

**Ethnic diversity and support for populist parties:**

**The “right” road through political cynicism and lack of trust**

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**Running head: The political correlates of diversity**

## **Abstract**

Putnam's (2007) constrict claim states that ethnic diversity has serious consequences for social cohesion, making people distrustful and leery. The present contribution extends this claim by including political cynicism and trust as side effects of diversity. Moreover, we nuance this claim by considering citizens' social-ideological attitudes as moderators of diversity effects. Using a Dutch nationally stratified sample ( $N = 628$ ), we showed that both objective and perceived diversity were associated with more political cynicism and less trust, but only for those high in right-wing attitudes (i.e., social dominance orientation and particularly authoritarianism). Furthermore, only political cynicism was a unique predictor of greater populist party support. Implications for the ongoing debates on the rise in diversity and populist parties are discussed.

*Key words:* ethnic diversity; social-ideological attitudes; political cynicism; political trust; populist party support

Based on data from over 30,000 people in 41 different U.S. communities, the renowned political scientist Robert Putnam concluded that - other things being equal - more ethnic diversity is associated with less trust between and within ethnic groups (Putnam, 2007). In addition to the devastating consequences for social cohesion within communities, Putnam also suggested that higher diversity has repercussions on people's ideas about and engagement in politics. In particular, Putnam found that greater diversity was related to less confidence in local government and leaders, less belief in own political efficacy, and lower expectancies of politics. Following Putnam's infamous claims, numerous studies tested the 'hunkering down' hypothesis with regards to general and intergroup trust (see Hewstone, 2015; Schaeffer, 2014; van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014). However, relatively little attention has been given to the proposed political consequences of diversity (for a notable exception, see McLaren, 2017). This is remarkable, especially because citizens' disillusionment in politics and politicians may lie at the basis of increased support for populist parties; an issue that has become increasingly important in many Western countries (e.g., Koopmans & Muis, 2009; Rydgren, 2008).

### **Political trust and cynicism**

Considering the political repercussions, an important question is whether diversity within communities merely erodes political trust and engagement among citizens, or whether diversity also instills a more 'angry' expression of political disillusionment in the form of political cynicism, leading people to reject traditional politics and political parties. As such, our first hypothesis pertains to the negative relation between diversity on the one hand, and lower political trust and greater political cynicism on the other.

Fifty-odd years ago, the concept of political cynicism was introduced as "the extent to which people hold politicians and politics in disrepute" (Agger, Goldstein, & Pearl, 1961, p.

477). Pattyn, Van Hiel, Dhont, and Onraet (2012) showed that political cynics' suspicion towards politic(ian)s can be empirically distinguished from mere lack of political trust. Indeed, although political cynicism and trust share communalities, as evinced by their high negative correlation, cynicism has unique elements as well. Political cynicism is an antagonistic form of contempt, with anger and hostility as two of its core elements, whereas political trust merely captures content and faith in the (performance of the) current regime (Eisinger, 2000). Hence, individuals high in political cynicism generally have negative feelings towards and negative expectancies about the intentions and actions of politicians, whereas citizens low in political trust merely do not ascribe positive attributes to politicians, without necessarily being explicitly negative. Exactly because of the powerful negative emotions embedded in political cynicism, it may be more consequential in shaping political support and behavior, compared to the more 'neutral' lack of trust and disengagement described by Putnam (2007).

Political cynicism, rather than mere lack of trust in traditional political leaders, may push people to populist parties rejecting the political establishment and emphasizing the contrasts between the "common people" and the "privileged elites" (see Bergh, 2004). These populist 'protest' parties can be located at the far-right as well as the far-left end of the political continuum, though the majority of populist movements are clearly right-wing in most Western countries (McClosky & Chong, 1985). Our second hypothesis predicts a substantial relative contribution of political cynicism above and beyond mere lack of trust in the prediction of support for (right)-populist parties.

### **Individual differences shape diversity effects**

Although Putnam (2007) proposed that diversity has negative overall effects within communities, many subsequent studies found rather inconsistent evidence (Hewstone, 2015).

As a result, various researchers suggested that diversity effects are not generalizable, but rather depend on individual difference variables because not everyone reacts in similar ways to diversity (e.g., Stolle, Soroka, & Johnston, 2008). Specifically, diversity should trigger negative reactions especially (or even exclusively) in people who feel most threatened by diversity, based on their social-ideological beliefs and underlying motivations (e.g., Asbrock & Kauff, 2015; Van Assche, Roets, Dhont, & Van Hiel, 2014, 2016).

According to Duckitt's (2001) Dual-Process Model, social-ideological attitudes fall apart into two broad and relatively independent dimensions. The first dimension, often operationalized as Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA; Altemeyer, 1981), encompasses a set of conservative sociopolitical and cultural attitudes including a strict adherence to conventional norms and values (i.e., conventionalism), an uncritical subjection to authority (i.e., authoritarian submission), and feelings of aggression towards norm violators (i.e., authoritarian aggression). The second dimension taps into the economic-hierarchical domain and is often operationalized as Social Dominance Orientation (SDO; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994), which reflects acceptance of inequality and the belief that social groups should be hierarchically organized.

