007).

4. Methodology

4.1 Variables

Five variables are used in a multiple linear regression (MLR). The formula for the model can be found in formula 1. A MLR is used because it is the most suitable test to calculate a mathematical relationship among different variables.

To calculate which variables have an influence on the percentage of APEP votes in an area it is important to know how large the percentage of APEP **votes** is at a polling station in the first place. Data on every polling station is gathered from Kiesraad (2021). Only the votes on the PVV and FvD will be used because those are the only political parties defined as anti-immigrational APEP by Rooduijn et al. (2019) which is adopted for this research. The votes for these two parties are combined and divided by the total number of votes at that specific polling station to calculate a percentage of APEP votes for every polling station. Votes cast by mail have all been deleted because they were not connected to the postal codes of the people who cast these votes. The code used for deleting all the data that is discarded, combining the APEP votes and calculating percentages is found in Appendix A. Votes casted at polling stations with the same postal codes were added together with the help of ArcGIS Pro. The percentage of votes per polling station was used as the dependent variable for the statistical test.

The percentage of APEP per area is mapped in ArcGIS Pro with gradient colours matching the percentage of votes. The result is a map with both the location of asylum centres in the Netherlands and all polling stations or neighbourhoods that are used for the research, coloured according to votes for the two APEP's (Figure 1).

Data on the distance from a polling station to the closest refugee centre gives an answer to the main research question because the percentage of APEP votes for every polling station is now known. The distance from a polling station to the closest refugee centre can give an idea of the presence of both the contact and halo theory. If people living further away from a refugee centre tend to vote APEP more often than people living close by, both theories could be having an effect. The distance between every polling station and the closest refugee centre is computed with the help of ArcGIS Pro. A map is made with the location of all the refugee centres and voting stations in the Netherlands and put in an Excel file to be used for the statistical test.

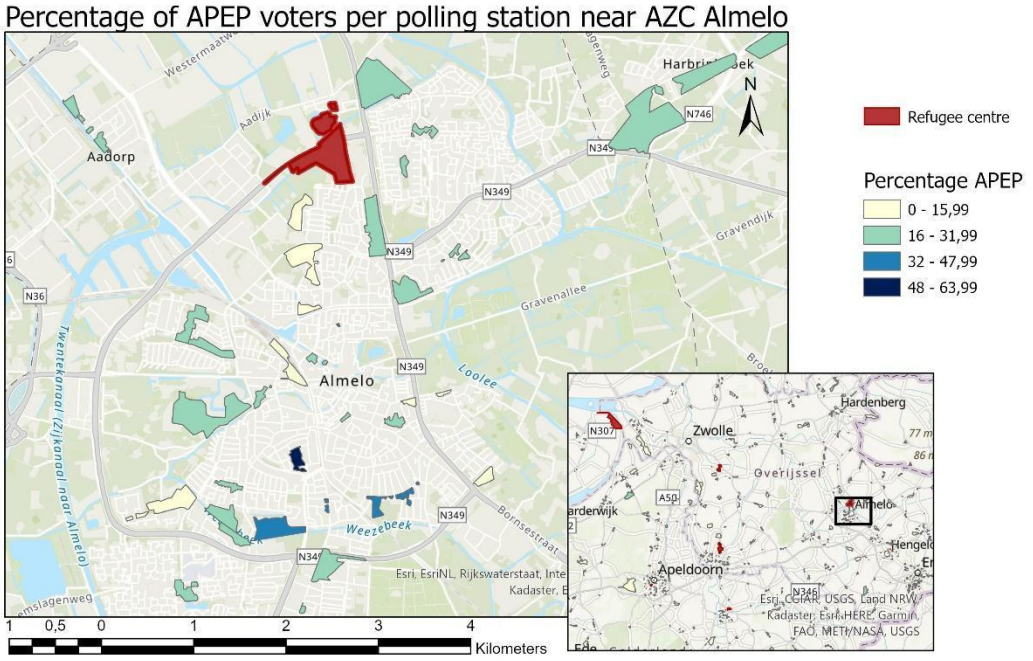

Figure 1. Percentage of APEP votes per polling station near refugee centre Almelo (Data: CBS, 2021)

It has been established that age could be an important push factor on the demand side of someone's motives to vote for an APEP (Wright & Inglehart, 1991). Older generations fear aspects of their daily life, norms, and values will be changed when other cultures are introduced. However, because the oldest living generation has been brought up in uncertain times, they are more open-minded and tolerant. Therefore, it is expected that suport for APEP's is highest among the age group of 45-64. Data on this age group per municipality has been gathered from Statistics Netherlands. Afterwards, in every municipality, the amount of people in this age group is divided by the total number of people to calculate the percentage of people aged 45-64 per municipality. The percentage is used in the MLR to calculate whether the number of people aged 45-64 has an influence on the percentage of APEP votes.

