

Geographies of Discontent: How Public Service Deprivation Increased Far-Right Support in Italy *

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Abstract

Electoral support for far-right parties is often linked to specific geographies of discontent. We argue that public service deprivation, defined as reduced access to public services at the local level, helps explain these patterns in far-right support. Public service deprivation increases the appeal of far-right parties by making people more worried about immigration and increased competition for public services. We examine our argument using three studies from Italy, home to some of the most electorally successful far-right parties in recent decades. We examine cross-sectional data from municipalities (study 1), exploit a national reform forcing municipalities below a certain population threshold to jointly share local public services (study 2), and explore geo-coded individual-level election survey data (study 3). Our findings suggest that public service deprivation helps us better understand geographic differences in far-right support and the mechanisms underlying them.

Far-right parties and candidates have gained significant vote shares and representation in many countries in recent years.¹ The literature explaining far-right support centers on two sets of factors: (1) material concerns stemming from exposure to globalization, trade shocks or changing labor markets (Ahlquist, Copelovitch, and Walter 2020; Baccini and Sattler 2021; Colantone and Stanig 2018; Dehdari 2022; Gingrich 2019; Walter 2021) and (2) cultural concerns relating to migration shocks or demographic patterns (Dancygier and Laitin 2014; Dinas et al. 2019; Maxwell 2019, 2020; Schaub, Gereke, and Baldassarri 2021) – and the interaction between the two (Ballard-Rosa et al. 2021; Belot 2021; Gidron and Hall 2020). Much less attention has been paid to people’s experiences with public service provision (for recent exceptions related to housing, see Hooijer 2021; Cavaille and Ferwerda 2022).

This lack of scholarly attention is surprising for two reasons. First, access to local public services gives people both material resources (such as access to health care, schooling, transport or garbage collection) and communal benefits, by defining the boundaries of political community and the meaning of citizenship. These factors closely resemble material and cultural drivers of far-right support. Second, important ethnographic work from specific communities in the United States (US) suggests that feelings of being ‘left behind’ and failing to receive a ‘fair share’ of government (Cramer 2016; Hochschild 2018) are important drivers of support for far-right candidates.

Building on the literature on policy feedback in the US and Europe (for overviews see Mettler and Soss 2004; Busemeyer 2013) and the Global South (for overviews see Hern 2019) and the importance of localized grievances (Belot 2021; Patana 2021; Colombo and Dinas 2022), we argue that public service deprivation, defined as reduced access to local public services (Barca 2009; Barca, McCann, and Rodríguez-Pose 2012; Rodríguez-Pose 2018), increases support far-right parties. Specifically, we suggest that experiencing the loss of material and communal resources² at the local level that public service deprivation triggers, makes people more worried about immigration

¹The term far-right is an ‘umbrella concept’ that includes populist radical right and extreme right parties that combine anti-immigration, nationalist and anti-elite rhetoric (Pirro 2022). We use the term ‘far-right’ rather than ‘populist radical right’ because factions within these parties often straddle the continuum of being critical of the state of democracy, to wanting major reform, to being anti-democratic (Mudde 2019).

²Due to the public good nature of these services, it is empirically very difficult to disentangle material from communal resources.

and the increased competition for local public services. By sparking fears about immigration, public service deprivation increases the appeal of far-right parties that advocate restricting immigration and immigrants' rights, which they argue will reduce the strain on local public services (on welfare competition between natives and non-natives more generally, see also Hooijer 2021; Magni 2021).³

We empirically substantiate our argument by presenting evidence from Italy – an ideal case to test our argument because it experienced a rise of far-right parties relatively early on, displays substantial variation in public service deprivation, and allows us to gain causal leverage on the electoral consequences of public service deprivation by exploiting a national reform. We conducted three empirical studies. In study 1, we introduce a novel and fine-grained measure of public service deprivation at the municipal level, and show that it is associated with higher levels of far-right support. In study 2, we exploit a 2010 national reform that required Italian municipalities below a certain population threshold to jointly provide public services to demonstrate that the relationship between public service deprivation and far-right support holds when examined in a more causal fashion. In line with our argument that public service deprivation raises fears about immigration and competition for local public services, we also show that in municipalities with a higher share of foreign-born residents, exposure to the reform increased far-right support even more. Finally, in study 3, we examine the individual-level mechanisms underlying our argument using geo-coded survey data. The results suggest that exposure to public service deprivation increases anti-immigrant sentiment and makes people self-identify as more economically right wing. Overall, our results are in line with the idea that public service deprivation fosters a far-right electoral response.

We also address a set of alternative explanations. The first is that public service deprivation primarily occurs in rural areas. Our Italian municipal data allows us to demonstrate that a considerable share of urban communities also experience public service deprivation. The second alternative

³It is of course possible for far-right parties to take pro-distribution stances, but their primary programmatic focus remains immigration (Elgenius and Rydgren 2019; Pirro 2022). Figures S10.1 and S10.2 in the Supplementary Information (SI) show that far-right parties and pro-redistribution parties in Italy differ most strongly in terms of their immigration and redistribution stances and the importance they attach to them. Section S10.2 of the SI provides examples of how discourses on redistribution and immigration stances inform their diverging rhetoric on public service provision.

explanation is that public service deprivation increases anti-incumbent and anti-establishment sentiment, which benefits the far right. Yet, we show that public service deprivation is not linked to anti-incumbent vote *or* a decrease in turnout; nor does it increase distrust in politicians. Finally, we examine the relationship between public service deprivation and support for pro-redistribution parties and find no clear link between the two; where it exists, it is in fact negative. This is in line with our finding that experiences with public service deprivation made people less likely to self-identify as economically left wing.

Our findings make three important contributions to the literature. First, they help us better understand the geographic concentration of far-right support. While such support is generally higher in rural areas, prior research has also identified substantial backing in urban areas (e.g., Rydgren and Ruth 2013; Harteveld et al. 2021). While multiple factors may account for far-right support in rural versus urban communities (Harteveld et al. 2021), our findings suggest that public service deprivation may help explain support for far-right parties in both settings. Our results therefore extend Cramer’s important work (2016) on resentment to suggest that discontent about being neglected by the state might motivate people in rural areas as well as urban areas to support far-right parties.

Second, our evidence contributes to an important line of research on political responses to local public services in the Global South which maintains that poor access to public services may not necessarily translate into political dissatisfaction (Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg, and Wibbels 2018; Bland et al. 2021; Hern 2019; McLoughlin 2015). Our evidence is at odds with this finding, perhaps because people in low-state-capacity environments may have lower expectations of the state’s ability to deliver public services, or lower levels of political efficacy. Future research should examine the differences in the Global North versus the Global South.

Finally, our results also inform the literature on why pro-redistribution parties may not necessarily gain from the retrenchment of public services (e.g., Giger and Nelson 2011; Alesina, Carloni, and Lecce 2012). Common supply-side explanations highlight that concerns about non-economic issues and cultural values – such as religiosity, ethnicity or nationalism – may distract voters’ attention from material hardship (Shayo 2009; Huber and Stanig 2011; Tavits and Potter 2015; Hacker and Pierson 2020). Our findings suggest that experience with public service deprivation may coincide with heightened concerns about immigration. This makes the policy offerings of

far-right parties – which tend to stress the importance of stricter immigration laws and restricting the rights of non-natives to reduce the demand for (and competition over) public services – more attractive to voters. Future research could examine whether austerity more generally (Baccini and Sattler 2021; Fetzer 2019; Hübscher, Sattler, and Wagner 2021) fosters similar responses among voters.

1 Public Service Deprivation and Far-Right Support

We argue that local public service deprivation helps explain geographically nested patterns of far-right electoral support. Our argument starts from the insight that local public service provision is one of the most direct ways in which politics affects citizens' lives, and thus provides a tangible basis for evaluating how taxes are being spent and how willing the state is to invest in communities (Dowding and John 2012; Hern 2019). Public service provision is based on the notion that certain goods – such as schooling, health, electricity, law enforcement, roads, transportation, and garbage collection – should be available to all citizens, regardless of their income, ability or other background characteristics and therefore should be funded collectively through taxation. Many of these services are provided at the local level to most closely meet citizen's needs and interests (Tiebout 1956).

According to the policy feedback literature, access to public services is an important driver of electoral behavior (for overviews see Mettler and Soss 2004; Busemeyer 2013). Policy feedback is commonly defined as the way in which public policy structures subsequent political processes by redefining or transforming state capacity and shapes people's policy preferences, citizenship and political behavior (Skocpol 1995). While the concept was initially applied mostly to the study of social policy programs in the US (see for example Mettler and Soss 2004; Schneider and Ingram 1993) or the study of welfare states in Europe (see for example Busemeyer 2013; Kumlin and Stadelmann-Steffen 2014), it has more recently been employed to study political behavioral responses to local public service provision in Africa (for an overview see Hern 2019). This literature suggests that access to local public services not only provides people with material resources such as access to health care, schooling, transportation or garbage collection;

it also offers communal benefits. Access to local public services defines the boundaries of membership in a political community, thereby giving meaning and content to citizenship and influencing how people understand their rights and standing in society (Shklar 1991; Mettler and Soss 2004). Combining these insights with recent work on the political consequences of localized grievances (e.g., Belot 2021; Colombo and Dinas 2022; Patana 2021), we argue that experiences with public service deprivation fuel grievances that increase support for the far right.

Local public service delivery is one of the most important points of contact between citizens and the state, and access to local public services is one of the most direct ways in which politics affects citizens' lives (Barca 2009; Barca, McCann, and Rodríguez-Pose 2012). The experience of having access to local services generates expectations that the state should be responsive to citizens' needs, and about what it should provide (Hacker et al. 2002; Mettler and Soss 2004). Such access also gives citizens a tangible basis for evaluating how their tax money is being spent and how willing the state is to invest in local communities. This allows even less politically sophisticated citizens to link access to local public service provision to political preferences and behavior (Dowding and John 2012; Hern 2019).

When people experience public service deprivation, for example because services have been reduced or have become more difficult to access, this generates discontent not only due to the loss of material and communal benefits, but also because it creates a sense that the state no longer adequately provides for its citizens' needs. People who experience reduced access to local public services become disgruntled and more susceptible to the idea that the state 'left their communities behind' and does not provide them with 'their fair share of resources' (Cramer 2016; Hochschild 2018). As a result, they begin to worry that they will need to compete with non-natives for such access to public services. These concerns lead to fears about immigration – which boosts support for far-right parties that advocate stricter immigration laws and the restricting non-natives' access to local public services.