Recent studies corroborated that RWA moderates (i.e., strengthens) the relationship between diversity and negative intergroup attitudes (e.g., Kauff, Asbrock, Thorner, & Wagner, 2013; Van Assche et al., 2016), and similar interaction patterns were found for individual differences in dangerous worldviews (Sibley et al., 2013) and conformity values (Fasel, Green, & Sarrasin, 2013), two concepts closely related to authoritarianism (Duckitt, 2001). For SDO, no such studies are currently available and, therefore, the role of SDO in shaping diversity effects is yet unknown. However, especially when it comes to diversity and (political) trust, we expect that RWA should play a more central role compared to SDO, given that maintaining social cohesion and security is an underlying motivation for RWA, but not

for SDO (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010; Kessler & Cohrs, 2008). Indeed, conventionalism and traditionalism are core aspects of RWA, and people endorsing these beliefs expect political leaders to be the guardians of these values (Altemeyer, 1981). Hence, to high RWA individuals, increased ethnic diversity may represent politicians' failure to live up to that task, and should trigger political cynicism and a lack of trust. As such, our third hypothesis states that the erosion of political trust and the upsurge in political cynicism in diverse communities applies especially to people high in RWA and SDO. Finally however, our fourth hypothesis states that when RWA and SDO are considered simultaneously, only RWA substantially moderates the association of diversity with political trust and cynicism, with particularly cynicism further relating to populist party support.

### **The present study**

Extending Putnam's (2007) claim that higher ethnic diversity makes people less trusting of political leaders and disengaged from politics, Hypothesis 1 states that diversity also relates to a more vigorous expression of political disillusion in the form of political cynicism. Moreover, we expect that cynicism, due to its "arousing" nature is a more potent basis of support for extremist-populist parties compared to the rather "neutral" state of lack of trust (Hypothesis 2). Based on recent research demonstrating the role of social-political attitudes as moderators of diversity effects, Hypothesis 3 states that especially among individuals high in RWA (and potentially SDO), diversity will be related to more political cynicism, less trust, and more populist party support.

Finally, we test a moderated mediation model in which social-ideological attitudes simultaneously moderate the association of diversity with political attitudes, which further relate to populist party support (expecting a more prominent role for RWA as a moderator and cynicism as a mediator; Hypothesis 4). To investigate these issues, Koopmans and Schaeffer

(2016) highlighted the importance of taking into account objective as well as subjective diversity. Indeed, where some studies (e.g., Semyonov, Raijman, Tov, & Schmidt, 2004) indicated that especially perceptions of diversity have detrimental effects, other studies (e.g., Van Assche et al., 2014; 2016) showed that objective and perceived diversity yield similar effects on intergroup attitudes.

## Method

### Participants

A nationally stratified sample of Dutch citizens ( $N = 628$ ) without migration background from 531 neighborhoods across the Netherlands completed an online survey.<sup>1</sup> Respondents first completed a questionnaire about their political attitudes, after which they completed a set of items concerning their social-ideological attitudes. All participants completed all relevant measures, yielding no missing data. The mean age of the sample was 54 years ( $SD = 15.88$ ) and 51% were men (see Appendix A for more information).

### Measures

Respondents answered the items for perceived diversity, social-ideological attitudes and populist party support on seven-point scales ranging from one (*none/totally disagree*) to seven (*a lot/totally agree*). The items for political attitudes were administered on five-point scales anchored by one (*totally disagree*) and five (*totally agree*). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations among all variables.<sup>2</sup>

**Diversity.** Data from the Central Bureau for Statistics in the Netherlands provided the number of non-Western minority members per neighborhood (i.e., zip code). We calculated the percentage as a function of the total number of registered inhabitants per zip code to get an objective diversity indicator. Two items tapping into subjectively perceived diversity in one's

direct environment (Semyonov et al., 2004): ‘How many people from immigrant origin live in your municipality/city?’ and ‘How many people from immigrant origin live in your street?’. Both items were highly positively interrelated ( $r = .57$ ).

**Social-ideological attitudes.** Funke’s (2005) 12-item RWA-scale was administered (e.g., ‘Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues children should learn’;  $\alpha = .67$ ). SDO was measured with eight items (see Pratto et al., 1994); e.g., ‘Some groups of people are simply not the equals of others’;  $\alpha = .80$ ).

**Political attitudes.** The 10-item political cynicism and 10-item political trust scales of Pattyn and colleagues (2012) were administered. An example item for cynicism is ‘Most politicians are willing to throw their ideals or promises overboard if this increases their power’. Cronbach’s alpha was .91. A sample item for trust is ‘One can confidently trust politicians’;  $\alpha = .93$ .

**Populist party support.** In the Netherlands, the ‘Partij Voor de Vrijheid’ (PVV; Party for Freedom) is the prime example of a populist, anti-establishment party that has achieved a prominent place in the country’s political landscape. PVV can be considered a right-populist party, and left-populist parties are rather marginalized in modern-day Dutch politics. Respondents completed the item ‘To what extent do you support the program and/or ideas of PVV’.

## Results

**Preliminary analyses.** We investigated whether multilevel analyses were warranted because our data were somewhat nested (individuals were located within zip codes), though 73% of the respondents in our sample had a unique zip code ( $N = 457$ ). These analyses indicated that objective neighborhood diversity could be considered as an individual-level variable in the present study (Appendix A).

**Simple regression analyses.** Next, we investigated whether social-ideological attitudes moderated the associations of diversity with our political attitudes (Table 2). We conducted twelve regression analyses, testing the effects of either objective or perceived diversity on political cynicism, political trust and PVV-support, with RWA or SDO as moderator, followed up by simple slope analyses, testing the significance of the regression slopes at low ( $< 1SD$  below the mean) and high ( $> 1SD$  above the mean) levels of the moderator. All predictors were centered before running the analyses (Aiken & West, 1991). In line with our expectations, all interaction effects for RWA were significant. Objective and perceived diversity were only associated with more political cynicism, less trust and more PVV-support among people high in RWA, and not among those low in RWA. For SDO, only the interaction term with objective diversity on cynicism was significant. Nonetheless, a closer look at the simple slopes indicated that, similar to the results for RWA, only among those high (versus low) in SDO, objective and perceived diversity tended to be negatively related to political trust, and positively related to political cynicism and PVV-support.