Income could be another important push factor on the demand side for APEP-vote motives. People who have an above-average income are more likely to vote APEP's than people who have the lowest income (Inglehart and Norris, 2016). However, people with fewer resources are more likely to identify with a homogeneous group of 'ordinary man' (Aslanidis, 2016) which leads to believe that people with lower income would vote for APEP's more.

The data on income has been gathered from Statistics Netherlands and is used as an independent variable in the statistical test. The average income per municipality is added to an ArcGIS map with the location of refugee centres to give an idea of what kind of neighbourhoods refugee centres are typically located (Figure 2). It can be concluded that no refugee centre is located in the municipalities that have the highest income.

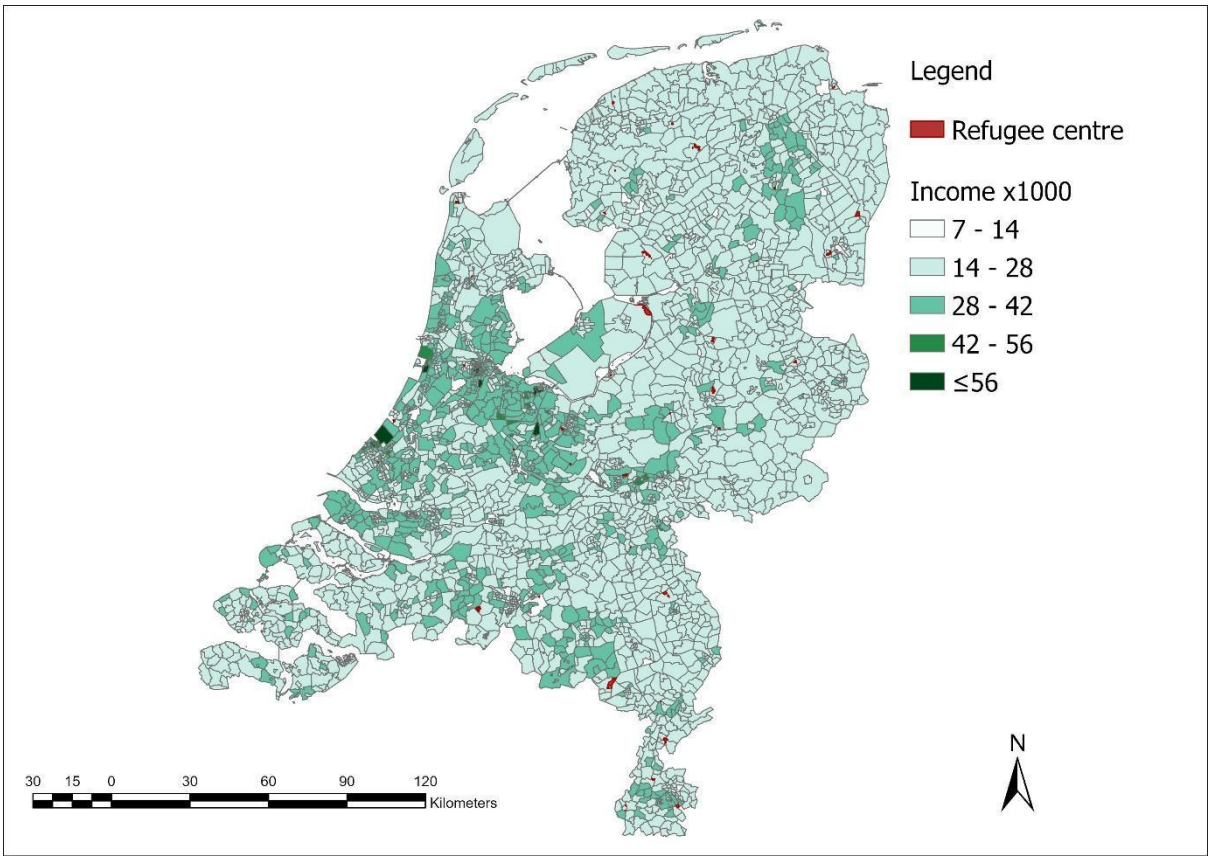

Figure 2: Location of refugee centre and average income per neighbourhood.

