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PLANNED GREEDINESS

Or the effect of media consumption on preferences for redistribution

Master Thesis in Policy Economics

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Abstract

This study sought to determine whether media consumption aids in solving the limited redistribution puzzle. I used data from the European Social Survey (ESS), rounds 8 to 10, as well as data from the Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM), so that my dataset is entirely composed by EU democracies. Starting with the fundamentals, I developed a series of hypotheses and sub-hypothesis that led to the central one: there is a positive relationship between the MPM Index and Authoritarian attitudes. Conversely, the correlation between the MPM Index and Libertarian values ought to be negative. To address the research question, I used two models to adjust for the ambiguity of the dependent variable of choice, reducing the chance of misinterpretation of the findings. First, I used an Ordered Logit model, then an OLS model. The findings reveal that when an individual increases their usage of the internet in a nation with a high MPM Index, not only libertarian sentiments but also authoritarian attitudes tend to decrease, implying a lowering in polarisation.

Keywords: redistribution, media, ordered logit, Europe

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List of Abbreviations

CMPF Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom

ESS European Social Survey

GOLM Generalized Ordered Logit Model

MPM Media Pluralism Monitor

OLM Ordered Logit Model

OLS Ordinary Least Squares

OVB Omitted Variable Bias

PfR Preferences for Redistribution

POUM Prospect of Upward Mobility

S.E. standard error

Chapter 1

Introduction

> Why have the rabble not redistributed the wealth?
>
> *Louis Putterman*

The question that titled Putterman (1997) essay stems from the necessity to find an explanation as to why the majority of individuals, living in economically developed capitalist countries, do not use their political power to better allocate property to themselves. This is odd, given that in many of such countries both individual and household wealth is unevenly distributed. Even after more than two decades, the question persists, and not for a lack of answers. Previous to Putterman, Meltzer and Richard (1981) tried to provide a definitive answer for this matter. In their key study *A Rational Theory of the Size of Government*, they discovered that people with lower incomes favour redistribution measures, while people with higher incomes oppose them. Then, majority voting would imply that the more the income disparity, the stronger the urge to redistribute. Current study, however, shows that there is significantly less redistribution than Meltzer and Richard's findings would suggest. Various solutions for the so-called 'limited redistribution puzzle' have been presented. For example, Alesina and Giuliano (2011) indicate that left-wing respondents have a stronger demand for redistribution, implying that ideology plays a significant role in determining redistribution preferences. Karabarbounis (2011) demonstrated empirically that the Meltzer-Richards model fails because it neglects the assertion that the extremely wealthy may have more influence in the politi-

cal process, whereas the poor have a lower turnout rate, giving them less weight in the political process. Furthermore, Stantcheva (2020) shows that the perception of fairness of inequality and taxation also has an important influence in establishing personal preferences for redistribution. I intend to contribute to this body of research by answering the question: "Is media consumption a further argument for the limited redistribution puzzle?". In other words, is it possible that - since the media is recognised to be biased - this bias influenced the public to become more individualistic, leading in an increase in authoritarian principles, which in turn affect preferences for redistribution?

The literature (Alesina and Glaeser, 2005; Bénabou and Tirole, 2006) has shown that culture and values play an important role in determining individual preferences for redistribution. Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020) then notice that, when comparing two people from the same socioeconomic background, those who believe in equal opportunities are more open to redistribution than those who have a different notion of fairness, and hence a different value system or attitudes. As a result, they observe that this raises the question of where these concepts of fairness emerge and what influences individual opinions. According to Besley (2008), values are originally determined exogenously by individual attributes but are also endogenously impacted by the media. As a result, if the media is biased, there may be adverse effects of media exposure. Thus, this research question links two strands of literature: the economics of redistribution and the impact of media bias. The former illustrates how redistribution is not equal even in democratic nations, whilst the latter indicates the numerous reasons why media is biased and the effect it has on people's attitudes and values.

Because information is often conveyed through media channels, the media has a key role in shaping people's perceptions and decisions in both economic (Newman, 2014) and political situations (Yagci and Oyvat, 2020). However, the media can never represent the entire truth and frequently frames news with either a favourable or an unfavourable slant: this is known as media bias. Already in 1998, such behaviour was described by Gunther (1998) as *persuasive press inference*. According to the persuasive press inference, people infer public opinion based on their impressions of the character of media coverage and their judgments about the persuasive power of that coverage on

the others. As a result, judgments made by individuals based on media information may differ from decisions made based on less biased and more detailed information. Petrova (2008), for example, investigates the relationship between economic disparity and media capture. She discovered empirical evidence for the concept that mass media is an effective instrument for manipulating public opinion, even when people recognise that the media might be biased, by establishing a theory of media capture in which the wealthy can alter information offered in a media outlet for a fee. According to her model, more inequality is related with poorer media freedom, and this impact is larger under democratic regimes. Prat and Strömberg (2011) discovered that the media influences voter information and voting outcomes, particularly in circumstances where political preferences are fluctuating. This is an important detail. Despite the fact that the media makes people more receptive to policy results and increases voter engagement in elections, there is evidence that voters filter out the media's political biases. Expected media endorsements of political candidates, for example, have a limited influence. Furthermore, there is significant evidence that voters favour ideologically aligned media. This suggests that media bias can be bidirectional: there can be supply-driven bias as well as demand-driven bias. The former is supported by the media (Garz et al., 2020), governments (Besley and Prat, 2006), and lobbying groups (Petrova, 2012). The latter is sought by "partisan individuals" (Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina, 2020), who intentionally seek biased contents that confirms their pre-existing beliefs. Gavin (2018), for example, demonstrates how the media may reinforce pre-existing opinions and that the processes that drive ideological reinforcement have potentially significant ramifications for public perceptions of the issue of concern. Even if the primary influence of the media is reinforcement, it may nevertheless be significant.

Another significant result is provided by Besley and Prat (2006). They discover a strong connection between state ownership and both political longevity and corruption. They found that in nations where the state controls at least 30 percent of the news, the political leader stays in power for an additional 7.21 years. This is an impressive result. For ownership concentration, equivalent conclusions apply. Prat and Strömberg (2011) show that governments have a significant incentive to gain control over the media, and media capture has been reported in a multitude of countries, including high-income

countries like Italy. However, capture is an endogenous process, and media plurality as well as a "healthy commercial motive" are both effective deterrents to media bias. In particular, the authors' model predicts that it is harder for a government to silence the media industry if: (i) it faces a large number of independent owners (ii), the media ownership is independent of other interests, (iii) the media companies have a strong commercial motive to establish a reputation for credibility (Prat and Strömberg, 2011).