**Moderated mediation analyses: RWA and SDO separately.** To test the conditional indirect effects of diversity on PVV-support via political cynicism and trust, we conducted four bootstrap analyses (5,000 bootstrap samples) using Hayes' Process macro (2013, Model 7) in which the associations between the predictor (either objective or perceived diversity) and both mediators (political cynicism and trust) were moderated by RWA (Figure 1) or SDO (Figure 2). The model tests revealed that the indirect associations of diversity with PVV-support through political cynicism were only significant for those high in RWA, not for low authoritarians (Table 3; Figures 1a and 1b). The indirect associations of diversity with PVV-support through political trust were not significant, neither for high nor for low authoritarians. Similarly, the model tests revealed that the indirect associations of diversity with PVV-support through political cynicism were only significant for those high in SDO (Table 3;

Figures 2a and 2b). The indirect associations of diversity with PVV-support through political trust were not significant for people both high and low in SDO.

**Moderated mediation analyses: RWA and SDO simultaneously.** Interestingly, two final models (one for objective and one for perceived diversity) considering both RWA and SDO as moderators *simultaneously* (Hayes, 2013; Model 9) indicated that only RWA was a unique moderator for the diversity effects. Finally, as expected, political cynicism (all  $\beta$ s > 0.25, all  $t$ s > 3.45, all  $p$ s < .001), but not political trust (all  $\beta$ s < -0.09, all  $t$ s < -1.54, all  $p$ s > .12), further related to more PVV-support in all six moderated mediation models. Hence, when included together, only political cynicism turned out to be a unique predictor of right-populist party support.<sup>3</sup>

## Discussion

The current research focused on psychological and socio-structural factors that are thought to play a fundamental role in individuals' views on politics and politicians. Building on previous findings, our primary objective was to delineate the interplay between neighborhood ethnic diversity and social-ideological attitudes to predict right-populist party support via political cynicism and trust.

### The political correlates of diversity

Corroborating our expectations, our analyses revealed positive associations between diversity and political cynicism and negative associations between diversity and trust (Hypothesis 1) which, importantly, were dependent upon individual differences. Indeed, we found that, *exclusively* among those who held right-wing attitudes, diversity was related to lower political trust and greater cynicism (Hypothesis 3). Furthermore, political cynicism, but not political trust, was in turn uniquely predictive of more right-populist party support (Hypothesis 2). Hence, these results indicate that, although diversity does not inevitably relate

to support for populist, anti-establishment parties, the combination with pre-existing social-ideological attitudes seems to produce a potent cocktail for political cynicism and stronger support for right-populist parties. These findings add to the growing insight in the differential effects of diversity for people low versus high in right-wing social-ideological attitudes, which is commonly explained in terms of the latter individuals being most sensitive to the perceived cultural threat posed by diversity (e.g., Sibley et al., 2013; Van Assche et al., 2014; 2016).

The moderation effects were always significant for authoritarianism and often non-significant for SDO (Hypothesis 4).<sup>4</sup> Previous studies already showed differences between RWA and SDO in their moderating effects (Duckitt & Sibley, 2010), and our findings align with the rationale that ethnic diversity particularly threatens authoritarians' underlying motivation to maintain social order and security, but it is less relevant for social dominators' motivation to maintain social hierarchy (see also Sibley et al., 2013).

### **The future of diversity studies**

With the rise of ethnic diversity in Western-European communities, the question of whether and how this diversity affects social and political life has become an increasingly prominent and contested topic of academic and political debate. Since Putnam's article (2007), over 90 studies have investigated the association between diversity and societal trust (Schaeffer, 2014; van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014). However, in addition to pointing out the key role of individual differences in this association, the present results also demonstrated that cynicism may be a relevant variable to include when studying the political repercussions of diversity. Indeed, diversity showed similar relations with political cynicism and trust among right-wing individuals, but *only* political cynicism uniquely explained the relation between diversity and right-populist party support in these individuals. In response to (perceived)

growing local minority proportions, right-wing individuals might thus act upon their feelings of cynicism by casting a populist vote. Future studies investigating the consequences of diversity would therefore benefit from including political cynicism in addition to trust, especially when focusing on political party support. Such studies could also explore the longitudinal and potentially bidirectional associations between populist party support and political attitudes over time.

An important merit of the present study is the inclusion of both the actual and the perceived diversity within the respondents' direct environment. Indeed, the similar patterns of results for objective and perceived diversity refute alternative interpretations in terms of biased or extreme responding that may apply to studies only measuring perceived diversity. As such, this study offers an empirically substantiated view on the additive and interactive influence of contextual differences in ethnic diversity and individual differences in social-ideological attitudes on relevant contemporary topics such as political cynicism, trust, and right-populist party support.

Nevertheless, it remains relatively unknown how our findings generalize to other political contexts, particularly in those countries where left-populist parties gain a substantial share of votes (e.g., Greece). In such countries, it would be possible to examine the tentative hypothesis that diversity relates to more left-populist support, especially among people scoring low on authoritarianism. Indeed, one may expect that whereas a higher minority proportion can trigger cynicism and lack of trust in high authoritarians, it may evoke and galvanize positive diversity beliefs in low authoritarians. These beliefs, in turn, may lead them to support left-populist parties if these parties advocate a strong multicultural rhetoric that they no longer find in traditional (left) parties.