Educational level is the last variable that is used. In general, people with lower education tend to have aligning principles that allow them to agree with these populist ideas (Anduiza, 2018). Because citizens with a lower level of education are more likely to identify themselves as 'the people' (Aslanidis, 2016) and are more attracted to the simplistic messages conveyed by APEP's (Bischof and Senninger, 2018).

Recent data on the educational level was only available for Flevoland, Utrecht, North-, and South Holland so the logistic regression has been run twice. The first time all variables were used, however, the sample size was much smaller because only data from four provinces were used. The second time the variable of education has been taken out resulting in an increased sample size. The sample size is increased from 754 neighbourhoods to 2241 neighbourhoods. This makes the results on all other variables more reliable.

If more variables that could have an impact on APEP voting would have been available, the MLR would have included them. For example, is known that changes in income and employment have an impact on life satisfaction which could have an effect on voting preference. Underlying motivations, also, have a considerable effect on APEP voting. People do not necessarily vote APEP because they are male or have a lower education, but rather because they have underlying principles that may correspond with their age, or gender (Koeppen et al., 2021).

4.2 Assumptions MLR

When using a multiple linear regression several assumptions are made. First of all, the relationship

between the independent and dependent variables is required to be linear. A scatterplot for each independent variable has been added to appendix B to prove a linear relationship exists.

Second, the MLR assumes that the errors between the observed and predicted values are normally distributed. A P-P plot has been added to appendix C. The P-P plot shows a normal distribution between the errors.

Thirdly, the MLR requires that there is no multicollinearity in the data. In the Pearson correlation in appendix D**,** it can be concluded that the magnitude of all correlation coefficients is lower than the required 0.8 maximum. The Pearson correlation also shows the strength of the correlation between the independent variables with regard to the dependent variable.

Lastly, the MLR assumes that there is homoscedasticity. Meaning the variance of the dependent variable is the same for all the data. A scatterplot of residuals versus predicted values is shown in appendix E. It can be concluded that there is no clear pattern in the distribution and the data is homoscedastic.

After the MLR, a Pearson correlation is conducted to measure the strength of the correlation between the distance to the closest refugee centre and the percentage of APEP votes in this neighbourhood.

4.3 Ethical considerations

An important ethical aspect of quantitative research is how the data is collected, managed, and stored. This research relies on the use of secondary data that is publicly available and managed by third parties. The parties that collected the data meet the European General Data Protection Regulation and have a plethora of knowledge on the subject. Therefore, it is assumed that caution and confidentiality during the data collection were provided and that the privacy of the respondents was secured.

5. Results

In this section, the results of the MLR are discussed. First, a brief explanation is given of the descriptive statistics. This is followed by an explanation of the model as a whole. Finally, the impact of every separate variable will be discussed on the basis of the calculated coefficients.

5.1 Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics can be found in Table 1. Data from 754 neighbourhoods has been used in the MLR. In an average neighbourhood, 15.53 per cent of the people voted for an APEP, 28.71 per cent of the people are low-educated, the average income is 28.71 thousand euros, 49.55 per cent is male and 27.69 per cent of the people is between the age of 45-64. On average a neighbourhood is 10.65 kilometres away from the closest refugee centre.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
APEP votes	15.53	6.38	754
Distance	10.65	6.27	754
Income	28.71	6.77	754
Education	27.45	8.55	754
Men	49.55	1.93	754
Age 45-64	27.69	4.38	754

5.2 Model summary

The summary of the multiple linear regression can be found in Table 2. The model has a significance of 4.3847E-87. According to the model, 42 per cent of the reasons to vote APEP can be appointed to the independent variables that are used in the MLR. When education is taken out of the regression, only 26.4 per cent of the model is explained by the independent variables. However, the model and the different variables are all still significant. Meaning that the null hypothesis can not be rejected.