Prior studies suggests that far-right parties combine anti-elite messages with a strong anti-immigration stance to vocalize a sense of decline and ethnic belonging (Mudde 2007; Elgenius and Rydgren 2017; Gidron and Hall 2020; Belot 2021). These sentiments provide an explanation to those who experience public service deprivation to make sense of their experiences. Such deprivation ignites fears that immigrants will crowd out access to services (Hooijer 2021; Magni 2021). Prior research suggests that sentiments of group

threat (Blumer 1958) sweep across communities with larger foreign-born populations (Blalock 1967; Quillian 1995; Schlueter and Scheepers 2010) or that experience sudden increases in immigration (Meuleman, Davidov, and Billiet 2009; Hopkins 2010; Dinas et al. 2019). Far-right parties have been shown to be particularly effective at mobilizing such fears and prejudices (Hainmueller and Hopkins 2015; Dancygier and Laitin 2014; Halla, Wagner, and Zweimüller 2017; Dinas et al. 2019; Dustmann, Vasiljeva, and Piil Damm 2019; Schaub, Gereke, and Baldassarri 2021), especially in Italy (Devillanova 2021; Campo, Giunti, and Mendola 2021). A growing body of work also demonstrates that anti-immigrant sentiment thrives in contexts where natives perceive that they are competing with non-natives for state-provided resources (Hooijer 2021; Magni 2021; Gennaro 2022; Cavaille and Ferwerda 2022). Finally, people’s understanding of how the state should spend ‘their taxes’ and provide for ‘their communities’ through local public services appears to be closely related to their perceptions of their community’s ethnic composition (Alesina, Miano, and Stantcheva 2018; Alesina and Stantcheva 2020; Luttmer 2001). These insights lead us to expect public service deprivation to fuel far-right support by raising concerns about immigration and competition for local public services.

2 Empirical Analysis

We examine this expectation by presenting evidence from Italy, where far-right parties have enjoyed electoral success for longer than elsewhere in Europe (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2007; De Vries and Hobolt 2020). The Italian case contains ample variation in public service deprivation. We exploit a reform that changed access to local services within Italian municipalities at a certain population threshold. These features allow us to measure and estimate the effect of public service deprivation on far-right support. Our empirical analysis presents evidence from three studies. In study 1, we introduce our measure of public service deprivation and link it to municipal electoral returns in Italy. Study 2 provides a causal test of our argument by exploiting a 2010 national reform that forced certain Italian municipalities to jointly provide local public services. In study 3, we present individual-level survey data from the Italian National Election Studies (ITANES) to explore the individual-level mechanisms driving our results.

2.1 Study 1: Cross-Sectional Evidence from Italian Municipalities

In our first study, we introduce a new and fine-grained measure of public service deprivation – defined as reduced access to public services at the local level – that builds on insights from geography (Barca 2009; Barca, McCann, and Rodríguez-Pose 2012; Rodríguez-Pose 2018). This measure captures the driving distance to *public service hubs* – municipalities or clusters of neighboring municipalities featuring (i) a nationally connected train station,⁴ (ii) a hospital offering services beyond an emergency room,⁵ and (iii) a high school.⁶ The Italian government agency for territorial cohesion introduced this classification of public service hubs to better target policies for local development (see also Barca 2009). The data on the hubs was made available in 2014 and is based on indicators collected up to the beginning of 2013. Figure 1 depicts the classification of Italian municipalities based on our public service deprivation measure and highlights substantial variation in public service deprivation across municipalities.

We explore the relationship between public service deprivation and support for far-right parties using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analyses. We constructed a novel dataset of municipal-level electoral results for the Italian lower house (*Camera dei Deputati*) in national elections held in 2013 and 2018 (i.e., the elections held after the distance from public services was measured). We collected a host of municipal characteristics, including share of college graduates, population size, share of population over 65, share of female population, share of foreigners, average income, and altitude.⁷ We calculated the municipal-level share of votes for far-right parties by dividing the number of votes for far-right parties in each municipality by the total number of votes in that municipality. The classification of Italian political

⁴We exclude small stations dedicated exclusively to regional transport.

⁵The measure captures the presence of hospitals nationally classified as *Dipartimento di Emergenza Urgenza e Accettazione di Primo Livello*, department of emergency/urgency and access of the first level. The hospitals in this category offer specific services next to an emergency room. These services include observation, short stay, and resuscitation services. In these hospitals, diagnostic and therapeutic interventions of general medicine, general surgery, orthopedics and traumatology, and cardiology intensive care are carried out. In addition, they ensure the provision of laboratory services, such as chemical-clinical and microbiological analysis, diagnostic imaging, and transfusion.

⁶This could include secondary vocational or technical education or a *liceo*.

⁷Table S2.1 in the SI provides summary statistics.



Figure 1: Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs), 2014

Notes: Dots indicate public service hubs. Colors indicate tertiles of distance from hubs.

parties is based on expert judgments and the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) data.⁸ The results from the more restrictive specification indicate that municipalities belonging to the second and third tertiles of our public service deprivation measure are associated with a 0.9 and 1.3 percentage

⁸More information can be found in the SI (Section S1)

Table 1: Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs) and Far-Right Support

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Distance (tertiles, ref. = 1 st)		
2 nd tertile	0.016*** (0.001)	0.009*** (0.001)
3 rd tertile	0.028*** (0.002)	0.013*** (0.002)
Province FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
Municipal controls		✓
<i>N</i>	16,194	16,194
<i>R</i> ²	0.81	0.82

Notes: OLS estimates at the municipality level. The dependent variable is the vote share for far-right parties in lower house elections. The main explanatory variable is the distance from public service hubs (in tertiles). Municipality controls include mean altitude, share of population over 65, share of population under 15, share of females, share of college graduates, share of foreigners, population size, and income. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. Table S3.1 of the SI reports full model results. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

point increase in far-right vote share, against the baseline far-right vote share of 18 percent, corresponding to the 1st tertile.

As shown in Table 1, public service deprivation is associated with higher electoral returns for the far right. To facilitate the interpretation of effect size, we model public service deprivation as a categorical variable based on tertiles of distance from public service hubs (in kilometers). We report the results for the continuous measure in Table S4.1 in the SI. For each model, we report results including province and year fixed effects (first column) and after adding the municipality-level controls listed above (second column). The effect remains robust when we control for economic and demographic characteristics.

2.2 Study 2: Evidence from the 2010 Reform of Municipal Public Service Provision in Italy

The cross-sectional results from study 1 are highly informative and lend initial support to our argument. Yet, questions remain about the causal nature of the relationship between public service deprivation and far-right electoral support. There might be a reciprocal relationship between public service deprivation and electoral outcomes. Cross-sectional service data does not allow us to account for the dynamic component of this relationship – how *reduced* access to local public services fuels support for the far right. To increase our causal leverage on the electoral effects of public service deprivation, we exploit a 2010 administrative reform in Italy that forced municipalities below a certain population threshold to manage jointly some of their local public services. Our approach follows recent work that exploits changes to the municipal structure to investigate the contextual effects on political behavior (see for example Lassen and Serritzlew 2011; Koch and Rochat 2017; Harjunen, Saarimaa, and Tukiainen 2021).

These reforms were part of a general effort by national governments across Europe in the last decade to reduce municipal fragmentation and the burden of administrative costs on state budgets (for overviews on the Italian and European setting, see Swianiewicz et al. 2022; Bolgherini, Casula, and Marotta 2018). The Italian reform from 2010 offers a unique opportunity to study the electoral consequences of public service deprivation. Before describing the empirical strategy and results, we provide more detail about Italian municipalities and the reform.

Municipalities constitute the lowest tier of Italian local government. They are responsible for crucial administrative functions such as local urban planning, roads and transport, local historical and environmental resources, the collection and disposal of waste, the collection and distribution of water and energy sources, services for economic development and commercial distribution, social, school, vocational training, and other urban services, and administrative police. Each municipality is governed by a municipal council chaired by a mayor, who is elected every 5 years. Italy has historically had an average of around 8,000 municipalities.⁹ In 2016, municipality population size averaged 7,600, close to the European median.

⁹There were 7,720 municipalities at country’s unification in 1861 and reached a peak of 8,201 in 2001.

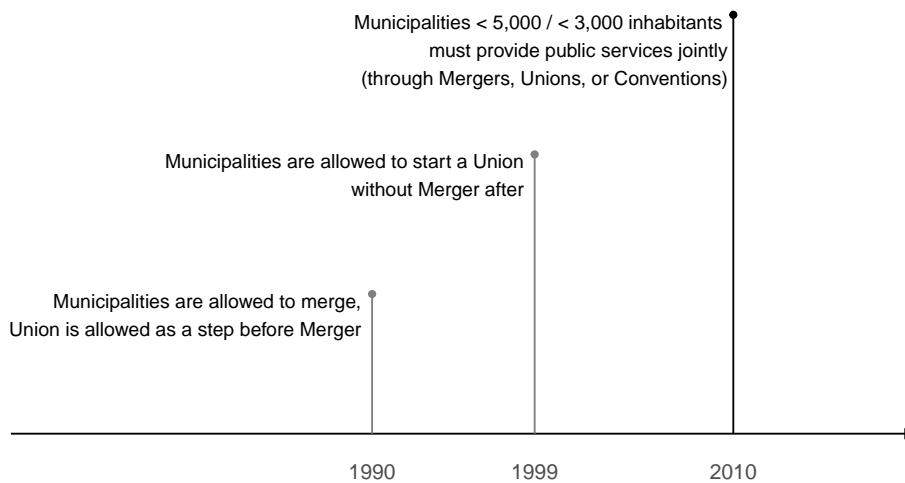


Figure 3: Timeline of Intermunicipal-Cooperation Laws, 1990—2010

Over the last three decades, the national government has introduced multiple legislative initiatives designed to reduce municipal fragmentation. In 1990, a national law (no. 142/1990) initiated forms of intermunicipal cooperation in an attempt to create economies of scale in the provision of local public services. Small municipalities were allowed to form *municipal unions* in which to share local public services. Municipal unions were intended as a first step towards stronger municipal integration; member municipalities were forced to merge into a new municipality after 10 years. In 1999, an additional law (no. 265/1999) relaxed the requirements needed to form unions.¹⁰ It abolished the 5,000 inhabitant threshold, allowing municipalities of any size to form unions; most importantly, it abolished the obligation to merge after 10 years.¹¹ However, municipal integration only gained real momentum after the 2010 reform that we investigate.

The 2008 financial crisis and the rise of austerity-related cuts to administrative budgets brought a new impetus to the process of municipal integration (Bolgherini, Casula, and Marotta 2018). In 2010, a new reform introduced the compulsory joint management (*gestione associata obbligatoria*) of basic public services (law no. 78/2010). The law required municipalities

¹⁰Between 1990 and 1999, only eight municipal unions were formed, involving a total of 29 municipalities.

¹¹Between 2000 and 2009, 263 new municipal unions were formed, involving 1,320 municipalities in total.