The inference is that market features such as concentration, ownership, and plurality of the media add to the likelihood of information manipulation by interested parties. To account for this, I will use the Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM) Index in my analysis. The MPM is a tool developed by the European University Institute's Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) to "assess the risks to media pluralism in a given country, based on 20 indicators covering four main areas defining 'media pluralism': Fundamental Protection, Market Plurality, Political Independence, and Social Inclusiveness"[1]. As stated on the website, the MPM research results in an assessment of possible weaknesses in the national media system that may impede media pluralism, rather than a ranking of the nations studied or a description of the current level of media plurality in any specific country. The estimated risk ratings are classified as Low (0 - 33%), Medium (34 - 66%), and High (67 - 100%). The MPM concentrates its analysis on news and current events and covers all of the numerous on- and offline channels that supply them and, ultimately, contribute to defining the 'public opinion'. This thesis is distinguished from the rest of the literature by its use of this instrument as a tool for determining how much influence the quality of media consumed has on people's opinions. The relevance of this topic is shown by the lack of scientific evidence about the influence of the media on people's views and how this can affect society as a whole when discussing income inequality.

The reminder of this paper is organized as follows: in Chapter 2 I illustrate the theories employed and how they lead to my pertinent hypotheses; Chapter 3 shows the methods I used to acquire and analyse the research material. Chapter 4 describes the results. Chapter 5 presents the robustness tests. Chapter 6 discusses the findings and Chapter 7 offers concluding remarks.

[1] from their website https://cmpf.eui.eu/media-pluralism-monitor/

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This thesis links two main strands of literature: economics of redistribution and the research on media bias.

2.1 Economics of Redistribution

As previously stated, the purpose of this essay is to investigate the relationship between old and new mass media influence and redistribution preferences. Meltzer and Richard (1981) fundamental study leads the political economy literature on the Redistribution Model, as mentioned in Swank O. "Chapter on Redistribution"[1]. The authors designed a theoretical model and observed that the financial implications of redistribution on citizens are what feed their desire for it. The model's findings have notably highlighted the self-interest motive, in which preferences for redistribution are driven by wealth. People with lower incomes support redistribution policies, while those with higher incomes oppose them. Because it offers the policy that the median voter wants, majority vote implies that higher wealth inequality would result in more redistribution. Therefore, the more redistributive the policy, the wider the gap between median and mean earnings. Thus, the authors discover a positive link between inequality and redistribution.

[1]Textbook on political economics. This book has not been published yet

Meltzer and Richard (1981) estimate the demand for redistribution by calculating the optimal taxation level for individual i as follows:

$$\tau_i = \frac{\overline{\alpha} - \alpha_i}{2\overline{\alpha} - \alpha_i} \tag{2.1}$$

Where $0 < \alpha_i < 2\overline{\alpha}$ is the assumption that ensures that there is a unique maximum at τ_i. This is the "citizen bliss point": the equation shows that the demand for redistribution depends on how productive citizen i is – denoted by α_i - relative to how productive the average citizen is, $\overline{\alpha}$. The lower the productivity, the higher the desire for redistribution, and vice versa. Although, current research reveals that there is far less redistribution than Meltzer and Richard's findings would predict. To shed light on the limited redistribution puzzle, Alesina and Giuliano (2011) conducted a survey to examine the individual determinants of the demand for redistribution. Consistent with Meltzer and Richard (1981) equation, they discovered that wealthier persons have a reduced demand for redistribution. They also argue that the people's heritage or culture is significant: black people have a larger need for redistribution than whites. Females expect more redistribution than males. Although, even after controlling for wealth, left-wing respondents had a greater desire for redistribution, meaning that ideology also plays a fundamental role. Higher educated respondents had a reduced appetite for redistribution: they predict to be more productive than the average citizen in the future, which may diminish their need for redistribution. This is called Prospect of Upward Mobility (POUM) (Benabou and Ok, 2001). Finally, Alesina and Giuliano (2011) discover that perceptions of fairness matter: success can be perceived as the product of hard work or luck, so citizens who belong in the former category will have a lower demand for redistribution than the latter. Another fundamental piece of literature that motivated my research question is "*Mass media and preferences for redistribution*" by Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020). Their paper investigates how mass media potentially act on preferences for redistribution, and propose a theoretical model which combines demand- and supply-driven media bias. They demonstrate that media bias is a decreasing function of advertising income and a rising function of the relative weight of ideology and pluralism in people's media consumption. They argue that those who believe that "ev-

eryone should have equal possibilities in life" are more open to redistribution than others in the same socioeconomic condition but with differing views on fairness. Thus, when two persons are compared, their desire for redistribution is dictated by their sense of social justice, *ceteris paribus.* This inform my first hypothesis:

$H_1 >$ ***Given two individuals with the same socioeconomic background, the one who believes in equal opportunities will be more open to redistribution than the one with a different view of fairness.***

Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020) then observe that if values do impact redistribution choices, the question of what determines individuals' values becomes relevant. As stated in the Introduction, values are initially exogenously determined by individuals' characteristics, but also endogenously influenced by the media (Besley, 2008). As a result, if the media is biased, there can be side effects of media exposure. The question that follows is then: *why should the media be biased?* Among the many reasons identified by the limited redistribution puzzle to explain why the positive correlation identified by Meltzer and Richard (1981) does not persist, there is the effect of lobbies and other political influence. Indeed, Prat and Strömberg (2011) emphasise that if the media affects voters' decisions, then the government, corporations, and lobbyists have an incentive to control the media and persuade them to broadcast false information or conceal crucial events. To sum this up: the desire to redistribute decreases as one's wealth rises. As a result, the individual with the largest wealth should be the least likely to redistribute it. Given that excessive wealth equates to more political power (Rossi, 2014), lobbies are established to influence public opinion against redistributive policies as to maintain their political power over time. The media is one of the tools that such groups (as well as governments and companies) employ to disseminate "anti-equality" views. The implication is that, as a group of people becomes wealthier and, as a result, more powerful, they will want to collaborate in order to keep that wealth (and power) over time. They recognise that if there is too much redistribution, they will lose some of their riches and thus some of their authority. To avoid this, one option is to buy out the media and control whatever news is delivered to the public and with what slant. The climate

change coverage serves as an example. It is known that the poor are disproportionately affected by climate change compared to the rich. Yang and Tang (2022), for instance, report that climate change-induced high temperatures might contribute to higher local fiscal stress by reducing company output and creating extra production expenses, which further reduces firms' capacity to pay taxes and leads to losses in fiscal revenues. Furthermore, high temperatures are linked to a variety of health issues and contribute to higher government spending on public health. Additionally, high temperatures can cause agricultural production deficits, which might have a negative impact on tax revenues (Cachon et al., 2012; Fisher-Vanden et al., 2015; Hübler et al., 2008 as cited in Yang and Tang (2022)). This adds to regional inequality in a variety of ways. Stopping climate change, on the other hand, is more expensive (in terms of lost revenues) for larger corporations than for small and medium-sized businesses. For instance, the majority of American oil conglomerates' donations to political lobby groups in 2020 went to the American Petroleum Institute, one of the US's most powerful trade organisations that drives the oil industry's relationship with Congress (McGreal, 2021). It is not surprising, then, that during the 1990s, there was a surge of effort by "conservative think tanks" (Shapiro, 2016) and other entities which tried to convince citizens that "the scientific evidence for global warming is exceedingly questionable." (McCright and Dunlap (2000) as cited in Shapiro (2016)).The vast majority of this endeavor was focused on creating or manipulating media exposure. (Cushman, 1998). As a consequence, to deny climate change is indirectly linked with aversion for redistribution. Following this rationale, I hypothesize that:

$H_2 >$ ***Preferences for redistribution are negatively correlated with media consumption***

2.2 Influence of media bias

Petrova (2012) states that "despite the journalistic ideal of 'just reporting the truth', media outlets as a rule operate as profit maximizing firms." It seems natural then for press coverage to be driven by the interests of those who pay for it. What needs to

be cleared is then: *who pays for it?* While most of the literature from the early 2000s expected a decline in media reliance on interest group subsidies as a result of economic growth (Petrova, 2012), evidence now indicates a different story. The MPM2016 results, for example, assessed a risk level for the EU area[2], equal to: (i) 28 percent for basic protection; (ii) 49 percent for media plurality; (iii) 46 percent for political independence; and (iv) 47 percent for social inclusiveness. This meant that none of the regions in analysis were at significant danger, even though none of them were devoid of threats to media plurality. Five years later, the situation had deteriorated. According to the MPM2022, the threat to basic protection is now estimated at 35 percent, while the risk to market plurality has risen to 66 percent, officially entering the "high risk" category. The risk to political independence is steady at 49 percent. The risk of social inclusion has risen to 54 percent. In this regard, Gehlbach and Sonin (2014) investigates governmental non-market measures, such as state censorship or nationalisation of media sources, to try to explain why economic progress has no beneficial influence on media freedom, as of today. They discovered that when the government or lobbyists have a special interest in motivating individuals to adopt behaviors that achieve some political purpose (but are not always in citizens' individual best interests), then media bias is strong and state control of the media increases. In this context, there is a growing strand of research on the links between media outlets and multiple interest groups, each with their own media content preferences. The bias might be in favour of the advertisers themselves (Gambaro and Puglisi, 2015), or it could stem from the incumbent politician (Besley and Prat, 2006), as well as journalists (Puglisi, 2011) and owners (Anderson and McLaren, 2012). This is known as a supply-driven bias. Other studies concentrate on the demand side of the issue. The literature has identified demand-driven bias as being prompted by consumers' interest in hearing news that validates their opinions, which can then cause political polarisation and radicalization through the reinforcing effect that slanted media has on these individuals, defined as *partisans* (Santos et al., 2021; Asher et al., 2018; Xiong and Liu, 2014; Alesina et al., 2020). The partisans, as explained in Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020), have strong beliefs and are not readily swayed, while the *non-partisans'* attitudes are more easily impacted by the media. As a consequence, I ex-

[2]28 European Union member states as well as two candidate countries, Montenegro and Turkey

pect partisans' ideal to have been formed in a period *prior* to my study, and that while the media might continue to strengthen their values, it cannot reverse their orientation. Empirically, this means that the media variable has no effect on them. Non-partisans, on the other hand, are more likely to change their minds when confronted with new data on the legitimacy or not of a political candidate or political view, therefore I predict media consumption to have a negative impact on their preferences for redistribution. The following is the related hypothesis:

$H_3 >$ ***When an individual is partisan, media factors are not significantly correlated with redistribution preferences because they are set in the past. However, when the individual is non-partisan, these are negatively correlated with media consumption.***

Understanding the effect of media bias and media capture also requires an insight into the characteristics of the media market. The Besley and Prat (2006) model postulates a relationship between media industry attributes and observed political results. They especially demonstrate that: (a) media pluralism offers adequate coverage against capture: if the government wants to buy out all the media, it must pay each one as if it were a monopoly supplier of unbiased information; (b) independent ownership (described as the difficulty with which the state can transfer funds to the media sources) diminishes capture; (c) media capture influences political outcomes by making it more difficult to identify bad politicians and by encouraging politicians to transfer resources with the awareness that they are less likely to be noticed. Other important results are provided by Djankov et al. (2001), who illustrates how state ownership of the media is linked with inadequate government performance; Strömberg (2004), who shows a positive relationship between radio ownership and distribution of New Deal funds across US countries; and Gentzkow et al. (2011), who, by analysing data on the entries and exits of US daily newspapers market from 1869 to 2004, find that one additional newspaper increases both presidential and congressional support by 0.3 percentage points. These findings illustrate the magnitude of the influence of media market features. For example, in Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020), the authors show that there is no media neutrality when lobbyists have an incentive in manipulating the media, implying

that there is income concentration at the top. As a result, if we take two persons who reside in countries with high and low MPM Indexes, respectively, the one who lives in the latter will be more likely to redistribute than the other, everything else being equal. On the contrary, it also implies that in a nation where media pluralism is under threat, residents will be more predisposed against equality principles. Upon this reasoning I form my fourth and main hypothesis of this research:

$H_4 >$ ***There is a positive relationship between the MPM Index and support for authoritarian values, and a negative relationship between the MPM Index and libertarian values. Moreover, as the MPM Index grows, I expect tastes for redistribution to deteriorate.***

Here I take into account both support for redistribution and also authoritarian and libertarian attitudes to shed more light on the relationship between media market features and personal traits, which was not highlighted in the prior specification. Heinrich and Pleines (2018) and Rollberg and Laruelle (2015) have already highlighted a link between authoritarian governments and restricted media pluralism, as the more illiberal a society, the greater the control over its media. This is considered as a necessity to preserve the general status quo. According to the above-mentioned hypothesis, the opposite might also be true: if an interest group/incumbent successfully limits the plurality of the media, turnout levels should fall and more power should be concentrated in the hands of those in control. If the lobbies want to maintain the status quo, everything external - such as foreign customs and immigration - might be regarded to as a threat (as is typical of authoritarian attitudes) and communicated to the population via slanted media. On the long-run, citizens internalize the bias, so that there is a positive association between media plurality risk and support for authoritarian ideologies. Further evidence may be found in Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020) to understand how the media market factors may alter the link between values and media consumption. The authors plot Values and Time spent on political news[3] against Risk to market plu-

[3]Data from ESS8

rality[4], and conclude that there is indeed a negative correlation between risk to media plurality and support for equal opportunities. In particular, in countries characterized by a high MPM Index, there is a positive relationship between media consumption and lower "pro-equity values". This inform my last hypothesis:

$H_5 >$ ***The greater the exposure to political news in a country with a high MPM Index, the lesser the democratic tendencies, which are replaced by autocratic principles. As a consequence, the interaction terms between media consumption and MPM Index is positively correlated with the Autindex and negatively correlated with the Libindex***

In the following chapters, I will refer to internet usage and news intake as "media consumption" variables so that I can quickly identify them both when needed. This means that H_5 implies two sets of results: the effect of the interaction term between the MPM Index and news intake on the Libindex and on the Autindex, and the interaction term between the MPM Index and internet use on the same. I expect the effect on Libindex to be always negative and the correlation with Autindex to be always positive. With this hypotheses in mind, we can now move to the next section.