Finally, a potential limitation in the current study resides in the framing of the items. Indeed, all political trust items are positively framed, whereas all cynicism items are negatively coded. This might have affected our findings about the relative importance of political cynicism (compared to political trust) in the prediction of populist party support. Further research with newly-developed scales that are more balanced in this regard, could account for this potential limitation.

## **Conclusion**

The present study brings together the hitherto dissociated research lines into one political-psychological model. Our results indicate that, via increased feelings of political cynicism, higher levels of ethnic diversity may push citizens with right-wing social-ideological attitudes to support populist and anti-establishment political agendas.

## Notes

<sup>[1]</sup> Power analyses, conducted with the ‘pwr’ package (Champely, Ekstrom, Dalgaard, Gill, & De Rosario, 2015) in R (version 3.3.1; R Core Team, 2015), indicated that with our sample size, we had a power of approximately 97% to detect a small-to-medium sized interaction effect ( $\beta = .15$ ; two-sided test; Gignac & Szodorai, 2016). The dataset was collected through an independent ISO 26362-certified survey company as a part of a larger multi-wave panel study (OSF: <https://osf.io/hbs8w>). We analyzed data from the second wave, which specifically tapped into political attitudes. From every zip code region, at least five respondents were recruited, providing us with a heterogeneous sample of adults from all regions in the Netherlands. A zip code region in the Netherlands is comprised of all zip codes that share the first two digits (for example: zip code region one consists of all zip codes between 1000 and 1099, zip code region two consists of all zip codes between 1100 and 1199, ..., zip-code region 90 consists of all zip codes between 9900 and 9999). A zip code region covers about 82 square kilometers.

<sup>[2]</sup> In order to check the distinctiveness of political cynicism and political trust, we conducted a principal component analysis with direct oblimin rotation including the items of both scales. The pattern matrix clearly showed two factors, with each item loading primarily on its specific factor (Appendix B; see also Pattyn et al., 2012). Moreover, further analyses indicated that there were no multicollinearity issues (all VIFs < 2.84).

<sup>[3]</sup> Running the analyses with age, gender, education, and income level as control variables yielded similar results. Additionally, a comparative test (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) indicated that the indirect effect via political cynicism was slightly stronger than the indirect effect via political trust. Particularly, the difference scores ( $\Delta b = 0.037$ ; boot *S.E.* = 0.027;  $CI_{95} = [0.004; 0.084]$  for objective diversity; and  $\Delta b = 0.024$ ; boot *S.E.* = 0.017;  $CI_{95} = [0.008; 0.040]$  for perceived diversity), specified that political cynicism had a slightly larger unique

ability to account for the associations of diversity with populist party support. Finally, a test of a model investigating the conditional effects of objective diversity on perceived diversity revealed that the strong and positive associations between objective and perceived diversity were especially pronounced among individuals with high RWA and SDO levels. Detailed results of these additional analyses are available in Appendix C.

<sup>[4]</sup> Notably, although the interaction effects with RWA were significant and those with SDO were not, the interaction effects themselves were not significantly different from each other.

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## Tables and figures

**Table 1.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Variables.

Measure	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Objective Diversity	11.02	11.41	-					
2. Perceived Diversity	3.38	1.47	.59***	-				
3. Authoritarianism	3.91	0.77	-.06	.02	-			
4. Social Dominance Orientation	3.05	1.06	.01	.07	.32***	-		
5. Political Cynicism	3.35	0.73	.01	.07	.30***	.13**	-	
6. Political Trust	2.74	0.68	-.04	-.08*	-.18***	-.08*	-.75***	-
7. Populist Party Support	3.07	2.15	.04	.11*	.45***	.32***	.32***	-.27***

Note: \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . The response scales ranged from 0% to 100% for objective diversity, from 1 to 7 for authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and populist party support, and from 1 to 5 for political cynicism and trust.

**Table 2.** Standardized and unstandardized estimates (95% confidence intervals in brackets) of regression analyses for Political Cynicism, Political Trust, and Populist Party Support.