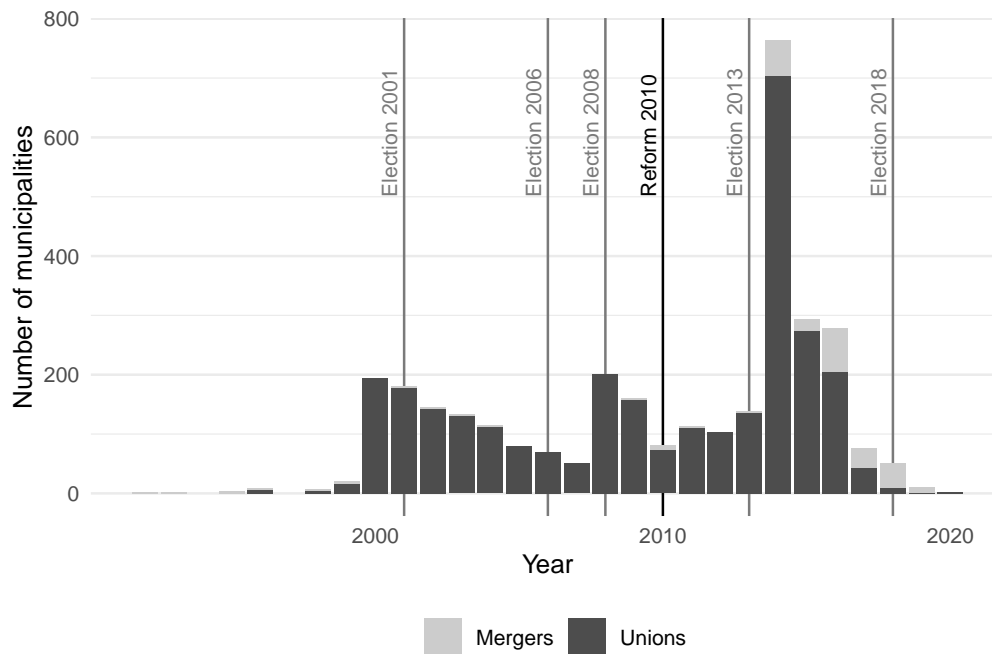


Figure 4: Creation of Municipal Unions and Mergers, 1992–2020

below a certain population threshold to start jointly managing at least 3 “fundamental functions” by January 1, 2013; at least 3 other functions by September 30, 2014; and all remaining functions by December 31, 2014. Fundamental functions include (a) administration, financial management, and accounting; (b) general interest public services, including municipal public transport services; (c) real estate registry; (d) urban planning and municipal construction; (e) civil protection and first aid; (f) the collection and disposal of waste and collection of related taxes; (g) social services; (h) school construction and management; (i) municipal police and local administrative police; and (j) electoral, registry, and statistical services, including the maintenance of civil status and population registers. The law specified two thresholds: a general threshold of 5,000 inhabitants and a special threshold of 3,000 inhabitants for municipalities that were part of a “mountain community” – intermunicipal institutions taking care of local governance in mountain areas. Municipalities with territories that extended over one or more islands were exempt from the reform.

Municipalities could choose to comply with the law by merging (dissolving

their municipal institutions into a single administrative entity), forming a union (creating an intermunicipal government tasked with organizing shared public service provision), or stipulating a convention (a contract regulating the joint provision of public services). Conventions, the most flexible and least demanding form of joint management, had to last at least three years and pass government’s efficiency and efficacy audits. An addition to the law in 2014 further simplified the process of forming unions and mergers. Figure 3 displays the timeline of the reform process. Figure 4 presents the progressive uptake of the reform by Italian municipalities. It illustrates how the 2010 reform was followed by a marked increase in intermunicipal-cooperation through municipal unions and mergers.¹²

2.2.1 Empirical Strategy and Results

We employ a difference-in-differences (DID) strategy to assess the effect of the 2010 reform on electoral outcomes. In the next section, we demonstrate that the reform increased public service deprivation, i.e., reduced access to local public services in the affected municipalities. Hence, it allows us to study the causal relationship between public service deprivation and far-right support. We compare the results in elections held before (2001, 2006, and 2008) and after (2013 and 2018) the implementation deadline of the reform in municipalities below the reform population threshold (which were forced to provide public services jointly) versus those above the threshold (which were not affected by the reform). We thus construct a counterfactual change in far-right vote share between elections held before and after the reform for municipalities that were forced to share public services using the change in far-right vote share in unaffected municipalities. In other words, we assume that if the affected municipalities had not been forced to share services, they would have experienced the same change in electoral outcomes as the unaffected municipalities.

This strategy yields causal estimates as long as the parallel-trend assumption holds. In the current context, this assumption would imply that the far-right vote shares would follow the same trajectory in the elections before and after the reform among treated and untreated municipalities had public service provision remained unchanged. Our treatment and control

¹²Nearly half (45 per cent) of the affected municipalities complied with the reform by establishing a municipal union or a merger. The government did not collect systematic data on conventions.

groups include municipalities that significantly differ across characteristics such as population size, remoteness, and socio-demographic characteristics. These differences invalidate the parallel-trend assumption.

To obtain a valid set of treatment and control units, we balance our treatment and control groups on observable characteristics using Mahalanobis Distance Matching (MDM). We match the treatment and control units based on pre-treatment municipality characteristics such as population size, average income, altitude, share of the population over 65, share of the population under 15, share of foreigners, share of females, and share of college graduates. Figure S5.1 of the SI displays descriptive statistics about how the matching procedure reduces imbalance on observable characteristics. We perform placebo tests to validate the parallel-trend assumption associated with this strategy.¹³

To estimate the reform’s effect on the far-right vote share we use the following two-way fixed effects (TWFE) panel estimator:

$$v_{i,t} = \alpha + \beta_{DID}r_{i,t} + \gamma_t + \mu_i + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

where i denotes the municipality and t the election year (2001, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2018). The term $v_{i,t}$ represents the municipal-level electoral outcome of interest. The binary indicator $r_{i,t}$ equals 1 if municipality i is exposed to the reform (i.e., below the population threshold in elections after 2010) and 0 otherwise. The vectors of dummies γ_t and μ_i identify year and municipality fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the municipality level. Under the parallel-trend assumption, the main coefficient of interest β_{DID} captures any deviation from a parallel evolution in vote shares between

¹³An alternative estimation strategy would be to employ a difference-in-discontinuity design (Grembi, Nannicini, and Troiano 2016). Concerns about the available measures of municipality population, which would be the running variable in the model, make the matched DID design preferable. The Italian government does not make the list of municipalities affected by the reform available, nor does it provide the population data used to define the threshold. Municipal mergers further complicate the estimation of population size in the year of the reform, since the National Institute of Statistics no longer reports the population size of merged municipalities. We calculate the population size at the onset of the reform based on the 2001 census, which creates potential misclassification issues among treated and control municipalities around the population thresholds adopted by the reform. A regression discontinuity approach is inappropriate in this context because it places a greater weight on units close to the population threshold, thus amplifying the measurement bias.

the treatment and the control groups due to the 2010 law – i.e., the reform effect.

For municipalities that merged after the reform, we can only observe the combined vote share of the merged municipalities because electoral records are collected at the municipal level. Given that population size is key in defining the treatment and control units, we need to maintain the municipal structure fixed to the last election before the reform (2008). We thus keep the number of municipalities and their relative population fixed to 2008, but we substitute the municipal vote share of each merged municipality with the weighted average of vote shares within the merger.¹⁴ We exclude from the sample 15 municipalities for which we are unable to assign a population threshold of reference due to the lack of information on mountain community membership at the time of the reform. We also drop 12 island municipalities that were exempt from the reform. The final sample includes 8,071 municipalities, 67 percent of which were affected by the reform.

The first column of Table 2 reports our baseline estimates. The regression coefficients associated with the binary variable r indicate that exposure to the 2010 reform is associated with an increase in the vote share of far-right parties. In the second column of Table 2, we test the parallel-trend assumption, adding a placebo binary variable that takes a value of 1 for treated municipalities in the year before the reform (2008). The estimated coefficient on the placebo is not statistically different from 0 for far-right vote estimates, which indicates that the vote shares for far-right parties in the control and treated municipalities were not distinguishable before the reform. This satisfies the parallel-trends assumption. In sum, our models identify a small but statistically and electorally significant increase of 0.5 percentage point in far-right parties' vote share caused by the 2010 reform.

2.2.2 The 2010 Reform and Public Service Deprivation

A crucial assumption guiding our analysis so far is that the reform increased public service deprivation, i.e., it reduced access to local public services in

¹⁴As an alternative strategy, we create synthetic municipalities by summing the votes of municipalities that merged after 2010 and assign the synthetic municipal population a random draw among the merged municipalities. Both strategies return virtually identical results, and are available upon request.

Table 2: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Election Outcomes

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform (r)	0.005** (0.002)	0.006* (0.003)
Placebo (r_{t-1})		0.004 (0.004)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,419	34,419
R^2	0.60	0.60

Notes: TWFE estimates at the municipality level. The dependent variable is the vote share for far-right parties in lower house elections. The treatment is the exposure to public services reform. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

affected municipalities.¹⁵ To test this assumption, we created an additional municipal dataset using information collected by the Italian Ministry for the Economy and Finance to monitor the re-structuring of municipal public service provision. We were able to obtain data for three key public services that were affected by the reform and included information collected by the ministry – local police, public registry, and garbage collection.¹⁶ We use these measures to capture the 2010 reform’s effect on access to local public services. The measure *delivery against standard demand* captures the difference between the quantity of a service the municipality delivered in the previous year and the average quantity delivered by municipalities with

¹⁵We also assume that the 2010 reform of municipal public service provision is the only legislative change that affected treated and control municipalities differently during the study period. Yet, the Italian government introduced a fiscal reform in 2013 that extended the municipal expenditure limits (the so-called Domestic Stability Pact) from municipalities with more than 5,000 inhabitants to those with over 1,000. To address potential concerns, we replicate our analysis estimating separate effects for the 2013 and 2018 election (see Table S9.1) in the SI and find that the effect is already present in the election of 2013, before the Domestic Stability Pact reform was introduced.

¹⁶Data on some of these services was not available for all municipalities, as reflected in the number of observations in Table 4.

Table 3: Effect of Exposure to the 2010 Reform on Services: Delivery Against Standard Demand

	Local Police	Public Registry	Garbage Collection
Exposure to the reform (r)	-11.763*** (3.165)	-4.126* (1.833)	-3.568+ (1.865)
Municipality FE	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓
N	8,554	9,806	10,546
R^2	0.10	0.01	0.26

Notes: TWFE estimates at the municipality level. The dependent variable is the difference between the quantity of a service the municipality delivered in the previous year and the average quantity delivered by municipalities with similar characteristics. The treatment is the exposure to public services reform. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 4: Effect of Exposure to the 2010 Reform on Services: Service Capacity

	Local Police	Public Registry	Garbage Collection
Exposure to the reform (r)	-0.014 (0.106)	-0.547*** (0.116)	-0.223** (0.083)
Municipality FE	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓
N	8,554	9,806	10,546
R^2	0.07	0.01	0.10

Notes: TWFE estimates at the municipality level. The dependent variable is a ten-point scale capturing the extent to which the municipality was able to satisfy citizens' demand for a service, accounting for municipality expenses and the average quantity of the service provided in municipalities with similar characteristics. The treatment is the exposure to public services reform. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

similar characteristics. *Service capacity* captures the extent to which the municipality was able to satisfy citizens' demand for a service, accounting for municipality expenses and the average quantity of the service provided in municipalities with similar characteristics – measured on a ten-point scale.¹⁷

We focus on the 2010 and 2013 waves, which provide us with a measure of public service provision before and after the reform.¹⁸ We replicate the

¹⁷In the SI, we report additional information about these two measures. Table S2.2 reports descriptive statistics. Section S6 provides additional details on variable definitions.