[4]Data from MPM2016

Chapter 3

Data and Methodology

To understand if the media consumption is an additional piece of the limited redistribution puzzle I employed an Ordered Logit Model (OLM) where 'preference for redistribution' is regressed against media consumption and a set of controls. To further investigate the matter, I designed a second regression function where, through the use of the MPM, I wanted to understand if media plurality is effective in protecting individuals — and, by implication, countries – from an authoritarian drift in attitudes. To do so, I focused on two dimensions of public opinion: liberal values and authoritarian attitudes.

Data The study relies on survey results from rounds 8 to 10 of the European Social Survey (ESS), which were collected between 2016 and 2022[1]. The data reflects a representative sample of about 90,000 individual-level observations from a set of 23 countries. In particular, to retrieve an homogeneous collection of nations that appeared in both the MPM and ESS, I could only save the observation from 16 countries in the ESS8, 23 countries in the ESS9 and 10 countries in the ESS10[2]. At each level, individuals are chosen using stringent random chance procedures. The data provide information about population' demographic traits (age, ethnicity, gender), as well as their attitudes regarding redistribution, democracy, and media consumption, other than their socioeconomic status as assessed by income and education. Data from the MPM entails a set of four areas

[1]Data from Round 10 was supposed to be collected and published in 2020, but there was a two-year delay due to the pandemic

[2]As of June 2022, that is the complete dataset published for round 10. The complete list of countries can be found in Appendix A

per country, they regard: fundamental protection, market plurality, political independence and social inclusiveness. Appendix A contains a description of these voices and the variables that make them up, other than tables A.1, A.2 and A.3, which show the level of risk per area and country in each year in analysis, as well as their average (MPM Index). I computed the mean of these four areas and named it MPM Index. For each ESS round, I matched the countries to their corresponding MPM Index, which means I used data from the MPM2021 (which refers to 2020), MPM2019 (which refers to 2018), and MPM2017 (refers to 2016). Summary statistics are reported in Table A.4 in Appendix A.

3.1 Dependent variables construction

Preferences for redistribution The dependent variable 'preferences for redistribution' in the first specification (equation 3.1) of my model is based on the following question from the ESS:*"A society is fair when income and wealth are equally distributed among all people."* The interviewee had to indicate his position on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that the subject agrees strongly and 5 disagrees strongly. I recoded this variable such that higher values indicate stronger support for the statement. In model (3.2), I used a set of three variables. The interviewees had to position themselves on a six-point scale, where higher values indicate agreement with the following statements: (i) society is fair when income and wealth is equally distributed; (ii) everyone should have equal opportunities in life; (iii) people in need should be taken care of, regardless of what they can give back. By combining these items I retrieve the 'Redistribution Index'. This is mainly used as a way to check if the results from my first model (3.1) hold even in (3.2). As an additional check, I created an index from the 'preferences for redistribution' variable, which is a continuous variable ranging from 0 to 1.

Liberal Values The first set of values capture the foundations of liberal democracy. This dimension is examined through a block of four items, where the interviewee had to judge the importance of: (i) equality and equal opportunities; (ii) understanding of the others; (iii) being free; (iv) follow rules. The aim is to ultimately understand how desirable democracy is, as a form of government, for the subject in analysis. In order

to better understand their attitude towards liberal values, I combine the items to obtain a 'Liberal Index'. The ESS includes information on each item on a six-point scale. I recoded them so that higher figures indicate more support for the statement.

Authoritarian values My second set of attitudes looks at authoritarianism as a behavioral feature. This second dimension is investigated through a set of four variables as well. They deal with the importance of: (i) following traditions; (ii) not having a homosexual relative; (iii) living in a country with low levels of immigration; (iv) having a strong government that ensures safety. Again, I combine this items to obtain an 'Authoritarian Index'. The ESS includes information on each item on a six-point scale. As before, higher figures indicate that the interviewee strongly agrees with the statement.

All of the three indexes have been rescaled such that the minimum value they can take is 0, indicating lack of certain values, and the maximum is 1, indicating strong support for those attitudes.

3.2 Empirical Methodology

Identification In addition to reviewing the available data for the most well researched drivers of preferences for redistribution, my conclusions primarily concentrate on the subset of channels for which there is less prior study. To do so, I first model a Logit regression of the type:

$$Y_{ict} = \alpha_1 + \eta F_{ict} + \alpha MC_{ict} + \gamma X_{ict} + \delta Z_{ict} + \omega U_{ict} + \varepsilon_{ict} \tag{3.1}$$

Where i indexes individuals, c countries and t years. ε_{ict} is the error term. Y_{ict} indicates preferences for redistribution as specified above.

To test my first hypothesis, "given two persons with the same socioeconomic background, the one who believes in equal opportunities will be more receptive to redistribution than the one who believes in differing views of fairness", F_{ict} reflects individual i's perspective of fairness. The main explanatory variable is derived from the question: "Do you think everyone should have equal opportunities in life?". I then added four

variables to further study how people's preferences for redistribution are influenced by their perceptions of fairness, together they form the "fairness controls". The related statements are: (1) "It is fair when elite families can enjoy their privileges", where those who agree or strongly agree are expected to have a preference the maintenance of the status quo, so I predict it to be in a negative relationship with Preferences for Redistribution (PfR); (2-3) states that "Justice always prevails" and "People get what they deserve". My hypothesis is that those who believe in justice have trust in the State's ability to function efficiently, hence they are more pro-redistribution. Those who believe that people get what they deserve, on the other hand, are confident that, regardless of their actions, external forces will operate in such a way that the social optimum is achieved. As a result, I predicted that they would be adversely correlated with PfR. Finally, "It is fair when hard-working people earn more than others" is a proxy to capture the work vs. luck placement of the individual. ***The coefficient η will test my first hypothesis,*** H_1.

MC_{ict} is a vector describing how and how much the individual uses media to recover information about politics. It is composed by two variables: the first is based on the question "On a typical day, about how much time do you spend watching, reading or listening to news about politics and current affairs?", the second indicates the daily internet use of the individual. Together, they compose the "media consumption" variables. ***The coefficient α will test my second hypothesis,*** H_2**,** which asserts that there is a negative relationship between media consumption and preferences for redistribution.