Table 2. MLR summary

Model summary				
	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig. F change
With education	0.651	0.424	0.420	0.000
Without education	0.404	0.263	0.261	0.000

5.3 Coefficients

The variable distance (Table 3) has a significance of 0.002. This is less than 0.05 so it has a significant impact on the model. According to this model, it is likely that the distance a polling station is located from a refugee centre has an impact on voters to vote APEP. The variable has a positive coefficient suggesting that the percentage of APEP votes increases if the distance from a refugee centre increases.

Table 3. Coefficients MLR

Coefficients					
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	37.025	3.685		10.048	0.000
Distance	0.147	0.030	0.144	4.898	0.002
Income	-0.663	0.025	-0.487	-26.037	0.000
Men	-0.286	0.074	-0.075	-3.893	0.000
Age 45-64	0.400	0.031	0.250	12.886	0.000
Education	0.265	0.029	0.355	9.256	0.000

Income has a negative coefficient of 0.663. If the average income in a neighbourhood increases the percentage of APEP votes is expected to decrease. The variable has an n the model education is also the variable that correlates the most with the percentage of APEP votes. If the percentage of lower educated people increases by 1 per cent in a neighbourhood, the percentage of APEP voters is expected 0.36. Education has a significance of 2.1997E-19.

Income is negatively correlated with the percentage of APEP voters. For every 1000 euro, the neighbourhood average is increased the average percentage of APEP votes is expected to decrease by 0.45.

Neighbourhoods are expected to have a 0.08 per cent decrease if the number of men increases with 1 percent. Neighbourhoods with many people aged 45 to 60 also are expected to have higher percentages of APEP voters with a 0.25 percentage expected increase of APEP voters per 1 per cent increase. The percentage of male citizens in a neighbourhood has a significance of 1.02E-4 and the amount of people between 45 and 60 1.05E-36 on the model.

6. Discussion

Anti-political establishment parties (APEP's) are political parties that challenge the traditional establishment parties by different means. APEP's insist an essential difference exists between the political establishment, coined as 'the elite', and 'the common people'. Furthermore, an APEP challenges significant political- and policy issues.

APEP's emphasize and enhance feelings of group threat among people prone to their ideas. Group threat occurs when an in-group is challenged for resources by an out-group moving into an area. Refugees can be perceived as an out-group competing for the resources of mainly low-educated, low-income citizens. APEP's focus on the cultural backlash and economic inequalities increases feelings of 'us' vs. 'them'.

Group threat can be countered and relieved by means of contact theory. This theory suggests that people become more inclusive, and tolerant, and are more likely to refrain from stereotyping when meeting out-groups in day-to-day activities. The halo effect is said to have an impact on people who

live further away from places where out-groups go through their daily routines and therefore have an incorrect image of people different from them because they only occasionally meet them. This does not provide sufficient in-depth interactions to let go of their prejudices.

Income, age, educational level, gender, and distance from a refugee centre have all been used to see whether correlations could exist between these variables and the percentage of votes for APEP's.

The model and all variables have a significant effect on APEP voting percentages according to the model. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. A relationship between the different independent variables and voting behaviour could exist. By accepting the null hypothesis we are at risk of making a Type II statistical error of not rejecting a null hypothesis that is false. This is in line with the research done by Steinmayr (2016). As seen in Denmark, refugee centres in the Netherlands might have a negative effect on the number of people who vote for APEP's. This supports the contact theory because frequent and close contact with refugees could dampen prejudices and create a more positive attitude towards asylum seekers (Allport, 1954).

This is opposite from the findings by many other researchers who found that immigration in Italy or Germany made votes for centre-right parties increase (Stecker & Debus, 2019; Barone et al., 2016; Otto & Steinhardt, 2014; Dustmann et al., 2018; Bratti et al., 2017). A possible explanation is that these researchers have had their results influenced by the halo effect. Most research has been done on a fairly large scale and no difference was made between people who live on the edge of a municipality or people living directly next to a refugee centre. The average size of a municipality differs per country and this could have an effect on conclusions based on data retrieved on a municipality scale.

This research is at risk of being influenced by aggregational errors. Information on all independent variables except distance to the refugee centre was only available on a neighbourhood level. This was bigger than initially intended and gave distorted pictures of reality by the means of Simpson's paradox for example. In the Netherlands, every individual has a secret of vote and data on exact addresses cannot be acquired but for more accurate results future researchers could collect extra data from polling stations. In that case, age, gender and educational level can be used on a more precise scale.