¹⁸A change in variable definition prevents us from extending our analysis to later

matched DID analysis of the reform’s effect using these six local public service measures as dependent variables. The results reported in Tables 3 and 4 show that, with the exception of local police capacity, the 2010 reform negatively impacted local public service provision in affected municipalities.

2.2.3 Public Service Deprivation and Immigration at the Local Level

Our argument is rooted in the idea that public service deprivation is linked to far-right support because it raises concerns about immigration and competing with non-natives residents for public services. As a preliminary test of this mechanism, we examine the heterogeneous treatment effect of the 2010 reform on far-right support as a function of immigration at the local level, which we measure using both the share of the foreign-born population (Blalock 1967; Quillian 1995; Schlueter and Scheepers 2010) and the change in the share of the foreign-born population (Meuleman, Davidov, and Billiet 2009; Hopkins 2010; Dinas et al. 2019).¹⁹ In line with our argument, we would expect public service deprivation to generate even greater support for far-right parties in municipalities with higher shares of foreign-born residents. In these contexts, experiences with public service deprivation are more likely to foster fears that non-natives will crowd natives out of accessing public services. We examine this expectation by adding an interaction of the treatment variable r and a measure of the share of foreign-born residents at the municipal level to our TWFE model. We consider both the share of foreign-born population in the last election before the reform (2008) and the change in the foreign-born population in the previous 5 years. The results, reported in Table 5, indicate that the reform’s positive effect on far-right support is largely driven by affected municipalities in which immigration was more pronounced in the years prior to the reform.

2.3 Study 3: Exploring Individual-Level Mechanisms

We continue to explore the mechanisms linking public service deprivation to far-right support at the individual level. We geo-coded individual-level panel survey data representative of the Italian population collected by ITANES

years.

¹⁹In Figure S9.1 we also explore reform’s heterogenous effects across macro areas and find that the far-right response was more pronounced in northern regions.

Table 5: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects of the Share of Foreign-Born Residents and Exposure to the 2010 Reform

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform (r)	-0.008*** (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)
$r \times$ Share foreign-born 2008	0.247*** (0.016)	
$r \times$ Change share foreign-born 2003-8		0.274*** (0.025)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,419	34,419
R^2	0.60	0.60

Notes: TWFE estimates at the municipality level. Dependent variable is the vote share for far-right parties in lower house elections. The treatment is the exposure to public services reform. Treatment interacted with the percentage of foreign-born municipality population in 2008 (column (1)) and the change in the percentage of foreign-born municipality population between 2003 and 2008 (column (2)). Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

to identify voters living in municipalities affected by the 2010 reform. We assemble data from two panel surveys collected between 2001 and 2013 for a total of eight waves.²⁰

In a first step, we examine the effect of the reform on a measure capturing a respondent’s self-positioning on an economic left-right scale. Then we use an additive scale to examine the reform’s effect on people’s concerns about immigration. This scale combines the answers to two survey questions asking respondents how much they agree that immigration is a danger for national identity and culture, and for national employment, respectively.²¹

²⁰We assemble two panel datasets. The first comprised of three waves collected in 2001, 2004 and 2006. The second one contains five waves collected between 2011 and 2013.

²¹In Section S7 of the SI, we report the phrasing of each survey question. In Table ??, we report the results on immigration attitudes based on individual questions rather than additive scales. These results are equivalent to those reported in the main text.

Table 6: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Left-Right Identification and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

	Left-Right		Anti-Immigrant	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Exposure to the reform	-0.254*	-0.279*	-0.537*	-0.536*
	(0.113)	(0.120)	(0.223)	(0.257)
Post 2010	-0.590***	-0.575***	-0.814*	-0.966**
	(0.141)	(0.136)	(0.382)	(0.359)
Exposure \times Post 2010	0.329*	0.292*	0.680*	0.657*
	(0.136)	(0.134)	(0.295)	(0.295)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Municipal controls		✓		✓
Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region FE		✓		✓
N	1,282	1,274	992	987
R^2	0.11	0.16	0.14	0.24

Notes: OLS estimates at the individual level. Dependent variables are position in the left-right scale (columns 1-2) and anti-immigrant sentiment (columns 3-4). Individual controls include age, gender, education, occupation. Municipality controls include mean altitude, share of population over 65, share of foreigners, share of females, share of college graduates, population size, and income. Table S3.2 of the SI reports full model results. Robust standard errors in parentheses. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

We run OLS regressions including a binary variable indicating if the respondent lived in a municipality affected by the reform, a binary variable indicating if the survey response was collected after the 2010 reform, and an interaction term between the two. We add a further set of binary variables for survey waves; region fixed effects; individual-level control variables capturing the effect of the respondent’s age, gender, education, and profession; and municipal-level control variables as in our previous models.²² Since the surveys were not collected in the same municipalities across all waves, we have to adopt a more relaxed specification than the one we used in study 2, because we cannot insert municipality fixed effects. Following the design from study 2, we use MDM to obtain a set of treated and control units living in comparable municipalities.²³

²²Table S2.3 reports descriptive statistics for the individual-level variables.

²³We match respondents based on the same municipality-level characteristics used in the electoral returns analysis.

The results reported in Table 6 suggest that public service deprivation made people self-identify further to the right on an economic left-right scale, and increased concerns about immigration. This individual-level evidence, together with that presented for studies 1 and 2, supports our argument that public service deprivation increases electoral support for the far right by heightening immigration fears.²⁴

3 Alternative Explanations and Possible Threats to Inference

We account for several possible alternative explanations. First, it could be the case that experiencing public service deprivation is simply synonymous with residing in rural communities. Yet, public service deprivation is not restricted to rural communities, rather it is the result of a lack of socioeconomic and political connections (*connectivity*) that is not necessarily restricted to rural areas (Castells 2000). Table 7 illustrates the relationship between our public service deprivation measure from study 1 and the classic urban-rural measure based on population size and density (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2016; Cho and Gimpel 2010; Primo and Snyder 2010; Urban and Niebler 2014; Benedictis-Kessner and Warshaw 2020). Following the official definition by the Italian National Institute of Statistics, we classify municipalities with a population smaller than 5,000 inhabitants and density lower than 300 inhabitants per squared kilometers as rural. The results in Table 7 show that public service deprivation is not merely a characteristic of rural communities, and that there is considerable variation within rural areas. Indeed, more than a third of urban areas (roughly 35 per cent) experience this type of deprivation, which suggests that public service deprivation goes beyond the urban-rural divide (Nemerever and Rogers 2021).

Our argument based on public service deprivation thus complements previous work on rural resentment. In her research on rural Wisconsin, Cramer (2016) highlights how rural residents' experiences fuel resentment towards mainstream political elites, in part because rural residents feel ignored and believe that they are not getting their fair share of resources. Our argument is sympathetic to the notion of rural resentment, albeit we

²⁴In SI Section S12 we explore the alternative possibility that the reform generated a response against the incumbent and obtain null results.

Table 7: Urban-Rural Communities and Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs)

	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.	Freq.	Perc.
Distance to service hubs						
1 st tertile	1,652	56.2	1,027	19.9	2,679	33.1
2 nd tertile	854	29.1	1,837	35.6	2,691	33.3
3 rd tertile	432	14.7	2,290	44.4	2,722	33.6
Total	2,938	100	5,154	100	8,092	100

suggest that urban residents as well as rural ones may resent being ignored and the lack of public resources.

A second alternative explanation is that the electoral consequences of public service deprivation follow a retrospective/performance voting logic, i.e., voters punish the incumbent for what they perceive to be negative policy outcomes (e.g., Fiorina 1978; Lewis-Beck 1988; Duch and Stevenson 2008). In Table S12.1 of the SI, we replicate the analysis for study 2 using incumbent vote share as the dependent variable, and find that public service deprivation has no effect. This might not be entirely surprising, given that municipalities had 3 years to implement the reform. This arguably clouds the clarity of responsibility for the reform, especially in the Italian case, where governments are comparatively short-lived (e.g., Powell Jr and Whitten 1993; Duch and Stevenson 2008).

Third, it could be the case that public service deprivation increases anti-establishment sentiment, which benefits the far right. Yet, in Tables S11.1, S11.2, and ?? in the SI, we demonstrate that this type of deprivation is not linked to a decrease in turnout or an anti-incumbent response, nor does it increase distrust in politicians.

A fourth potential alternative explanation is that people who are disgruntled about public service deprivation may demand compensation, thus boosting the support for parties promising to enhance the supply of local public services through increased spending. We find little evidence to support this possibility (see Tables S10.2 and S10.3 in the SI). This may be because first-hand experience of public service deprivation may cause people to view party pledges to invest in public services as less credible. This might

be a fruitful area for future research.

Finally, local public service provision is not only characterized by the *degree of access*, which we focus on here, but also by the *quality of services*. It has proven virtually impossible to develop objective indicators of the quality of local public services due to the lack of data access and availability. Another potential concern is that citizens may turn to alternative service providers such as nongovernmental associations and churches (Dowding and John 2008), which would make it more difficult to detect electoral effects of public service deprivation. In the Italian context we study here, private alternatives are not that common and readily accessible.²⁵ This is of course not to say that they may not be more common elsewhere (Hern 2019).

4 Concluding Remarks

This study examined the relationship between public service deprivation – i.e., reduced access to local public services – and support for far-right parties. Local public service provision is one of the most direct ways in which politics touches citizens’ lives, and provides a tangible basis for evaluating how taxes are being spent and how willing the state is to invest in their communities. Building on the literature on policy feedback and localized grievances, we argue that public service deprivation increases support for far-right parties because it heightens concerns about immigration and competing with non-natives for access to public services. We present evidence from three empirical studies conducted in Italy, where far-right parties have been successful for quite some time and state-provided public services play a crucial role in citizens’ everyday lives, which allows us to capture variation in public service deprivation using a cross-sectional and causal approach.

In study 1, we introduced a fine-grained measure of public service deprivation and showed how it coincides with higher electoral returns for

²⁵For example, Bertola, Checchi, and Oppedisano (2007) and Bertola and Checchi (2004) show that, unlike the Anglo-Saxon environment, Italian public schools significantly reward talent, ensuring that they attract a large pool of students. There are fewer private schools in Italy than in the United Kingdom (UK) or US; the quality is often worse than Italian public schools. Dorigatti, Mori, and Neri (2020) examine the trajectories of externalization in three key welfare services – elderly care, early childhood services and kindergartens – and show that political and social factors affect choices about service externalization. In particular, voters and trade unions strongly oppose market solutions in the provision of these services (Dorigatti, Mori, and Neri 2018).

far-right parties. In study 2, we exploited a 2010 administrative reform in Italy that increased public service deprivation in certain municipalities to demonstrate the causal relationship between this type of deprivation and far-right support. In line with our argument, we find that the reform’s effect on support for far-right parties is especially pronounced in municipalities where the share of foreign-born population is higher than the average or has been increasing. Study 3 employed individual-level data to explore the mechanisms underlying our findings in greater depth. The results show that residents of municipalities that experienced an increase in public service deprivation due to the 2010 reform became more concerned about immigration, and self-identified as further right on the economic left-right dimension. We also account for possible alternative explanations and threats to inference to demonstrate that our findings are robust.