To test my third hypothesis, which states that the media variable is not significantly correlated with preferences for redistribution when the individual is partisan, while it is negatively correlated with the same when the individual is non-partisan, I split the sample in two. First, I generate the variable *"posted"*, which is a dummy that takes value 1 if the individual has posted anything political online in the last 12 months, 0 otherwise. I use this variable to identify the *partisan* individuals. According to Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020), partisans strive to influence non-partisans through the media; consequently, I expect them to be uninfluenced by the media at the time of the survey, given that their values are already set and can not be easily manipulated; thus while

media consumption can deepen their conviction in such ideals, it cannot change their orientation. ***The coefficient α will also test my third hypothesis, H_3.*** But while for H_2 I expected it to have a negative sign, now I expect it to not be significantly different from zero. Since this method has not been established in the literature, I also tried to control for the partisans instead of splitting the sample. In this way, I also had the possibility to add two interaction variables. The resulting model is then:

$$Y_{ict} = \alpha_1 + \lambda P_{ict} + \eta F_{ict} + \alpha MC_{ict} + \gamma X_{ict} + \delta Z_{ict} + \omega U_{ict} + \varepsilon_{ict} \qquad (3.1.1)$$

Which is the same as model (3.1) with the addition of the term P_{ict}, which is a vector containing the dummy *posted* and two interaction variables, *Posted*News* and *Posted*Internet*. The goal is to comprehend what happens to a person's liking for re-distribution when their intake of news or the internet increases, providing that that person has posted anything political in the previous year. The related hypothesis is still given by H_3, but now the coefficient of interest is λ. As before, I still expect the three variables to not being significantly correlated with PfR, as partisans taste in this matter should have already being defined before the conduction of the survey and this study.

Finally, X_{ict} is a vector of individual-level controls which includes demographics such as: age, gender, race, religion, marital status, educational level and family income. These are the variables that constitute the basic model of interest, to which I will then add the following extensions, based on the literature: Z_{ict} captures the political ideology of the respondent, it includes: placement on the left/right scale of the respondent and if they voted in the last elections. U_{ict} includes two dummies to test how POUM influences preferences for redistribution. These variables are given by the difference between the level of education of individual i and level of education of their father and mother, the variables take value one if the respondent has an higher level of education of their father or mother.

Standard errors are clustered at the country level, to account for possible correlation between respondents residing in the same country.

As previously mentioned, I model a second function:

$$Attitudes_{ict} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MC_{ict} + \beta_2 MPMIndex_{ct} + \beta_3 MC_{ict} \times MPMIndex_{ct} + T_{ict} + \varepsilon_{ict} \tag{3.2}$$

Where $T_{ict} = \gamma X_{ict} + \delta Z_{ict} + \eta F_{ict}$. Depending on the specific analysis, the outcome variable $Attitudes_{ict}$ is one of those described in the previous section. The novel independent variables are: the MPM Index, as the average of four indicators (fundamental protection, market plurality, political independence, social inclusiveness), which is specific per country and year. In particular, ***the coefficient*** β_2 ***will test my fourth hypothesis,*** H_4***:*** the MPM Index has a positive association with support for authoritarian principles and a negative link with support for libertarian values. Finally, the interaction between MC and MPM Index provides an individual-level measure of the intensity of the media bias, targeting individuals who spend a certain amount of time, per day, gathering information of sort. This allows me to compare the effect of the treatment (being subjected to media bias) of individuals potentially belonging to the same targeted audience but differing in their exposure to media in terms of time spent on it. Then, ***the coefficient*** β_3 ***will test my fifth hypothesis,*** H_5**.** My expectation here is that, in a country with a high MPM Index, the larger the exposure to political news, the lower the democratic tendencies, which are substituted by autocratic principles. As a result, the interaction terms between news consumption and the MPM Index is positive with the Autindex and negative with the Libindex.

The reason why I chose to adopt two models (3.1 and 3.2) is due to how ambiguous the variable "preferences for redistribution" might be, as well as the several interpretations that it possesses. Indeed, while the ESS dataset contains several questions about redistribution preferences, they are seldom detailed enough to allow for a clear interpretation of the issue itself. As a result, I believed that by developing a set of indexes that could sum up the two major political tendencies of modern societies, essentially simulating the American dicothomy between democrats and republicans, I could reduce the possibility of misinterpreting my findings or that my hypotheses were - eventually -

confirmed only by chance. Furthermore, in order to better understand what happened to the findings in (3.1), I constructed a redistribution index. I also made an index out of the preferences for redistribution variable. The estimation approach for the former model is not applicable to continuous variables, as my indexes are, which is why model (3.2) contains the dependent variable from (3.1) whereas model (3.1) does not.

Estimation To estimate models (3.1) and (3.1.1) I used an OLM. This is the most reasonable choice given the natural ordering in survey responses. On the other hand, for the second model I run a Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), since the dependent variables in (3.2) are continuous. If I had only used OLS estimation, then I would have been forced to adopt a cardinal interpretation on the responses, so I present estimation results based on OLM as a baseline, to then show the correspondent OLS output in the second model, where the redistribution index and the 'preferences for redistribution' index are employed. In the following section, I used an ordinal variable correlation analysis to determine the strength of the relationship between multiple variables. The main assumption for ordinal regression analysis is that there is a dependency or casual relationship between a dependent variable, here preferences for redistribution (3.1) and (3.1.1) and attitudes (3.2), and the independent ones, media consumption and its controls. With this method, I compared the contribution of media consumption to authoritarian attitudes with the literature's suggested contributions of socioeconomic class as defined by income and education. As a result, I explored the function of media consumption while also testing the role of individual characteristics and specific culture, as proposed by Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020), Stantcheva (2020) and Colantone and Stanig (2018).

I also estimated (3.1) and (3.2) through a *random effects model* as well. In fact, while the *fixed effects model* has been extensively used to analyze continuous dependent variables, in my setting it is not the best choice, since it drops the constant terms on Y, which, as one can see in table B.8 where country fixed effects were applied, can result problematic. In fact, fixed effects basically delete all the variation between countries, which means that when I include a variable - in this case, the MPM Index - that does not necessarily

vary over time (for instance, the MPM Index for Austria is constant between 2018 and 2020 as one can see in Appendix A), Stata will omit it because of collinearity. However, I also run a regression with year fixed effect in Table B.7. The random effects technique estimates a model that predicts the log probabilities of having redistribution preferences while accounting for the data's hierarchical structure (Bell et al., 2018). This is ideal given the use of ordered survey data in this study. Then, the interpretation of the resulting coefficients is analogous to that of the ordered logit model. Furthermore, the estimates' standard errors are modified to account for repeated observations for each individual (David J. Maume, 2004). Finally, this approach generates robust parameter estimates when people have valid data in some years but not others (David J. Maume, 2004), which is ideal as my data grew unbalanced as the analysis became more sophisticated.