Future research could focus more on the halo effect. This research has lacked information on the distance where this effect would be the strongest. Using ArcGIS buffers could be made to see between what distances the percentage of APEP votes is the highest. This would be in a distance too far to interact with refugees on a daily basis but within close enough proximity to see the out-group occasionally without meaningful interactions and have prejudices confirmed.

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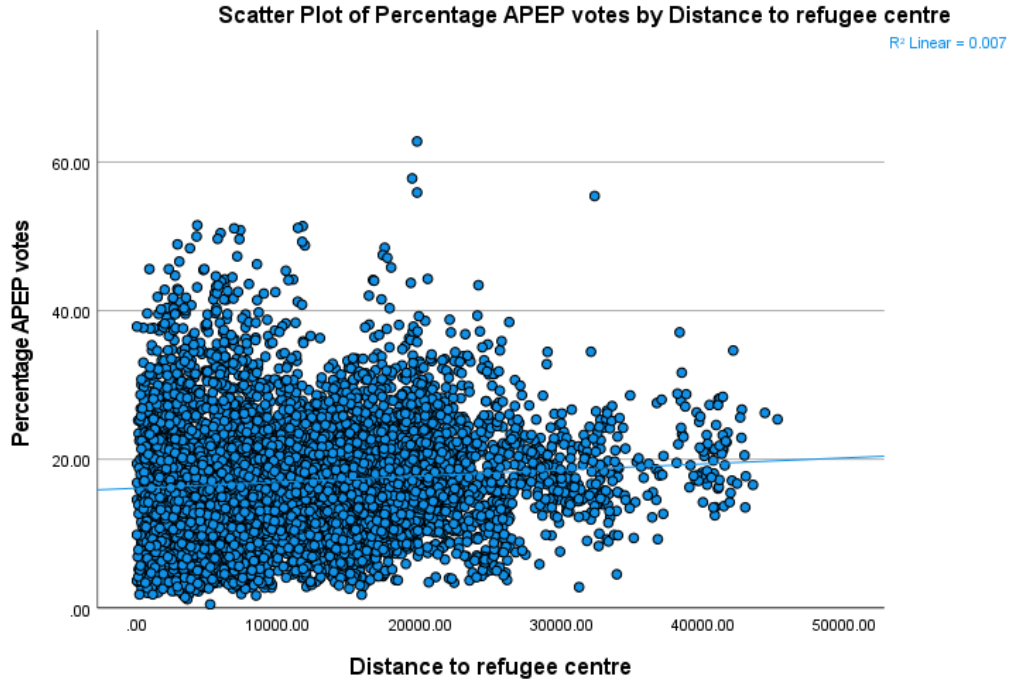
8. Appendix:

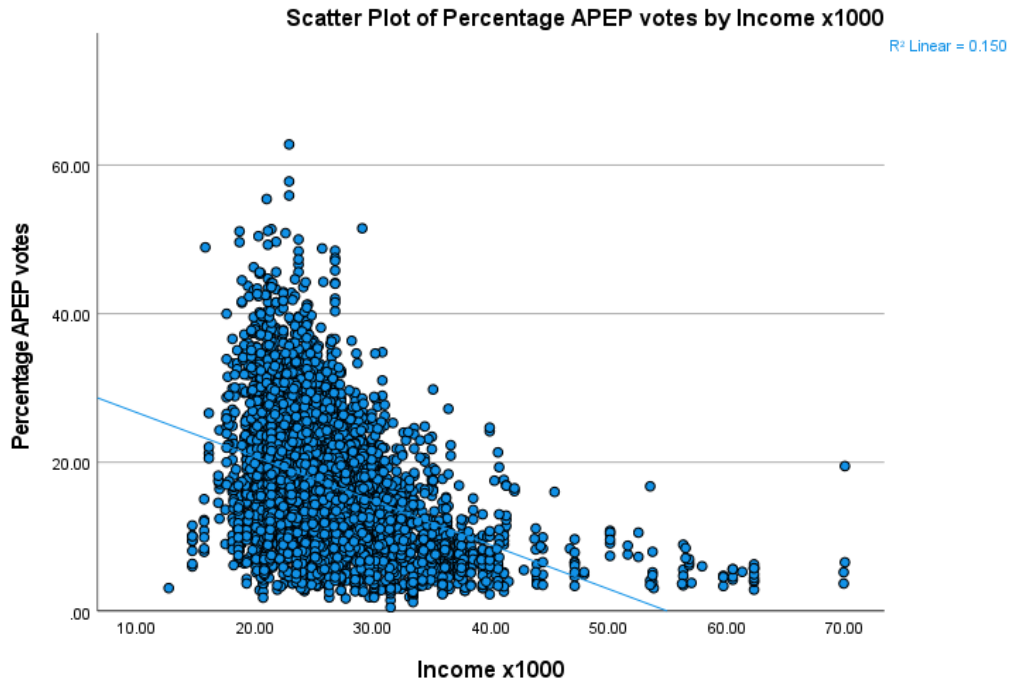
A. Code for deleting, adding postcodes and votes