While we theoretically argue and empirically substantiate that public service deprivation helps us understand geographic patterns in far-right support, we do not suggest that such deprivation is somehow the root cause of far-right parties’ electoral success. Previous research in this area has made important strides in showing how large-scale economic developments (e.g., Emmenegger et al. 2012; Rodrik 2016; Autor, Dorn, and Hanson 2016; Colantone and Stanig 2018, 2019; Margalit 2011; Kurer and Gallego 2019; Im et al. 2019; Gingrich 2019) and distinct patterns in individual mobility (e.g., Maxwell 2019, 2020; Dinas et al. 2019; Bratsberg et al. 2021; Riaz, Bischof, and Wagner 2021; Dustmann, Vasiljeva, and Piil Damm 2019; Campo, Giunti, and Mendola 2021; Schaub, Gereke, and Baldassarri 2021; Dancygier et al. 2022) – or both (Patana 2020) – fuel support for far-right parties. We argue here that distinct geographic concentrations of economic decline and the share of foreign-born residents that are reflected in public service deprivation at the local level may help us better understand the geographic clustering of far-right support. Public service deprivation, we argue, sparks concerns about immigration and competition for public resources, which increases the programmatic appeal of far-right parties.

In advanced industrial democracies like Italy, people are accustomed to having reasonable access to local public services and expect the state to be responsive to their needs. If these expectations are not met, local residents become disgruntled and may turn to radical political forces, as we show here. Yet, recent evidence from the Global South suggests that this might not be what is happening in low-state-capacity contexts (Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg, and Wibbels 2018; Bland et al. 2021). In these contexts, public service

deprivation may not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction that is channeled into a specific electoral response. The precise reasons for these different responses to poor access to local public services constitutes an important avenue for future research. It might, for example, be the result of different expectations about the state, different experiences of deprivation, or a different sense of political efficacy.

Overall, our findings support the idea that citizens' concerns about public services and the composition of the local population are intertwined (see also Cavaille and Ferwerda 2022; Gennaro 2022; Hooijer 2021; Magni 2021). Public service deprivation may cause native-born residents to feel they are competing for access to public resources, especially when combined with a substantial immigrant presence. Far-right parties' rhetoric finds fertile ground in these contexts.²⁶ What is more, our results suggest that pro-redistribution parties may not necessarily gain from the retrenchment of public services (see also Giger and Nelson 2011; Alesina, Carloni, and Lecce 2012). While prior work on elite behavior and rhetoric suggests that this might be due to political elites distracting voters from material concerns to cultural ones – such as religiosity, ethnicity or nationalism – (Shayo 2009; Huber and Stanig 2011; Tavits and Potter 2015; Hacker and Pierson 2020; De Vries and Hobolt 2020), our findings suggest that people's experiences of public service deprivation may also trigger concerns about immigration – thereby linking material and cultural concerns. The extent to which our results apply beyond the Italian case is an important topic for future research. Since Italian politics has in many ways been at the forefront of the wave of far-right electoral success in the advanced industrial world, it is an important, and perhaps even crucial, case to study.

²⁶A sample of official tweets by Italian political parties (see Section S10.2 of the SI) suggests that far-right parties in Italy used anti-immigrant sentiment in their rhetoric about public services.

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Supplementary Information

S1 Party Classification

Table S1.1: Far-Right Parties in Italian Elections

Party	Election Year				
	2001	2006	2008	2013	2018
Alleanza Nazionale	✓	✓			
Alternativa Sociale Mussolini		✓			
Azione Sociale Mussolini			✓		
Casapound Italia				✓	✓
Destra Nazionale		✓			
Fiamma Tricolore	✓	✓		✓	
Forza Nuova	✓		✓	✓	
Fratelli d'Italia				✓	✓
Fronte Nazionale	✓				
Futuro e Libertà				✓	
Italia agli Italiani					✓
La Destra				✓	
La Destra - Fiamma Tricolore			✓		
Lega					✓
Lega Nord	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Rifondazione Missina Italiana				✓	

S2 Summary Statistics

Table S2.1: Summary Statistics of Municipal-Level Variables (Studies 1 and 2)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Distance to Service Hubs (Km, 2008)	22.98	15.75	0	240
Service Hub (2013)	0.04	0.20	0	1
Mean Altitude (m, 2011)	466.56	454.64	0.36	2,776.96
Population Over 65 (% , 2013)	0.23	0.06	0.06	0.63
Female Population (% , 2013)	0.51	0.02	0.38	0.60
University Graduates (% , 2011)	0.07	0.03	0	0.29
Population Size (2008)	7,415.39	39,724.82	0	2,604,557
Average Income (€, 2008)	15,500.70	3,454.45	6,362.95	45,383.59
Far-Right Parties Vote Shares (% , 2001-18)	0.18	0.12	0	0.74
Turnout (% , 2001-18)	0.79	0.09	0.04	1
Pro-Redistribution Parties Vote Hares (% , 2001-18)	0.39	0.16	0	0.89
Municipalities	40,495			

Table S2.2: Summary Statistics of Municipal Public Service Provision Indicators (Study 2)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<i>Services Against Standard Demand</i>				
Local Police	-9.84	69.49	-99.80	2,962.24
Public Registry	1.49	31.37	-99.96	534.73
Garbage Collection	-0.90	51.32	-99.97	392.38
<i>Service Capacity</i>				
Local Police	5.10	1.74	1	10
Public Registry	5.27	2.02	1	10
Garbage Collection	6.03	2.09	1	10
Municipalities 2009	6,671			
Municipalities 2013	6,668			
Municipalities Total	13,339			

Table S2.3: Summary Statistics of Study 3 Variables

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
<i>Individual Level</i>				
Age Group				
18 – 24	0.09	0.28	0	1
25 – 34	0.15	0.35	0	1
35 – 44	0.14	0.35	0	1
45 – 54	0.18	0.39	0	1
55 – 64	0.19	0.39	0	1
> 64	0.25	0.43	0	1
Gender	1.52	0.5	1	2
Education				
No Qualification	0.03	0.16	0	1
Primary	0.16	0.36	0	1
Lower Secondary	0.35	0.48	0	1
Professional	0.07	0.26	0	1
Upper Secondary	0.29	0.45	0	1
Tertiary	0.11	0.31	0	1
Occupation Group				
Manager	0.03	0.17	0	1
Teacher	0.04	0.19	0	1
Employee	0.17	0.37	0	1
Construction Worker	0.20	0.40	0	1
Entrepreneur	0.02	0.13	0	1
Self-Employed	0.06	0.24	0	1
Cooperative Member	0.01	0.09	0	1
Other Contract	0.02	0.16	0	1
On Welfare	0.21	0.40	0	1
Retired	0.18	0.39	0	1
Student	0.05	0.22	0	1
<i>Municipal Level</i>				
Mean Altitude (m, 2011)	221.73	243.62	0.36	2,776.96
Foreigners (% , 2013)	0.08	0.05	0	0.23
Population Over 65 (% , 2013)	0.21	0.04	0.09	0.49
Female Population (% , 2013)	0.52	0.01	0.45	0.54
University Graduates (% , 2011)	0.11	0.05	0.02	0.27
Population Size (2008)	230,275.30	574,838.26	144	2,604,557
Average Income (€, 2008)	18,034.45	4,111.04	7,919.10	34,234.85
<i>Outcomes</i>				
Left-Right Scale	0	1	-1.87	1.82
Anti-Immigrant Scale	4.48	1.95	2	8
Trust Scale	0	1.73	-3.07	5.02
Respondents	7,140			

S3 Full Table Results for Main Estimates

Table S3.1: Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs) and Far-Right Support

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Distance (tertiles, ref. = 1 st)		
2 nd tertile	0.016*** (0.001)	0.009*** (0.001)
3 rd tertile	0.028*** (0.002)	0.013*** (0.002)
Mean altitude		0.000*** (0.000)
Population over 65		-0.086*** (0.014)
Female population		-0.084 ⁺ (0.044)
University graduates		-0.165*** (0.030)
Population size		0.000 (0.000)
Average income		-0.000*** (0.000)
Foreigners		0.025 (0.020)
Province FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	16,194	16,194
<i>R</i> ²	0.81	0.82

Notes: The table reproduces Table 1 in the main text adding full information on control variables' coefficients. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table S3.2: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Left-Right Identification and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes

	Left-Right		Anti-Immigrant	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Exposure to the reform	-0.254*	-0.279*	-0.537*	-0.536*
	(0.113)	(0.120)	(0.223)	(0.257)
Post 2010	-0.590***	-0.575***	-0.814*	-0.966**
	(0.141)	(0.136)	(0.382)	(0.359)
Exposure × Post 2010	0.329*	0.292*	0.680*	0.657*
	(0.136)	(0.134)	(0.295)	(0.295)
Age between 25 and 34	0.078	0.142	-0.919**	-0.831**
	(0.112)	(0.109)	(0.302)	(0.300)
Age between 35 and 44	0.066	0.068	-0.361	-0.311
	(0.121)	(0.121)	(0.315)	(0.306)
Age between 45 and 54	0.012	0.032	-0.500	-0.378
	(0.122)	(0.122)	(0.331)	(0.332)
Age between 55 and 64	0.035	0.058	-0.559	-0.360
	(0.123)	(0.122)	(0.357)	(0.342)
Age Over 65	0.015	0.030	-0.299	-0.120
	(0.144)	(0.143)	(0.387)	(0.373)
Female	-0.012	0.021	0.096	0.166
	(0.070)	(0.065)	(0.160)	(0.148)
Elementary License	0.298	0.368	-0.198	-0.179
	(0.204)	(0.229)	(0.351)	(0.359)
Middle School License	0.354 ⁺	0.438*	-0.696 ⁺	-0.681 ⁺
	(0.197)	(0.222)	(0.372)	(0.370)
Professional Diploma	0.390 ⁺	0.452 ⁺	-0.983*	-0.761 ⁺
	(0.216)	(0.242)	(0.453)	(0.452)
High School Diploma	0.240	0.374 ⁺	-1.225**	-1.162**
	(0.201)	(0.227)	(0.392)	(0.393)
Tertiary Degree	0.128	0.213	-1.441**	-1.431**
	(0.217)	(0.251)	(0.484)	(0.497)
Teacher	-0.487 ⁺	-0.550 ⁺	-0.792	-0.641
	(0.288)	(0.285)	(0.895)	(0.873)
Employee	-0.350	-0.338	-0.350	-0.362
	(0.278)	(0.278)	(0.868)	(0.846)
Worker	-0.183	-0.154	0.458	0.377
	(0.281)	(0.280)	(0.860)	(0.836)
Entrepreneur	0.168	0.133	0.125	0.180
	(0.327)	(0.338)	(0.895)	(0.854)
Independent Contractor	0.205	0.214	0.107	0.005
	(0.296)	(0.302)	(0.885)	(0.865)
Cooperative Member	-0.064	0.018	0.644	1.016
	(0.420)	(0.465)	(1.133)	(1.078)
Other Contract	0.355	0.307	0.807	0.822
	(0.344)	(0.327)	(0.969)	(0.967)
Unemployed, On Welfare	0.137	0.129	0.012	-0.137
	(0.280)	(0.278)	(0.852)	(0.831)