	Political Cynicism		Political Trust		Populist Party Support	
	$\beta$	$b$ (CI <sub>95</sub> )	$\beta$	$b$ (CI <sub>95</sub> )	$\beta$	$b$ (CI <sub>95</sub> )
Objective Diversity (OD)	.05	0.30 (-0.29; 0.88)	-.07	-0.44 (-1.01; 0.12)	.08	1.56 (-0.06; 3.17)
RWA	.22***	0.21 (0.13; 0.30)	-.16***	-0.14 (-0.23; -0.06)	.44***	1.23 (1.01; 1.45)
OD X RWA	.10*	0.88 (0.10; 1.67)	-.09*	-0.74 (-1.50; -0.02)	.13***	3.32 (1.28; 5.36)
<i>OD effect for low RWA</i>	-.06	-0.38 (-1.20; 0.44)	.02	-0.13 (-0.67; 0.92)	-.06	-1.06 (-3.40; 1.27)
<i>OD effect for high RWA</i>	.15*	0.98 (0.12; 1.83)	-.17**	-1.01 (-1.84; -0.18)	.22***	4.18 (1.95; 6.41)
Perceived Diversity (PD)	.04	0.02 (-0.02; 0.07)	-.10*	-0.04 (-0.09; 0.00)	.10*	0.14 (0.01; 0.28)
RWA	.18***	0.17 (0.08; 0.26)	-.13**	0.12 (-0.20; -0.03)	.44***	1.22 (0.96; 1.46)
PD X RWA	.17***	0.10 (0.04; 0.17)	-.14**	-0.09 (-0.14; -0.03)	.12**	0.23 (0.06; 0.40)
<i>PD effect for low RWA</i>	-.12	-0.06 (-0.13; 0.01)	.04	0.02 (-0.05; 0.08)	-.02	-0.03 (-0.24; 0.17)
<i>PD effect for high RWA</i>	.20***	0.10 (0.04; 0.16)	-.24***	-0.11 (-0.17; -0.05)	.22***	0.32 (0.15; 0.50)
Objective Diversity (OD)	.02	0.15 (-0.41; 0.72)	-.05	-0.31 (-0.85; 0.23)	.07	1.25 (-0.50; 2.99)
SDO	.13**	0.09 (0.03; 0.15)	-.08 <sup>a</sup>	-0.05 (-0.11; 0.00)	.32***	0.64 (0.47; 0.82)
OD X SDO	.09*	0.58 (0.03; 1.12)	.00	0.00 (-0.52; 0.52)	.06	1.04 (-0.57; 2.65)
<i>OD effect for low SDO</i>	-.07	-0.46 (-1.23; 0.31)	-.05	-0.31 (-1.04; 0.42)	.01	0.13 (-2.19; 2.45)
<i>OD effect for high SDO</i>	.12 <sup>a</sup>	0.77 (-0.08; 1.62)	-.05	-0.31 (-1.11; 0.50)	.13 <sup>a</sup>	2.36 (-0.22; 4.94)
Perceived Diversity (PD)	.06	0.03 (-0.01; 0.07)	-.08 <sup>a</sup>	-0.04 (-0.08; 0.01)	.09*	0.13 (0.00; 0.26)
SDO	.13**	0.09 (0.03; 0.15)	-.07 <sup>a</sup>	-0.05 (-0.10; 0.01)	.31***	0.63 (0.46; 0.81)
PD X SDO	.06	0.03 (-0.01; 0.07)	-.02	-0.01 (-0.05; 0.03)	.07	0.10 (-0.02; 0.21)
<i>PD effect for low SDO</i>	-.01	0.00 (-0.06; 0.06)	-.05	-0.03 (-0.08; 0.03)	.02	0.03 (-0.15; 0.21)
<i>PD effect for high SDO</i>	.12*	0.06 (0.00; 0.12)	-.10 <sup>a</sup>	-0.04 (-0.10; 0.01)	.16**	0.23 (0.06; 0.41)

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 3.** Standardized and unstandardized estimates (95% confidence intervals in brackets) of indirect effects of Objective or Perceived Diversity on Populist Party Support via Political Cynicism and Political Trust at high and low levels of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) or Social Dominance Orientation (SDO).

		Indirect Effect via Political Cynicism		Indirect Effect via Political Trust	
		$\beta$	$b$ (CI <sub>95</sub> )	$\beta$	$b$ (CI <sub>95</sub> )
Objective Diversity	<i>For low RWA</i>	-.02	-0.34 (-1.53; 0.50)	.00	-0.02 (-0.45; 0.15)
	<i>For high RWA</i>	.05*	0.85 (0.13; 2.02)	.01	0.16 (-0.31; 0.92)
Objective Diversity	<i>For low SDO</i>	-.02	-0.34 (-1.20; 0.32)	.00	-0.02 (-0.45; 0.15)
	<i>For high SDO</i>	.03*	0.65 (0.06; 1.69)	.01	0.16 (-0.31; 0.92)
Perceived Diversity	<i>For low RWA</i>	-.03	-0.05 (-0.09; 0.02)	.00	0.00 (-0.04; 0.01)
	<i>For high RWA</i>	.06**	0.08 (0.03; 0.18)	.01	0.01 (-0.04; 0.09)
Perceived Diversity	<i>For low SDO</i>	.00	0.00 (-0.06; 0.06)	.00	0.01 (-0.01; 0.05)
	<i>For high SDO</i>	.03*	0.05 (0.01; 0.12)	.01	0.02 (-0.01; 0.07)

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Figure 1.** Standardized results of the models testing the associations of Objective Diversity (Figure 1a) and Perceived Diversity (Figure 1b), with Populist Party Support via Political Cynicism and Trust, at high and low levels of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA).

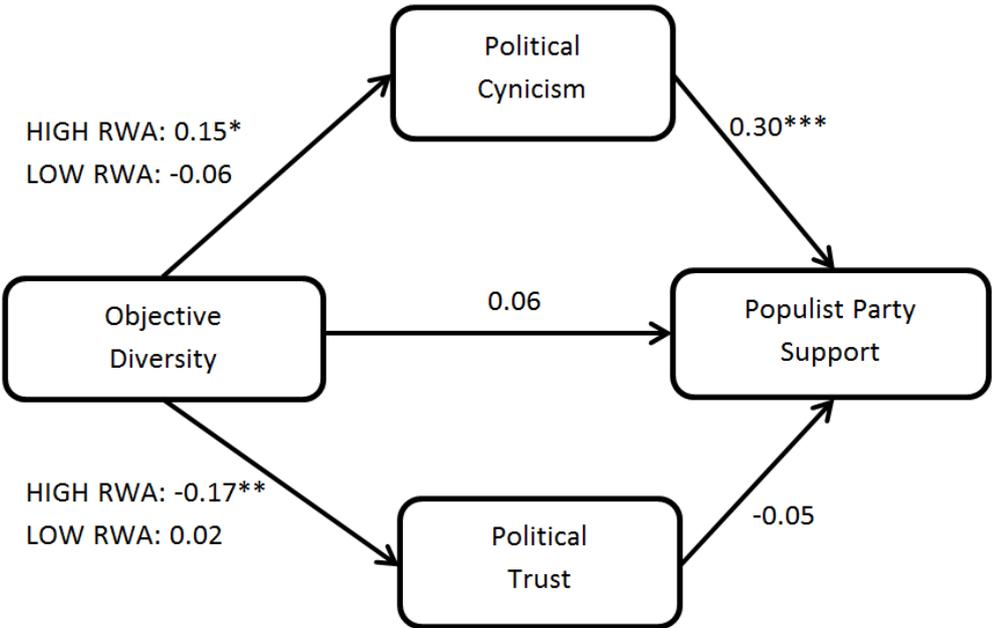


Figure 1a.