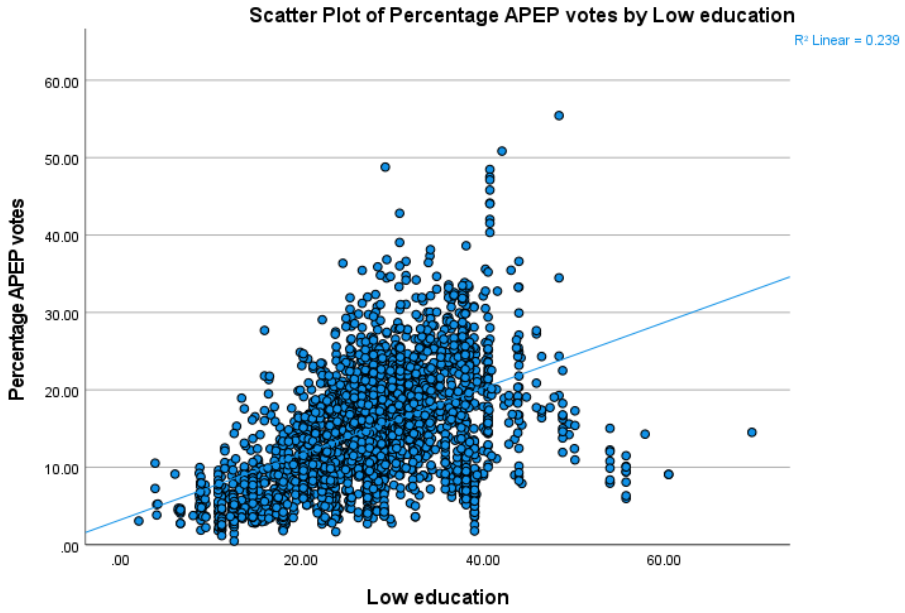
```
install.packages("stringr")
library('stringr')
install.packages("dplyr")
library("dplyr")
install.packages('openxlsx') # Install just once
library(openxlsx)
files <- list.files(path="C:/Users/Michiel/Documents/Michiel/Bachelor eind project/Data/1 Data
        verwerkt apep vote per station", pattern="*.csv", full.names=TRUE, recursive=FALSE)

for(f in 1:length(files)){
 data <- read.csv(files[f], sep=";")

 dropNames <- c("ï..Id", "SchemaVersion", "ns1.TransactionId", "ns1.AuthorityIdentifier", "Id2",
         "ns1.AuthorityAddress", "ns3.CreationDateTime", "Algorithm", "ns1.EventIdentifier",
         "Id3", "ns1.ElectionName", "ns1.ElectionCategory", "ns3.ElectionSubcategory",
         "ns3.ElectionDate", "Id4", "ns1.ContestName", "Id5", "ns1.RejectedVotes",
         "ReasonCode", "ns1.UncountedVotes", "ReasonCode7", "ns3.ElectionSubcategory",
         "ns1.RegisteredName", "ns1.ValidVotes", "Id6", "ns1.Cast", "ns1.TotalCounted",
         "ns1.Cast13", "ns1.RejectedVotes15", "ReasonCode16", "ns1.UncountedVotes17",
        "ReasonCode18",
         "Id8", "Id9", "Id12")
 df = data[,!(names(data) %in% dropNames)]
 #colnames(df)[1:5] = c("Partij", "Geldige Stemmen", "Uitgebrachte Stemmen", "Getelde Stemmen",
        "Postcode")
 df <- df[-which(df$ns1.RegisteredName10 != "PVV (Partij voor de Vrijheid)" &
        df$ns1.RegisteredName10 != "Forum voor Democratie"), ]
 colnames(df)[1:4] = c("Postcode", "Partij", "Stemmen", "Totaal Stemmen")
  x = df$`Totaal Stemmen`[1]
 for (row in 2:nrow(df)){
     if (df$`Totaal Stemmen`[row] != x & df$`Totaal Stemmen`[row] != 0 ){
         x = df$`Totaal Stemmen`[row]
     }else{
       df$`Totaal Stemmen`[row] = 0
     }
 }
 df$Postcode <- str_replace_all(df$Postcode, 'Early voting maandag ', "")
 df$Postcode <- str_replace_all(df$Postcode, 'Early voting dinsdag ', "")

 df = df[,!(names(df) %in% "Partij")]

 df$Stemmen= as.numeric(df$Stemmen)
 df <- aggregate(. ~ Postcode, data=df, FUN=sum)
```