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Table S3.2 continued

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Retired	-0.304 (0.269)	-0.262 (0.271)	-0.458 (0.861)	-0.554 (0.863)
Student	-0.007 (0.288)	-0.050 (0.291)	-0.604 (0.924)	-0.654 (0.911)
Mean Altitude		0.000 (0.000)		0.000* (0.000)
Foreigners		0.923 (1.074)		0.299 (2.753)
Population Over 65		-1.282 (0.847)		-5.193* (2.137)
Female Population		-5.265 ⁺ (3.056)		11.293 ⁺ (6.830)
University Graduates		2.169 (2.208)		5.309 (6.023)
Population Size		-0.000* (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)
Average Income		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)
Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region FE		✓		✓
<i>N</i>	1282	1274	991	986
<i>R</i> ²	0.10	0.15	0.16	0.26

Notes: The table reproduces Table 6 in the main text adding full information on control variables' coefficients. Robust standard errors in parentheses. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

S4 Results Using Alternative Specifications of Distance to Public Services

Table S4.1: Public Service Deprivation (Continuous Distance to Public Service Hubs) and Far-Right Support

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Distance (km)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.000*** (0.000)
Mean Altitude		0.000*** (0.000)
Population Over 65		-0.079*** (0.014)
Female Population		-0.076 ⁺ (0.044)
University Graduates		-0.160*** (0.030)
Population Size		0.000 (0.000)
Average Income		-0.000*** (0.000)
Foreigners		0.027 (0.020)
Province FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	16,194	16,194
<i>R</i> ²	0.81	0.82

Notes: The table reproduces Table 1 in the main text using a continuous measure of distance to public service hubs. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

S5 Municipal-Level Matching

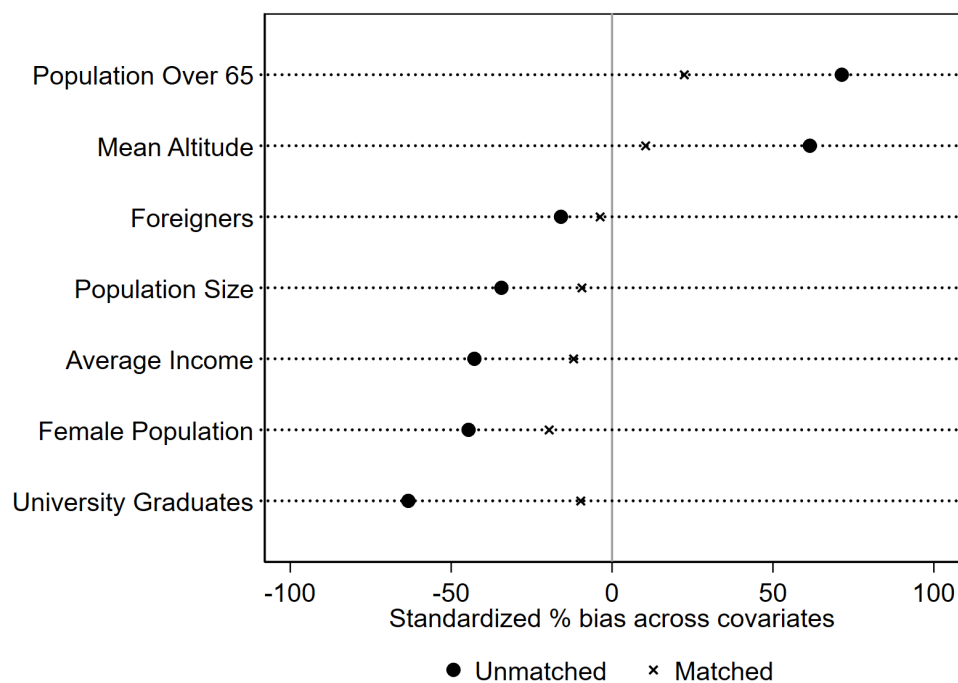


Figure S5.1: Balance Plot of Municipal-Level Covariates Before and After MDM

S6 Measures of Municipal Public Service Delivery and Capacity

Since 2009, the Ministry of Economy and Finance has been monitoring public spending and service delivery in Italian municipalities. Every year, it collects a municipal survey containing a large number of questions on municipal characteristics, and the expense and quantity of services provided by the municipality. The ministry then uses predictive models to calculate the average expense and quantity of services provided in Italian municipalities accounting for their characteristics. This predicted value constitutes the benchmark against which to compare the actual quantity of services provided by the municipality in the previous year, as we do to calculate the two

indicators used in this paper. Additional information about the survey questionnaire, the available data, and the econometric models used to compute the indicators can be found at <https://www.opencivitas.it/it/note-metodologiche>.

S7 Phrasing of Survey Questions and Variable Coding

Left-Right Scale: *E pensando alle Sue opinioni politiche, Lei in quale casella si collocherebbe su una scala da 1 a 10 dove 1 significa la sinistra e 10 la destra?* Moving to your political opinions, where would you place yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is left and 10 is right?

Immigration Scale: *Le leggerò ora alcune affermazioni su politica ed economia che vengono fatte correntemente. Mi dica per ognuna se lei è per niente, poco, abbastanza o molto d'accordo: Gli immigrati sono un pericolo per la nostra cultura.* I will now read some common statements on politics and the economy. Tell me, for each of them, if you agree, partially agree, partially disagree or disagree: Immigrants are dangerous for our national culture.

Le leggerò ora alcune affermazioni su politica ed economia che vengono fatte correntemente. Mi dica per ognuna se lei è per niente, poco, abbastanza o molto d'accordo: Gli immigrati sono un pericolo per l'occupazione (si intende l'occupazione degli italiani). I will now read some common statements on politics and the economy. Tell me, for each of them, if you agree, partially agree, partially disagree or disagree: Immigrants are dangerous for Italians' employment.

Trust Scale: *Ora le leggo un elenco di istituzioni e mi dica, per ciascuna di esse, quanta fiducia ha (cioè molta fiducia, abbastanza fiducia, poca fiducia, nessuna fiducia).* Now I will read a list of institutions. Please tell me how much do you trust each of them (very much, trust, little trust, no trust).

Due to scale changes over time, we standardize the variables *Trust Scale* and *Left-Right Scale* to obtain consistent values over time. For what concerns *Trust Scale*, the first ITANES panel (the first three waves) operationalizes the levels of trust in different political institutions on a 4-point scale, whereas the second does so on a 10-point one. In both cases, higher values correspond to higher levels of trust. As for *Left-Right Scale*, the first panel uses a 10-point scale, ranging from 1 to 10, while that of the second panel spans from 0 to

11. We create our standardized variables by subtracting from each value the mean of the distribution and dividing by the standard deviation.

For our control variables, we recoded the variable *Age*, originally computed as a continuous variable, by grouping it into six categories. The variable *Occupation* summarizes two original survey variables, *Profession* and *Activity*. The former is a 17-point discrete variable indicating the respondent's job type. The latter is an 8-point indicator of the general activity of the respondent, either inside or outside the labor market. The variable *Occupation* combines them to create a more comprehensive proxy for the respondent's activity, either inside or outside the labor market.

S8 Individual-Level Results on Reform Effect by Single Survey Item

Table S8.1: Effect of Exposure to the 2010 Reform on Anti-Immigrant Attitudes by Single Survey Item

	Bad for Culture		Bad for Employment	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Exposure to reform	-0.241 ⁺ (0.127)	-0.218 (0.141)	-0.295* (0.120)	-0.318* (0.143)
Post 2010	-0.338 ⁺ (0.203)	-0.380* (0.192)	-0.476* (0.212)	-0.587** (0.207)
Exposure × Post 2010	0.317 ⁺ (0.168)	0.286 ⁺ (0.165)	0.363* (0.162)	0.371* (0.164)
Age between 25 and 34	-0.505** (0.185)	-0.440* (0.184)	-0.414* (0.182)	-0.391* (0.177)
Age between 35 and 44	-0.105 (0.197)	-0.061 (0.191)	-0.257 (0.185)	-0.251 (0.181)
Age between 45 and 54	-0.225 (0.200)	-0.135 (0.197)	-0.275 (0.196)	-0.243 (0.195)
Age between 55 and 64	-0.136 (0.218)	-0.025 (0.208)	-0.423* (0.197)	-0.334 ⁺ (0.189)
Age Over 65	-0.022 (0.233)	0.092 (0.227)	-0.277 (0.213)	-0.212 (0.203)
Female	0.059 (0.093)	0.095 (0.086)	0.036 (0.085)	0.071 (0.080)
Elementary License	-0.076 (0.208)	-0.086 (0.214)	-0.122 (0.180)	-0.093 (0.177)
Middle School License	-0.283 (0.222)	-0.290 (0.218)	-0.413* (0.189)	-0.392* (0.187)
Professional Diploma	-0.277 (0.264)	-0.151 (0.262)	-0.707** (0.234)	-0.610** (0.234)
High School Diploma	-0.487* (0.236)	-0.458* (0.233)	-0.738*** (0.200)	-0.705*** (0.201)
Tertiary Degree	-0.564* (0.284)	-0.587* (0.289)	-0.877*** (0.241)	-0.844*** (0.247)
Teacher	-0.520 (0.469)	-0.460 (0.456)	-0.272 (0.463)	-0.181 (0.455)
Employee	-0.345 (0.466)	-0.388 (0.456)	-0.005 (0.423)	0.026 (0.413)
Worker	0.011 (0.465)	-0.047 (0.456)	0.447 (0.415)	0.424 (0.402)
Entrepreneur	-0.052 (0.478)	-0.009 (0.466)	0.177 (0.446)	0.189 (0.421)
Independent Contractor	-0.168 (0.480)	-0.230 (0.472)	0.274 (0.431)	0.236 (0.421)
Cooperative Member	0.296 (0.581)	0.479 (0.570)	0.347 (0.570)	0.536 (0.531)
Other Contract	0.234 (0.533)	0.229 (0.537)	0.573 (0.473)	0.593 (0.469)
Unemployed, On Welfare	-0.200 (0.461)	-0.281 (0.453)	0.212 (0.415)	0.144 (0.405)