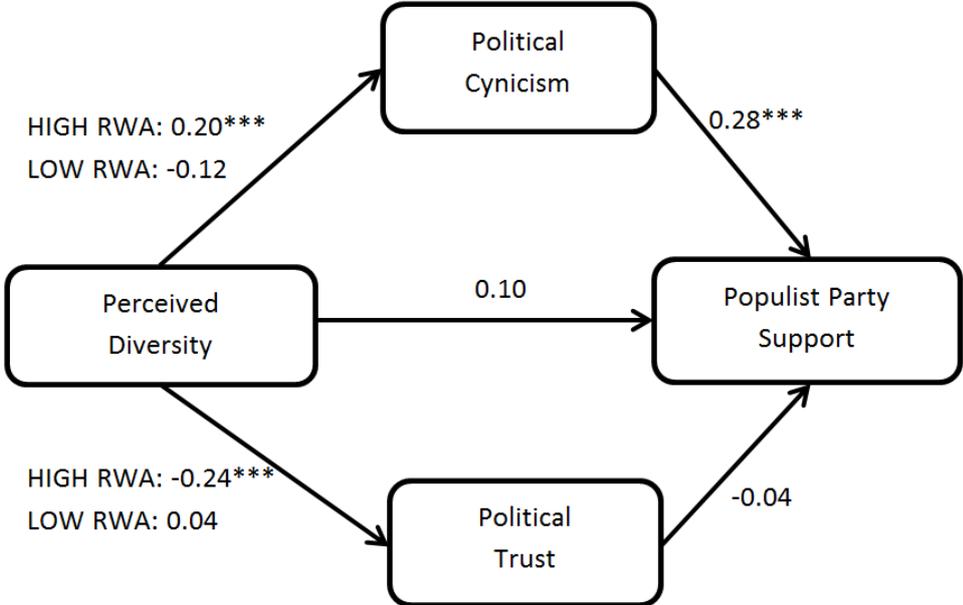


Figure 1b.

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . The total explained variance ( $R^2$ ) in populist party support was 11.79% ( $F(3, 462) = 18.63; p < .001$ ) and 10.74% ( $F(3, 462) = 18.54; p < .001$ ) in the model with objective and perceived diversity, respectively.

**Figure 2.** Standardized results of the models testing the associations of Objective Diversity (Figure 2a) and Perceived Diversity (Figure 2b), with Populist Party Support via Political Cynicism and Trust, at high and low levels of Social Dominance Orientation (SDO).

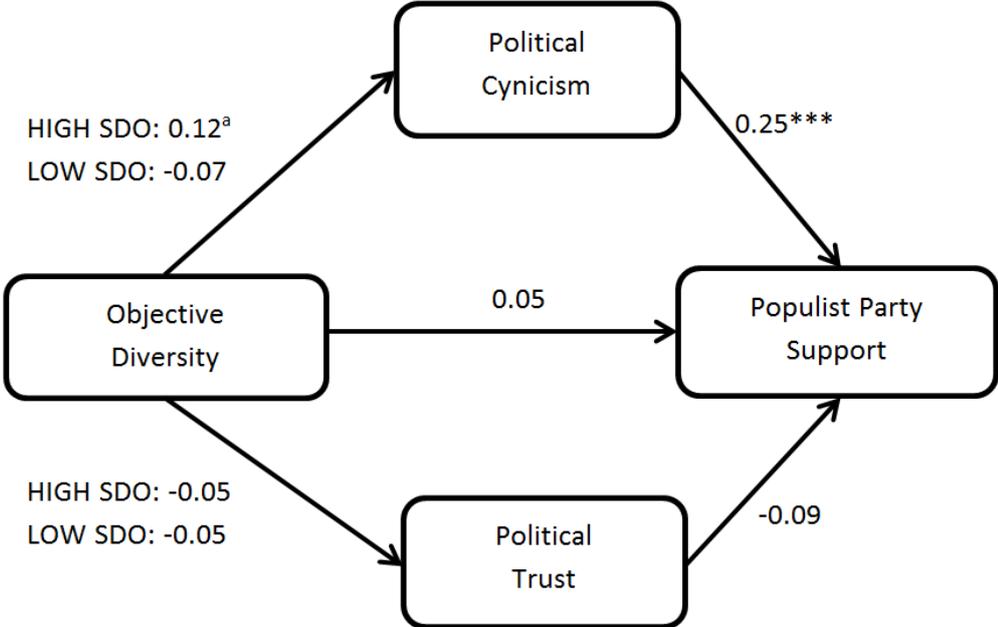


Figure 2a.