Chapter 4

Analysis and Results

Assumptions To ensure the internal validity of the OLM, two assumptions must be respected. First, a multicollinearity test must be performed to determine if the independent variables in the model are comparable. If the variables in my models are significantly correlated, I should retrieve a VIF value above 10, if the VIF value is between 1 and 10, there is no multicollinearity. This condition was fulfilled by all of the variables in use, as one can see in B.1, B.2 and B.3 in the Appendix. The parallel regression assumption (or proportional odds) implies that all pairings of groups have the same relationship, such that there is only one set of coefficients and one model. As stated in Long and Freese (2014), the parallel regressions assumption is rejected in the vast majority of applications, since it is sensible to various sorts of misspecification. This is also true for my research. When the variables that failed the test were explanatory, I used the Generalized Ordered Logit Model (GOLM)[1] to relax the assumption on them, whereas when the parallel regression assumption was violated but the predictions from the OLM[2] were equivalent to those from the generalised model, I chose the former because of the easier interpretation.

4.1 Does Fairness Matter?

Before starting my investigation, I replaced as missing values all of the missing replies labelled ”refusal,” ”don’t know,” and ”no answer.” Furthermore, I recoded all

[1]This is the case for the model in 4.2
[2]This is the case for the models in 4.5

of the variables used so that larger values always imply greater support for the sentence in analysis. Here, as well as in section 4.2, only data from the ESS rounds 8 and 9 have been used, as in the last round all the subjects regarding the perception of fairness have been taken out of the questionnaires. Table 4.2 reports estimates for the effect of perception of fairness on the support for redistribution. Although, since the personal perception of fairness is endogenous and can also be influenced by media consumption, first I run a regression with just the main explanatory variable. The results are shown in Table 4.1.

My first hypothesis was that, *ceteris paribus*, an individual who believes in equal opportunities should be less averse to redistribute. Since the fairness controls used in my model failed the parallel regressions assumption, I had to use the GOLM instead of the OLM. The results are not intuitive and need to be properly explained. In the GOLM, positive coefficients indicate that, as the value of the explanatory variable grows, it is more probable that the interviewee is positioned in a higher category rather than the current one. Otherwise, a negative coefficient indicates that larger values of X increase the probability of being in the current (or lower) categories (Williams, 2006). The main explanatory variable asked the respondent if they believed everyone should have equal opportunities in life. Its coefficients are consistently positive and increasing across cut-points, both in tables 4.1 and 4.2. This means that those who believe in equal opportunities also care more about redistribution, accordingly, these individuals are also more prone to select themselves into the strongly agree and agree categories than those who do not believe in equal opportunities.

In table 4.2, the coefficients for "people get what they deserve" are negative but get smaller across cut-points, with the exception of agree. Hence, individuals who believe that people get what they deserve are less likely to redistribute than others, with the most significant variation being that they are less likely to fall into the agree or strongly agree classifications. Conversely, the point estimates for "justice" are always positive but decrease over cut-points. This suggests that respondents who believe in social justice are more supportive of redistributive policies than those who do not, with former respondents being less inclined to fall into the strongly disagree and dis-

Table 4.1: Preferences for redistribution on background controls (GOLM)

Preference for redistribution	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**
Fairness variable				
Important that people have equal opportunities	0.0999**	0.157***	0.299***	0.543***
	(0.0447)	(0.0502)	(0.0470)	(0.0430)
Background controls				
Age of respondent	-0.00339	-0.00255	-0.000615	0.00133
	(0.00314)	(0.00204)	(0.00186)	(0.00229)
Female	0.368***	0.150***	-0.0575	-0.111**
	(0.116)	(0.0484)	(0.0383)	(0.0551)
Minority	-0.0311	-0.0311	-0.0311	-0.0311
	(0.120)	(0.120)	(0.120)	(0.120)
Religious	0.108	0.216***	0.195***	0.117***
	(0.0675)	(0.0515)	(0.0549)	(0.0426)
Married	-0.00429	-0.00429	-0.00429	-0.00429
	(0.0589)	(0.0589)	(0.0589)	(0.0589)
Highschool	-0.248*	-0.248*	-0.248*	-0.248*
	(0.149)	(0.149)	(0.149)	(0.149)
College	-0.398***	-0.604***	-0.530***	-0.336***
	(0.101)	(0.0637)	(0.0687)	(0.0579)
Income	-0.0848***	-0.0848***	-0.0848***	-0.0848***
	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)
L/R Scale	-0.192***	-0.134***	-0.124***	-0.117***
	(0.0368)	(0.0193)	(0.0169)	(0.0188)
Constant	3.958***	1.411***	-0.236	-3.434***
	(0.443)	(0.433)	(0.380)	(0.346)
Observations	13,860			
Countries	23			
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

agree groups. The two variables could appear similar, but while the first one leaves the possibility of getting what one deserves to external forces, the second accounts for the involvement of the state. As expected, the data demonstrate that when the state is involved, the willingness to redistribute is positive, whereas it is negative when the assumption is that getting what one deserves requires fortune.

The second control in 4.2 was a proxy to test the "work vs luck" hypothesis, where people who believe that hard work is more important than luck in defining wealth are less prone to redistribute, so that there is a negative correlation between that and preferences for redistribution. The results show that my theory is rejected: the coefficient for "work vs luck" goes from negative to positive as one moves from strongly disagree to agree, meaning that those who do not believe in remuneration for hard work also do not care for redistribution, while the situation is diametrically opposed for higher categories. My thesis regarding this variable was mainly based on literature from the U.S. (Alesina and Giuliano, 2011), which is maybe why it failed: while in the U.S. people tend to believe that success is determined by hard work, Europeans recognise that there is a "luck" component that largely determines people's earning capacity. The last

Table 4.2: Preferences for redistribution on fairness and background controls (GOLM)

Preference for redistribution	**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**
Fairness controls				
Important that people have equal opportunities	0.112**	0.170***	0.300***	0.480***
	(0.0521)	(0.0482)	(0.0444)	(0.0345)
Hard-working people should earn more than others	-0.263**	0.0255	0.185***	0.670***
	(0.126)	(0.0717)	(0.0580)	(0.0842)
People get what they deserve	-0.213***	-0.130***	-0.0848***	-0.165***
	(0.0345)	(0.0321)	(0.0309)	(0.0244)
Justice always prevails over injustice	0.238***	0.157***	0.111***	0.105***
	(0.0430)	(0.0442)	(0.0385)	(0.0340)
Families with high social status should enjoy privileges	0.0427	0.108	0.0479	-0.160**
	(0.0695)	(0.0770)	(0.0704)	(0.0647)
Background controls				
Age of respondent	-0.00258	-0.00234	-0.000553	-0.0000522
	(0.00300)	(0.00201)	(0.00177)	(0.00197)
Female	0.285**	0.125**	-0.0583	-0.125**
	(0.112)	(0.0504)	(0.0388)	(0.0564)
Minority	-0.0668	-0.0668	-0.0668	-0.0668
	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.114)
Religious	0.0823	0.195***	0.176***	0.118***
	(0.0682)	(0.0542)	(0.0575)	(0.0441)
Married	0.0118	0.0118	0.0118	0.0118
	(0.0570)	(0.0570)	(0.0570)	(0.0570)
Highschool	-0.257	-0.257	-0.257	-0.257
	(0.173)	(0.173)	(0.173)	(0.173)
College	-0.373***	-0.593***	-0.506***	-0.320***
	(0.0982)	(0.0719)	(0.0756)	(0.0648)
Income	-0.0861***	-0.0861***	-0.0861***	-0.0861***
	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)	(0.0149)
L/R Scale	-0.184***	-0.134***	-0.125***	-0.124***
	(0.0365)	(0.0198)	(0.0179)	(0.0178)
Constant	4.879***	0.990**	-1.111***	-5.252***
	(0.749)	(0.416)	(0.380)	(0.453)
Observations	13,410			
Countries	23			
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