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Table S8.1 continued

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Retired	-0.465 (0.472)	-0.528 (0.474)	0.007 (0.414)	-0.026 (0.414)
Student	-0.531 (0.507)	-0.558 (0.501)	-0.073 (0.460)	-0.095 (0.453)
Mean Altitude		0.000* (0.000)		0.000+ (0.000)
Foreigners		0.287 (1.568)		0.012 (1.390)
Population Over 65		-3.435** (1.131)		-1.758 (1.192)
Female Population		4.351 (3.882)		6.942+ (3.720)
University Graduates		2.680 (3.299)		2.629 (3.487)
Population Size		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)
Average Income		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)
Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region FE		✓		✓
<i>N</i>	993	988	993	988
<i>R</i> ²	0.14	0.21	0.16	0.22

Notes: The table reproduces Table 6 in the main text using single survey items as a dependent variable. Robust standard errors in parentheses. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

S9 Results on Reform Effect, Disaggregating by Time and Area

Table S9.1: Effect of Exposure to the 2010 Reform on Far-Right Support by Single Election

	Far-Right	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform ($r_{t1(2013)}$)	0.003 ⁺ (0.002)	0.004 ⁺ (0.002)
Exposure to the reform ($r_{t2(2018)}$)	0.007 ⁺ (0.004)	0.008 ⁺ (0.005)
Placebo ($r_{t-1(2008)}$)		0.004 (0.004)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,434	34,434
R^2	0.60	0.60

Notes: The table reproduces Table 2 in the main text disaggregating the treatment variable by year. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

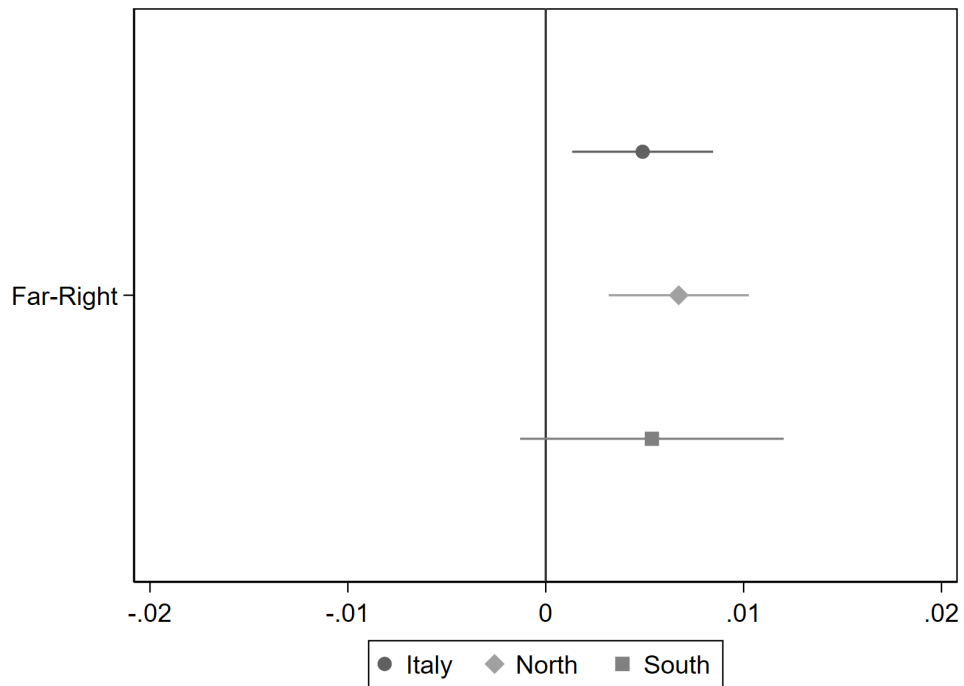


Figure S9.1: Effect of Exposure to the 2010 Reform on Voting by Macro Area

Notes: The plot reproduces the DID estimates of Table 2 splitting the sample by northern and southern regions. We exclude central regions (Marche, Umbria, Tuscany, Lazio and Sardinia).

S10 Pro-Redistribution Parties

S10.1 Party Classification

Table S10.1: Pro-Redistribution Parties in Italian Elections

Party	Election Year				
	2001	2006	2008	2013	2018
Comunisti Italiani	✓	✓			
Democratici di Sinistra	✓				
Il Girasole	✓				
L'Ulivo		✓			
Liberi e Uguali					✓
Movimento 5 Stelle				✓	✓
Partito Comunista					✓
Partito di Alternativa Comunista			✓	✓	
Partito Democratico			✓	✓	✓
Partito Socialista			✓		
Per una Sinistra Rivoluzionaria					✓
Potere al Popolo!					✓
Rifondazione Comunista	✓	✓			
Rivoluzione Civile				✓	
Sinistra Critica			✓		
Sinistra Ecologia Libertà				✓	

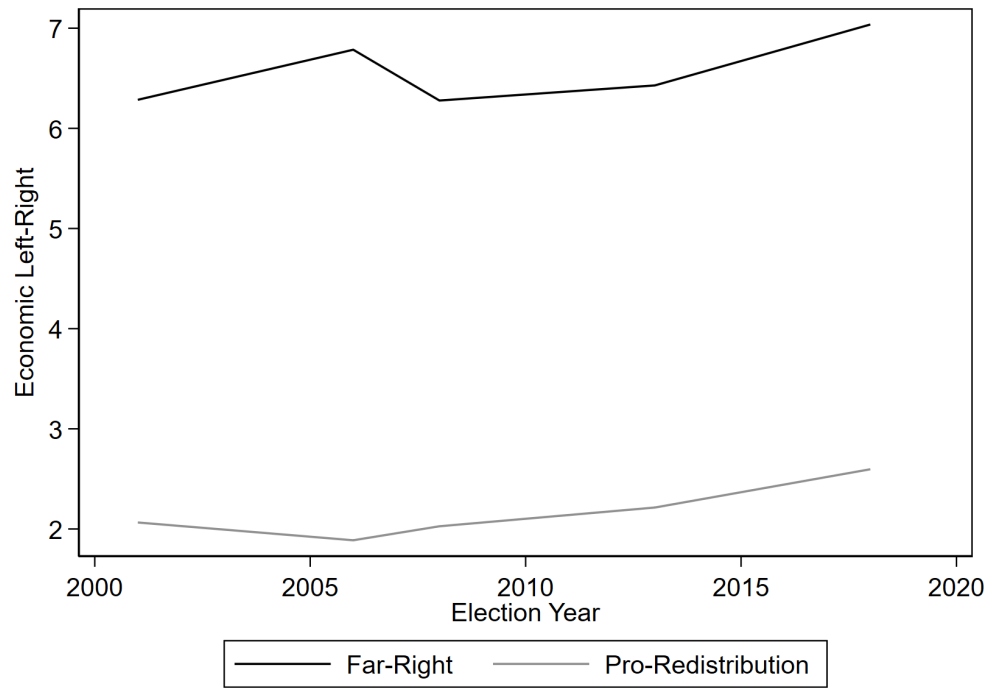


Figure S10.1: CHES Party Scores on Economic Left-Right

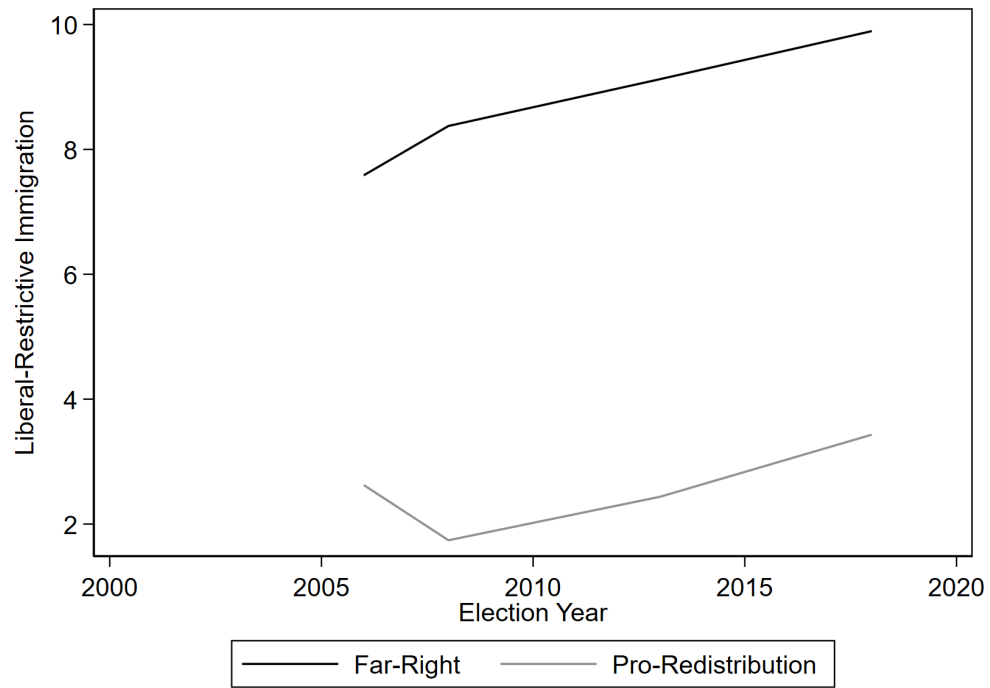


Figure S10.2: CHES Party Scores on Immigration Policy

S10.2 Examples of Far-Right and Pro-Redistribution Rhetoric on Public Service Provision



Matteo Salvini 
@matteosalvinimi



[#Salvini](#): immigrati in hotel, Cristina in camper. 4 MLN italiani disoccupati, i soldi vanno PRIMA a loro!
[#mattino5](#)

Translated from Italian by [Google](#)

[#Salvini](#) : immigrants in the hotel, Cristina in a camper. 4 MLN Italian unemployed, the money goes FIRST to them! [#mattino5](#)



9:12 AM · Jan 11, 2016 · Twitter for iPhone

192 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 332 Likes

Figure S10.3: Tweets by Far-Right Parties (Lega)

 **Giorgia Meloni** 
@GiorgiaMeloni

Caritas certifica che italiani in difficoltà sono più degli [#immigrati](#). I veri profughi sono gli [#italiani](#) dimenticati dal Governo. ST

[Translate Tweet](#)

 **Giorgia Meloni**
2 ore • 

I dati diffusi dalla Caritas certificano che nel sud d'Italia il numero di italiani in difficoltà che hanno chiesto aiuto alla Caritas è superiore a quello degli stranieri. Ormai i veri profughi sono gli italiani a casa loro, dimenticati dal Governo Renzi Alfano e ignorati dai riflettori dei grandi media sempre concentrati a parlare di immigrazione. Purtroppo alimentare la povertà e la disperazione è proprio quello che vuole il grande capitale per ridurre i salari e i diritti dei lavoratori e grazie al governo Renzi ci stanno riuscendo benissimo

il Giornale

DRAMMA AL SUD E PER I GIOVANI
**Rapporto choc:
italiani più poveri
degli immigrati**

7:05 PM · Oct 18, 2016 · Twitter for Android

122 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 129 Likes

Figure S10.4: Tweets by Far-Right Parties (Fratelli d'Italia)



CasaPound Italia 🇮🇹
@CasaPoundItalia



Alcuni deputati italiani si stanno imbarcando sulle navi delle Ong a tutela degli immigrati.