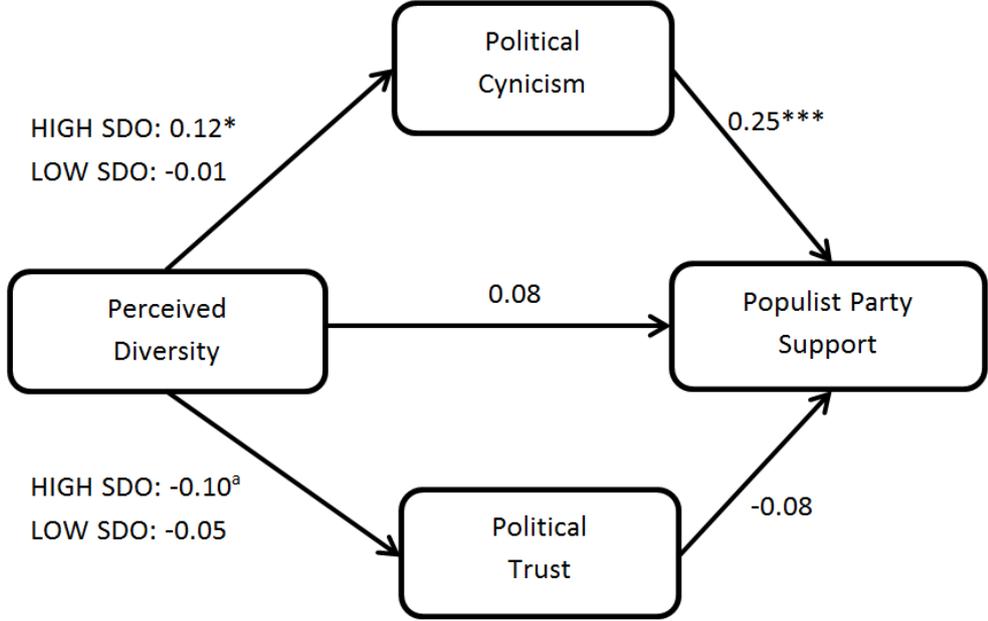


Figure 2b.

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . The total explained variance ( $R^2$ ) in populist party support was 10.29% ( $F(3, 462) = 17.67$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and 10.74% ( $F(3, 462) = 18.54$ ;  $p < .001$ ) in the model with objective and perceived diversity, respectively.

## Supplementary materials

### Appendix A. Additional Sample Information.

**Demographics.** Males were slightly overrepresented (49.00% in our sample was female versus 50.49% in the general population). As for age, younger adults were slightly underrepresented. In our sample, 8.60% were between 18 and 24 years old (versus 12.07% between 15 and 24 in the general population), 45.80% were between 25 and 54 years old (versus 39.52% in general), 18.00% were between 55 and 64 years old (versus 13.28% in general), and 19.60% were older than 65 (versus 18.73% in general). Further, thirty-five percent of the participants had completed primary school, 40% had completed high school and 24% had a college or university degree. Annual gross household income showed a fairly normal distribution, with 6% earning less than €11,000, 13% between €11,000 and €23,000, 23% between €23,000 and €34,000, 22% between €34,000 and €56,000, and 12% earned more than €56,000. Twenty-four percent of the respondents chose the option “I do not want to disclose this information”. Finally, 47% of the participants was Christian, 41% did not have a religious denomination, 5% were atheist, 2% were agnostic, and 4% categorized themselves as belonging to an ‘other religion’.

**Preliminary Analyses.** We estimated empty (intercept-only) models, which provide insight in the variances in our outcomes at the individual and contextual level. We also assessed the intraclass correlations (ICCs) to explore if there was substantial between-level variance, which would warrant the use of multilevel modeling. Taking into account the higher-level structure did not improve the goodness-of-fit statistics of each model significantly (i.e., changes in  $-2 * \log\text{-likelihood}$  were  $\chi^2(1) = 0.00$ ,  $p > .250$  and  $\chi^2(1) = 0.00$ ,  $p > .250$  for the mediators political cynicism and trust, and  $\chi^2(1) = 3.31$ ,  $p = .079$  for the outcome PVV-support, respectively). Additionally, the ICC’s were small in size (0.00 for political cynicism, 0.01 for trust, and 0.09 for PVV-support).

**Appendix B.** Pattern Matrix Coefficients among Cynicism and Trust Items.

Item	Factor 1: Cynicism	Factor 2: Trust
Almost all politicians will sell out their ideals or break their promises if it will increase their power	.79	
Politicians pretend to care more about people than they really do	.78	
Politicians primarily act out of self-interest	.77	
No man can hope to stay honest once he enters politics	.76	
Politicians are only interested in getting and maintaining power	.75	
Our political leaders are prepared to lie to us whenever it suits their purposes	.70	
If a politician sticks to his ideals and principles, he is unlikely to reach the top of his profession	.68	
All politicians are bad – some are just worse than others	.65	
People are very frequently manipulated by politicians	.48	
Corruption is a serious issue in our political system	.39	<i>.30</i>
It is often possible to trust politicians with a restful heart		<i>.86</i>
Most politicians are confident without having to be much controlled		<i>.83</i>
In general, one can rely on politicians to do the right thing		<i>.83</i>
Most politicians are honest and in no way corrupt		<i>.78</i>
Politicians put the interests of the people over the interests of their own party		<i>.77</i>
Politicians usually have good intentions		<i>.77</i>
When politicians make statements on television or other media, they usually tell the truth		<i>.70</i>
I have good faith in the political system		<i>.67</i>
Politicians usually try to keep the promises they made during the elections		<i>.66</i>
Most politicians care about their constituencies		<i>.65</i>

Note: Factor coefficients are shown only if > 0.30. Cross-loadings in italics.