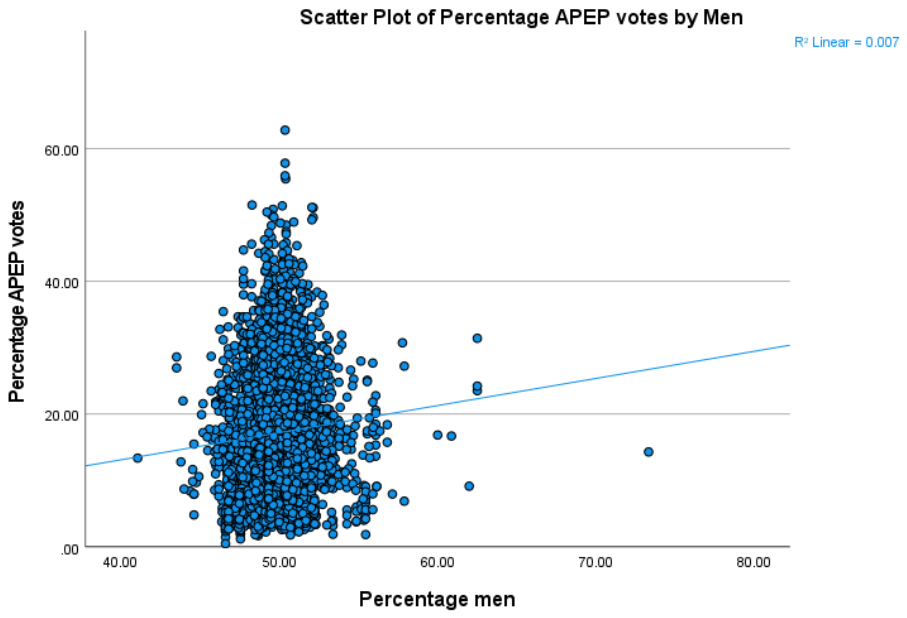
```
 df <- df[!grepl("Briefstembureau",df$Postcode),]
 for (row in 1:nrow(df)){
   df$Postcode[row] = str_trunc(df$Postcode[row], 12, "left")
 }
 df$Postcode <- str_replace_all(df$Postcode, "[^[:alnum:]]", "")
 df <- aggregate(. ~ Postcode, data=df, FUN=sum)
 #Percentage wordt berekend
 for (row in 1:nrow(df)){
   df$Percentage[row] = round(df$Stemmen[row]/df$`Totaal Stemmen`[row]*100, digits = 2)
 }
 fileAppend <- paste(f,".xlsx")
 fileName <- str_replace(files[f], ".csv", fileAppend)
 print(fileName)
 #Data wordt gestopt in nieuwe csv file VERANDER NAAM VOOR ELKE FILE
 write.xlsx(df, fileName)
}
```