In tutti questi anni solo #CasaPound è stata fisicamente al fianco degli italiani in difficoltà, dai terremotati agli anziani sotto sfratto.

Translated from Italian by Google

Some Italian deputies are embarking on NGO ships to protect immigrants.

In all these years only #CasaPound has been physically alongside the Italians in difficulty, from earthquake victims to the elderly under eviction.



4:11 PM · Jul 24, 2018 · Twitter for iPhone

220 Retweets 11 Quote Tweets 652 Likes

Figure S10.5: Tweets by Far-Right Parties (Casapound)



Partito Democratico   
@pdnetwork



600mila famiglie, 500mila bambini. Con [#redditoinclusione](#) 2 miliardi di euro in servizi e aiuti per chi ha bisogno

Translated from Italian by Google

600 thousand families, 500 thousand children. With [#redditoinclusione](#) 2 billion euros in services and aid for those in need



deputatipd.it

Reddito di inclusione, inserimenti al lavoro, aiuti per le cure

Il reddito di inclusione è una misura concreta, sostenibile ed efficace, perché rivolta a chi ne ha davvero bisogno. Niente a che fare con la proposta di un ...

8:30 PM · Aug 26, 2017 · TweetDeck

72 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 117 Likes

Figure S10.6: Tweets by Pro-Redistribution Parties (Democratic Party)



MoVimento 5 Stelle 
@Mov5Stelle



"Distretti industriali sono diventati trappole. Le soluzioni sono servizi, infrastrutture e fondo da anticorruzione per abbassare tasse"

Translated from Italian by [Google](#)

"Industrial districts have become traps. The solutions are services, infrastructure and an anti-corruption fund to lower taxes"



 Luigi Di Maio

1:56 PM · Sep 24, 2017 · Twitter Web Client

19 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 39 Likes

Figure S10.7: Tweets by Pro-Redistribution Parties (Five Star Movement)



LIBERI e UGUALI

@liberi_uguali



La flessibilità del lavoro non ha prodotto sicurezze. Dare sicurezze sul lavoro e garantire servizi di welfare adeguati (ad esempio aumentare l'offerta di asili nido) è anche una politica per le famiglie [@PietroGrasso](#) a [@radioanchio](#)

Translated from Italian by [Google](#)

The flexibility of the work did not produce certainties. Providing safety at work and guaranteeing adequate welfare services (e.g. increasing the supply of nursery schools) is also a policy for families [@PietroGrasso](#) a [@radioanchio](#)

8:56 AM · Feb 9, 2018 · Twitter Web Client

23 Retweets **1** Quote Tweet **40** Likes

Figure S10.8: Tweets by Pro-Redistribution Parties (Liberi e Uguali)

S10.3 Results on Pro-Redistribution Parties

Table S10.2: Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs) and Pro-Redistribution Parties

	Pro-Redistribution	
	(1)	(2)
Distance (tertiles, ref. = 1 st)		
2 nd tertile	-0.023*** (0.002)	-0.013*** (0.002)
3 rd tertile	-0.042*** (0.003)	-0.025*** (0.003)
Mean Altitude		-0.000*** (0.000)
Population Over 65		0.139*** (0.024)
Female Population		0.179** (0.068)
University Graduates		0.150** (0.049)
Population Size		-0.000 (0.000)
Average Income		0.000*** (0.000)
Foreigners		-0.037 (0.031)
Province FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	16,194	16,194
<i>R</i> ²	0.60	0.62

Notes: The table reproduces Table 1 in the main text using the vote share for pro-redistribution parties as a dependent variable. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table S10.3: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Pro-Redistribution Parties

	Pro-Redistribution	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform (r)	-0.006* (0.003)	-0.008* (0.003)
Placebo (r_{t-1})		-0.005* (0.002)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,419	34,419
R^2	0.80	0.80

Notes: The table reproduces Table 2 in the main text using the vote share for pro-redistribution parties as a dependent variable. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

S11 Results on Turnout and Trust in Politics

Table S11.1: Public Service Deprivation (Distance to Public Service Hubs) and Turnout

	Turnout			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Distance (km)	-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)		
Distance (tertiles, ref. = 1 st)				
2 nd tertile			-0.024*** (0.001)	-0.006*** (0.001)
3 rd tertile			-0.050*** (0.002)	-0.016*** (0.002)
Mean Altitude		-0.000*** (0.000)		-0.000*** (0.000)
Population Over 65		-0.293*** (0.014)		-0.292*** (0.015)
Female Population		0.127** (0.045)		0.145** (0.046)
University Graduates		0.169*** (0.029)		0.176*** (0.030)
Population Size		-0.000* (0.000)		-0.000* (0.000)
Average Income		0.000*** (0.000)		0.000*** (0.000)
Foreigners		-0.094*** (0.013)		-0.101*** (0.013)
Province FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	16,194	16,194	16,194	16,194
<i>R</i> ²	0.60	0.67	0.61	0.67

Notes: The table reproduces Table 1 using turnout as a dependent variable. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table S11.2: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Turnout

	Turnout	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform (r)	0.003 (0.002)	0.005 ⁺ (0.003)
Placebo (r_{t-1})		0.006* (0.003)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,420	34,420
R^2	0.48	0.48

Notes: The table reproduces Table 2 in the main text using turnout as a dependent variable. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Table S11.3: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on Trust in Political Institutions

	Trust Scale		Single Survey Item			
	(1)	(2)	Parliament		Parties	
			(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Exposure to the reform	-0.127 (0.197)	-0.174 (0.208)	-0.176 (0.123)	-0.220 ⁺ (0.124)	0.049 (0.134)	0.046 (0.146)
Post 2010	0.183 (0.273)	0.109 (0.267)	0.114 (0.160)	0.059 (0.155)	0.069 (0.173)	0.050 (0.175)
Exposure × Post 2010	0.250 (0.250)	0.272 (0.249)	0.263 ⁺ (0.150)	0.260 ⁺ (0.147)	-0.013 (0.156)	0.012 (0.157)
Age between 25 and 34	-0.601* (0.246)	-0.516* (0.259)	-0.251 ⁺ (0.141)	-0.178 (0.146)	-0.351* (0.159)	-0.338* (0.168)
Age between 35 and 44	-0.589* (0.266)	-0.586* (0.269)	-0.270 ⁺ (0.148)	-0.249 ⁺ (0.150)	-0.319 ⁺ (0.177)	-0.338 ⁺ (0.181)
Age between 45 and 54	-0.395 (0.255)	-0.387 (0.262)	-0.176 (0.145)	-0.127 (0.148)	-0.219 (0.170)	-0.260 (0.177)
Age between 55 and 64	-0.365 (0.271)	-0.313 (0.279)	-0.137 (0.157)	-0.086 (0.159)	-0.228 (0.175)	-0.227 (0.183)
Age Over 65	-0.028 (0.300)	-0.001 (0.304)	-0.073 (0.174)	-0.036 (0.171)	0.044 (0.200)	0.035 (0.208)
Female	0.199 (0.129)	0.202 (0.130)	0.156* (0.074)	0.156* (0.074)	0.043 (0.076)	0.046 (0.077)
Elementary License	0.635 ⁺ (0.384)	0.391 (0.373)	0.021 (0.333)	-0.142 (0.279)	0.614* (0.251)	0.533 ⁺ (0.278)
Middle School License	1.070** (0.378)	0.883* (0.355)	0.250 (0.329)	0.116 (0.269)	0.820*** (0.241)	0.767** (0.266)
Professional Diploma	1.117* (0.435)	0.898* (0.408)	0.325 (0.351)	0.202 (0.294)	0.792** (0.270)	0.696* (0.284)
High School Diploma	1.063** (0.386)	0.854* (0.366)	0.285 (0.335)	0.146 (0.276)	0.778** (0.247)	0.708** (0.274)
Tertiary Degree	1.063* (0.447)	0.945* (0.424)	0.361 (0.360)	0.278 (0.301)	0.701* (0.279)	0.667* (0.301)
Teacher	0.584 (0.590)	0.402 (0.531)	0.469 (0.345)	0.333 (0.281)	0.115 (0.333)	0.070 (0.320)
Employee	0.489 (0.486)	0.344 (0.408)	0.352 (0.297)	0.280 (0.234)	0.137 (0.230)	0.064 (0.225)
Worker	0.213 (0.456)	0.097 (0.386)	0.317 (0.280)	0.243 (0.224)	-0.104 (0.218)	-0.145 (0.216)
Entrepreneur	0.582 (0.571)	0.318 (0.511)	0.559 ⁺ (0.334)	0.425 (0.291)	0.024 (0.314)	-0.106 (0.305)
Independent Contractor	0.695 (0.513)	0.628 (0.446)	0.637* (0.318)	0.588* (0.262)	0.058 (0.250)	0.040 (0.248)
Cooperative Member	0.652 (0.632)	0.378 (0.650)	0.879* (0.369)	0.714 ⁺ (0.365)	-0.227 (0.360)	-0.336 (0.390)
Other Contract	0.072 (0.602)	-0.107 (0.540)	-0.003 (0.327)	-0.072 (0.286)	0.075 (0.388)	-0.035 (0.352)
Unemployed, On Welfare	-0.013 (0.454)	-0.029 (0.387)	0.105 (0.281)	0.087 (0.223)	-0.118 (0.216)	-0.116 (0.215)

Continued on the next page

Table S11.3 continued

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Retired	0.103 (0.460)	0.016 (0.405)	0.271 (0.279)	0.224 (0.229)	-0.168 (0.233)	-0.208 (0.232)
Student	0.346 (0.511)	0.325 (0.460)	0.285 (0.307)	0.285 (0.261)	0.062 (0.259)	0.040 (0.268)
Mean Altitude		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)
Foreigners		-1.421 (1.954)		-0.765 (1.082)		-0.656 (1.127)
Population Over 65		0.427 (1.773)		-0.204 (1.001)		0.631 (0.979)
Female Population		0.780 (6.412)		-0.909 (3.667)		1.689 (3.484)
University Graduates		-1.707 (4.690)		-0.142 (2.676)		-1.565 (2.690)
Population Size		-0.000 (0.000)		-0.000 (0.000)		0.000 (0.000)
Average Income		0.000 (0.000)		0.000 (0.000)		0.000 (0.000)
Wave FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region FE		✓		✓		✓
<i>N</i>	1,068	1,061	1,068	1,061	1,068	1,061
<i>R</i> ²	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.12	0.06	0.10

Notes: The table reproduces Table 6 in the main text using trust in political institutions as a dependent variable. Robust standard errors in parentheses. ⁺ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

S12 Results on Support for the Incumbent

Table S12.1: Effect of Public Service Deprivation (Exposure to the 2010 Reform) on National Incumbent

	National Incumbent	
	(1)	(2)
Exposure to the reform (r)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.003)
Placebo (r_{t-1})		0.000 (0.003)
Municipality FE	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓
N	34,419	34,419
R^2	0.69	0.69

Notes: The table reproduces Table 2 using the vote share for the national incumbent as a dependent variable. Standard errors (in parentheses) clustered at the municipality level. + $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.