**Appendix C.** Additional Analyses Controlling for Background Characteristics.

**Table A.** Unstandardized estimates (95% confidence intervals in brackets) of regression analyses controlling for age, gender, education, and income level.

	Political Cynicism	Political Trust	Populist Party Support
	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )
Objective Diversity (OD)	0.38 (-0.23; 0.98)	-0.51 <sup>a</sup> (-1.10; 0.08)	1.80* (0.20; 3.41)
RWA	0.13** (0.04; 0.22)	-0.10* (-0.19; -0.01)	1.10*** (0.86; 1.33)
OD X RWA	0.82* (0.01; 1.64)	-0.61 <sup>a</sup> (-1.41; 0.09)	2.74** (0.71; 4.77)
<i>OD effect for low RWA</i>	-0.25 (-1.10; 0.59)	-0.05 (-0.87; 0.78)	-0.37 (-2.70; 1.97)
<i>OD effect for high RWA</i>	1.01* (0.11; 1.90)	-0.98* (-1.85; -0.18)	3.97*** (1.76; 6.17)
Perceived Diversity (PD)	0.03 (-0.01; 0.08)	-0.06* (-0.10; -0.01)	0.18** (0.05; 0.32)
RWA	0.12** (0.03; 0.21)	-0.09* (-0.17; 0.00)	0.95*** (0.68; 1.23)
PD X RWA	0.09** (0.03; 0.15)	-0.08** (-0.14; -0.02)	0.23** (0.05; 0.41)
<i>PD effect for low RWA</i>	-0.04 (-0.10; 0.03)	0.01 (-0.06; 0.07)	0.00 (-0.21; 0.22)
<i>PD effect for high RWA</i>	0.10*** (0.04; 0.16)	-0.12*** (-0.17; -0.06)	0.37*** (0.19; 0.54)
Objective Diversity (OD)	0.17 (-0.37; 0.72)	-0.32 (-0.85; 0.21)	1.58 <sup>a</sup> (-0.10; 3.27)
SDO	0.09** (0.04; 0.15)	-0.05* (-0.11; 0.00)	0.58*** (0.40; 0.75)
OD X SDO	0.46 <sup>a</sup> (-0.06; 0.99)	-0.07 (-0.58; 0.44)	0.74 (-0.81; 2.30)
<i>OD effect for low SDO</i>	-0.32 (-1.06; 0.42)	-0.25 (-1.04; 0.55)	0.79 (-1.46; 3.04)
<i>OD effect for high SDO</i>	0.66 <sup>a</sup> (-0.15; 1.48)	-0.40 (-1.12; 0.32)	2.38 <sup>a</sup> (-0.11; 4.87)
Perceived Diversity (PD)	0.04 <sup>a</sup> (-0.01; 0.08)	-0.04 <sup>a</sup> (-0.11; 0.01)	0.15* (0.02; 0.28)
SDO	0.09** (0.03; 0.15)	-0.05* (-0.08; 0.00)	0.56*** (0.39; 0.73)
PD X SDO	0.02 (-0.02; 0.06)	0.00 (-0.04; 0.03)	0.07 (-0.04; 0.19)
<i>PD effect for low SDO</i>	0.02 (-0.04; 0.08)	-0.04 (-0.10; 0.02)	0.07 (-0.11; 0.25)
<i>PD effect for high SDO</i>	0.06* (0.00; 0.12)	-0.05 <sup>a</sup> (-0.10; 0.01)	0.23** (0.06; 0.40)

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table B.** Unstandardized estimates (95% confidence intervals in brackets) of indirect effects of Objective or Perceived Diversity on Populist Party Support via Political Cynicism and Political Trust at high and low levels of Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) or Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), controlling for age, gender, education, and income level.

		Indirect Effect via Political Cynicism	Indirect Effect via Political Trust
		<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )
Objective Diversity	<i>For low RWA</i>	-0.09 (-1.02; 0.48)	0.04 (-0.35; 0.63)
	<i>For high RWA</i>	0.58* (0.04; 1.70)	0.19 (-0.01; 1.59)
Objective Diversity	<i>For low SDO</i>	-0.19 (-0.94; 0.32)	0.08 (-0.14; 0.74)
	<i>For high SDO</i>	0.43 <sup>a</sup> (-0.01; 1.30)	0.11 (-0.09; 0.75)
Perceived Diversity	<i>For low RWA</i>	-0.01 (-0.07; 0.02)	0.00 (-0.04; 0.02)
	<i>For high RWA</i>	0.05** (0.02; 0.12)	0.03 (-0.01; 0.09)
Perceived Diversity	<i>For low SDO</i>	0.01 (-0.03; 0.06)	0.01 (-0.01; 0.06)
	<i>For high SDO</i>	0.04* (0.01; 0.10)	0.02 (-0.01; 0.07)

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table C.** Unstandardized estimates (95% confidence intervals in brackets) of regression analyses for Perceived Diversity.

	RWA as moderator	SDO as moderator
	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )	<i>b</i> (CI <sub>95</sub> )
Objective Diversity (OD)	7.73*** (6.80; 8.67)	7.84*** (6.90; 8.79)
Social-Ideological Attitude (SIA)	0.09 (-0.04; 0.23)	0.10* (0.00; 0.20)
OD X SIA	1.97** (0.01; 1.64)	0.66 (-0.25; 1.58)
<i>OD effect for low SIA</i>	6.21*** (4.82; 7.60)	7.14*** (5.85; 8.43)
<i>OD effect for high SIA</i>	9.26*** (7.95; 10.57)	8.55*** (7.13; 9.97)

Note: <sup>a</sup>  $p < .10$ ; \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$