fairness variable is largely insignificant, but one can still see how people who believe that elite families should enjoy their privileges are against redistribution. For what regards the background controls, the study shows how females tend to be more willing to redistribute than males, and the same goes for religious people versus atheists. As seen in Chapter 2, college is in a negative relationship with PfR, which is consistent with the POUM theory. Same goes for family income. Finally, as the political preference of the respondent moves towards the right, the probability of being in disagreement with redistributive initiatives increases. Overall, **these results confirm my first hypothesis.**

4.2 Does Media Consumption Affects Our Views?

The second and third hypotheses of this study concern the impact of media consumption on people's attitudes toward redistribution. The more media one consumes, the less inclined citizens should be to redistribute. Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020) also underline the importance of distinguishing between the partisans, who hold strong beliefs and are unaffected by the media, and non-partisans, who can be more easily influenced. More specifically, partisans' liking for redistribution is not influenced by media consumption, which, while strengthening their pre-existing ideas, can also lead to radicalization through its reinforcing effect. Although, the question of where attitudes come from for partisans individuals could be an interesting one for future research. My third hypothesis is that partisan subjects are unaffected by media consumption since the media reinforces but does not easily alter their opinions. To test these hypotheses I used a OLM where I regressed a set of media, background, ideological (voter turnout and positioning on the L/R scale) and fairness variables (same as in table 4.2) on PfR. The choice for these controls is justified by the correspondent related literature, that has found them to be significantly related with the outcome variable (Gunther, 1998; Stantcheva, 2020; Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina, 2020). Finally, I also added controls to test the POUM hypothesis. In order to distinguish between partisan and non-partisan individuals, I adopted two different strategies: first, I split the sample in two. Table 4.3 shows the results for non-partisans, whereas table 4.4 shows the results for partisans. In both cases I started with the basic model, to then add the fairness controls in column (2), ideology controls in (3) and random effects in (4). Table 4.5 shows the models in (3) and (4) for both partisans and non-partisans, so that they are easier to compare. Secondly, because by adopting the first strategy the number of observations for partisans would drop considerably, I controlled for people who posted anything political in the previous year and those who did not, as shown in equation (3.1.1). The results are shown in 4.6.

As predicted, in table 4.3 one can see that media intake and internet use both have a significant effect on PfR. Although, the direction of the effect is ambiguous: while internet use actually decreases non-partisans' taste for redistribution, news intake has

Table 4.3: News intake on preferences for redistribution for non-partisans (OLM)

Preferences for redistribution	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**
News about politics and current affairs	0.000482***	0.000552***	0.000586***	0.000566***
	(0.000185)	(0.000192)	(0.000193)	(0.000174)
Internet use	-0.000693***	-0.000783***	-0.000805***	-0.000835***
	(0.000262)	(0.000242)	(0.000235)	(0.000139)
Age of respondent	-0.00782**	-0.00691**	-0.00565	-0.00550***
	(0.00322)	(0.00291)	(0.00360)	(0.00170)
Female	0.145**	0.114*	0.0556	0.0648
	(0.0641)	(0.0634)	(0.0689)	(0.0471)
Minority	0.0465	0.0479	-0.000413	-0.0183
	(0.156)	(0.136)	(0.144)	(0.110)
How religious				0.188***
				(0.0301)
1. Somewhat religious	0.234***	0.226***	0.307***	
	(0.0660)	(0.0642)	(0.0705)	
2. Very Religious	0.353***	0.252***	0.347***	
	(0.0948)	(0.0978)	(0.123)	
Married	-0.0532	-0.0256	-0.0346	-0.0681
	(0.0682)	(0.0640)	(0.0653)	(0.0741)
Highschool	-0.0424	-0.0207	0.0387	0.0342
	(0.350)	(0.351)	(0.395)	(0.155)
College	-0.486***	-0.505***	-0.567***	-0.573***
	(0.0724)	(0.0697)	(0.0668)	(0.0542)
Income	-0.102***	-0.0968***	-0.0837***	-0.0893***
	(0.0169)	(0.0147)	(0.0164)	(0.00931)
POUM Father	-0.0207	0.000402	0.00334	-0.000795
	(0.0635)	(0.0647)	(0.0757)	(0.0548)
POUM Mother	0.141*	0.119	0.0946	0.100*
	(0.0757)	(0.0737)	(0.0730)	(0.0572)
Baseline model	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls		√	√	√
Ideology controls			√	√
Random Effects				√
Observations	8,331	8,021	6,505	6,505
Countries	23		23	

Clustered (1-3) and standard (4) errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

a beneficial effect on the same. Both these effects become larger when I add controls and random effects, which indicates that such controls are correlated both with my explanatory variables and with the outcome variable, Y. The implication is that, had I not added the fairness and ideology controls, my model would have suffered from Omitted Variable Bias (OVB). If preferences for redistribution are caused by both media consumption, ideology, and perception of fairness, all of which are correlated with each other, and only one of them is included in the model, some of the variation in the response variable that is due, for instance, to ideology, will be incorrectly attributed to media consumption. This means that the value of my explanatory variable is skewed; and this is known as the omitted variable bias. Other intriguing findings concern the respondent's age, indicating that as one becomes older, their desire for redistribution

Table 4.4: News intake on preferences for redistribution for partisans (OLM)