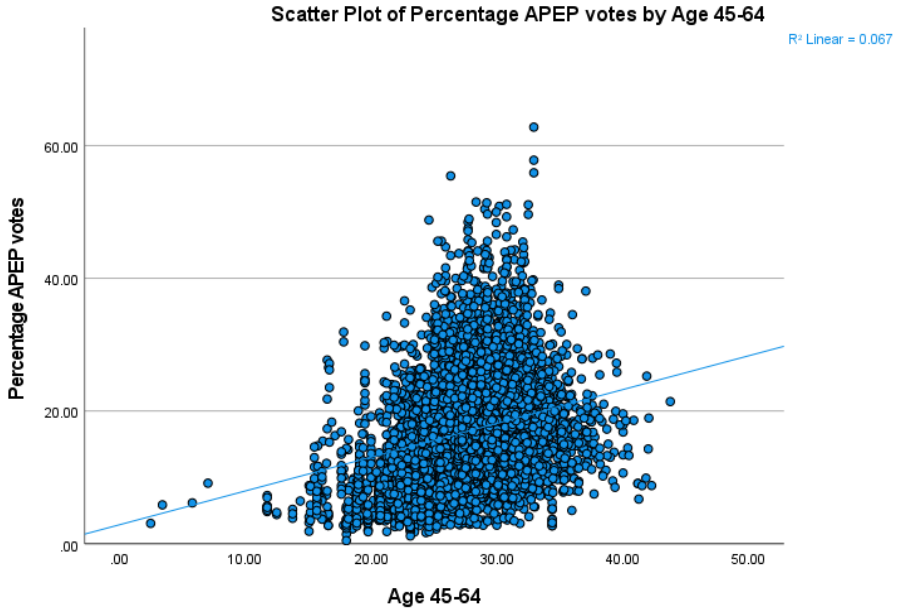
B. Scatter plots showing linearity



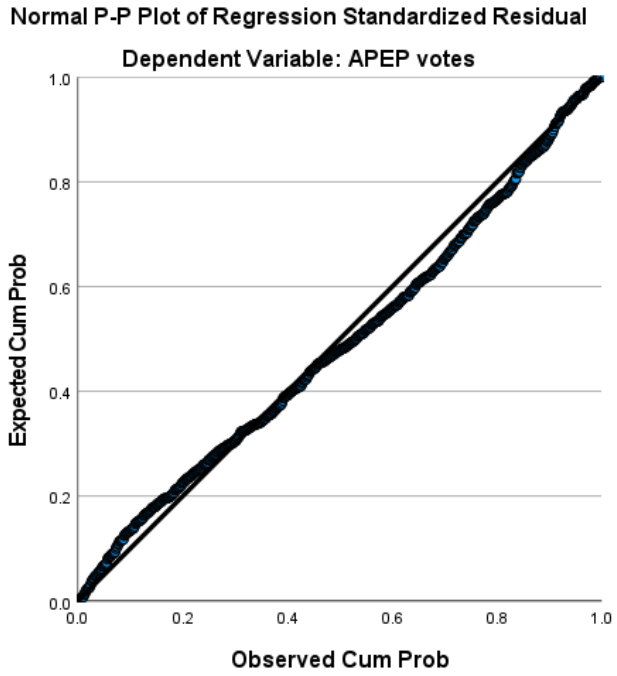

Scatter Plot of Percentage APEP votes by Income x1000
R² Linear = 0.150
Percentage APEP votes
60.00
40.00
20.00
.00
10.00
20.00
30.00
40.00
50.00
60.00
70.00
Income x1000


Scatter Plot of Percentage APEP votes by Low education
R² Linear = 0.239
Percentage APEP votes
60.00
50.00
40.00
30.00
20.00
10.00
.00
.00
20.00
40.00
60.00
Low education


Scatter Plot of Percentage APEP votes by Men
R² Linear = 0.007
Percentage APEP votes
60.00
40.00
20.00
.00
40.00
50.00
60.00
70.00
80.00
Percentage men


Scatter Plot of Percentage APEP votes by Age 45-64
R² Linear = 0.067
Percentage APEP votes
60.00
40.00
20.00
.00
.00
10.00
20.00
30.00
40.00
50.00
Age 45-64

C. P-P plot



D. Pearson's correlation

Correlations

	Per cent APEP votes	Distance to refugee asylum	Income	Low education	Men	Age 45-64
Votes	1.000	0.280	-0.451	0.576	0.012	0.266
Distance	0.280	1.000	-0.046	0.155	0.036	0.317
Income	-0.451	-0.046	1.000	-0.625	-0.054	0.200
Education	0.576	0.155	-0.625	1.000	0.099	0.160
Men	0.012	0.036	-0.054	0.099	1.000	0.055
Age 45-64	0.266	0.317	0.200	0.160	0.055	1.000

E. Scatter plot