Preferences for redistribution	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
News about politics and current affairs	0.00114***	0.000873***	0.000893***	0.00109***
	(0.000209)	(0.000222)	(0.000209)	(0.000401)
Internet use	-0.000930***	-0.000918***	-0.000674***	-0.000816***
	(0.000313)	(0.000314)	(0.000260)	(0.000271)
Age of respondent	-0.00116	-0.00219	-0.000915	-0.000428
	(0.00315)	(0.00334)	(0.00359)	(0.00363)
Female	0.156***	0.0848*	-0.000764	0.0228
	(0.0552)	(0.0481)	(0.0722)	(0.0956)
Minority	0.128	0.0475	-0.109	-0.131
	(0.110)	(0.110)	(0.162)	(0.212)
How religious				0.161***
				(0.0626)
1. Somewhat religious	0.0240	0.0855	0.202**	
	(0.0903)	(0.0988)	(0.0962)	
2. Very Religious	0.128	0.128	0.281***	
	(0.0846)	(0.105)	(0.104)	
Married	0.0736	0.131	0.0835	0.115
	(0.192)	(0.196)	(0.190)	(0.174)
Highschool	-0.125	-0.257	-0.128	-0.155
	(0.262)	(0.286)	(0.277)	(0.328)
College	-0.307**	-0.379***	-0.509***	-0.568***
	(0.131)	(0.137)	(0.142)	(0.125)
Income	-0.101***	-0.0928***	-0.0775***	-0.0930***
	(0.0222)	(0.0209)	(0.0237)	(0.0205)
POUM Father	0.0513	0.0320	0.0143	0.00578
	(0.0947)	(0.0911)	(0.0843)	(0.107)
POUM Mother	0.160	0.117	0.143*	0.164
	(0.100)	(0.0835)	(0.0856)	(0.113)
Baseline model	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls		√	√	√
Ideology controls			√	√
Random Effects				√
Observations	2,677	2,614	2,248	2,248
Countries	23		23	

Clustered (1-3) and standard (4) errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

deteriorates. Moreover, as anticipated by Alesina and Giuliano (2011), to be religious increases tastes for redistribution. Education has a significant and negative coefficient: better educated people are more opposed to redistribution. Presumably this represents expectations for upward mobility: to be economically successful, people invest more in education while maintaining income constant. After completing their education, they expect to be able to earn a salary higher than the average, and are not prone to share it. Although, the results show that this effect is present only for college students, whereas high school pupils do not appear to engage in this sort of reasoning. The POUM dummies turned out to not be statistically significant for both non-partisans and partisans individuals, even though more than half of the sample is more educated than their parents (54 percent is more educated than their father, 62 percent than their mother)(table

Table 4.5: News intake on partisan and non-partisan individuals (OLM)

Preferences for redistribution	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**
	Non-partisans		*Partisans*	
News about politics and current affairs	0.000586***	0.000566***	0.000893***	0.00109***
	(0.000193)	(0.000174)	(0.000209)	(0.000401)
Internet use	-0.000805***	-0.000835***	-0.000674***	-0.000816***
	(0.000235)	(0.000139)	(0.000260)	(0.000271)
Age of respondent	-0.00565	-0.00550***	-0.000915	-0.000428
	(0.00360)	(0.00170)	(0.00359)	(0.00363)
Female	0.0556	0.0648	-0.000764	0.0228
	(0.0689)	(0.0471)	(0.0722)	(0.0956)
Minority	-0.000413	-0.0183	-0.109	-0.131
	(0.144)	(0.110)	(0.162)	(0.212)
How religious		0.188***		0.161***
		(0.0301)		(0.0626)
1. Somewhat religious	0.307***		0.202**	
	(0.0705)		(0.0962)	
2. Very Religious	0.347***		0.281***	
	(0.123)		(0.104)	
Married	-0.0346	-0.0681	0.0835	0.115
	(0.0653)	(0.0741)	(0.190)	(0.174)
Highschool	0.0387	0.0342	-0.128	-0.155
	(0.395)	(0.155)	(0.277)	(0.328)
College	-0.567***	-0.573***	-0.509***	-0.568***
	(0.0668)	(0.0542)	(0.142)	(0.125)
Income	-0.0837***	-0.0893***	-0.0775***	-0.0930***
	(0.0164)	(0.00931)	(0.0237)	(0.0205)
POUM Father	0.00334	-0.000795	0.0143	0.00578
	(0.0757)	(0.0548)	(0.0843)	(0.107)
POUM Mother	0.0946	0.100*	0.143*	0.164
	(0.0730)	(0.0572)	(0.0856)	(0.113)
Ideology controls				
Voted	-0.206*	-0.208***	-0.272**	-0.322**
	(0.120)	(0.0554)	(0.127)	(0.133)
L\R Scale	-0.133***	-0.134***	-0.181***	-0.214***
	(0.0220)	(0.0123)	(0.0249)	(0.0308)
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Random Effects	-	√	-	√
Observations	6,505	6,505	2,248	2,248
Countries	23		23	

Clustered (1)-(3) and standard (2)-(4) errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

A.4). This could be given by the reduced number of observations relative to the variability of my data: in general, the larger the sample size, the smaller the standard error (S.E.). For the variables in analysis the S.E. is not huge in absolute values, but it is of considerable magnitude with respect to the POUM coefficients.

The results for partisans individuals are analogous to those for non-partisans (table 4.4): news intake favours preferences for redistribution while internet use deteriorates them. This goes against my hypothesis for which partisans individuals are not influenced by any kind of media. In table 4.5 one can look at the results for non-partisan and partisans individuals all together. At first, the effects of the media consumption

explanatory variables on the PfR can appear to not be significantly different from zero, although, one must keep in mind that the effects are to be intended as *per minute* spent consuming media of any sort. The results show that, if a subject were to increase the time they spend watching, reading or listening to political news by one minute per day (one unit), the log of odds of having a positive perception about redistribution would increase by 0.0006 while the other variables in the model are held constant. On the other hand, by adding one minute in the daily internet use, there is an increase in the log of the probability of being averse towards redistribution of 0.0008 points. In table B.4 the same regression has been performed, but the results reported are in odd ratios, which may be easier to comprehend. For instance, for every one minute increase in a non-partisan's news intake, the odds of being more likely to redistribute is multiplied by 1.0006 times, meaning an increase of 0.06 percent, holding constant all other variables. The figure grows to 0.09 percent for partisans when random effects are not applied. However, one unit increase in the daily use of internet lowers tastes for redistribution by 0.08 percent [given by $(1 - 0.9992)/1x100\%$], holding constant all the other variables. This means that, by staying one hour more on the web, this figure would grow up to 4.8 percent. By following the same reasoning, if a non-partisan individual spends one additional hour per day reading, listening or watching the news, they will be 3.6 percent more prone to redistribute, 5.4 percent for partisans. As anticipated before, for those who **do not** have a college degree, the odds of being more likely to redistribute is $1/0.567 = 1.76$ (hence 76% higher) times that of a college graduate, keeping constant all other variables. From here, the interpretation of the other variables comes intuitive.

Other interesting results that can be seen in table 4.5 are that, even after adjusting for wealth, left-wing individuals are more pro-redistribution. Finally, the variable "voted" is a dummy that takes value 1 when the respondent has voted in the last national elections. It is in a negative relationship with PfR, which is consistent with this study's research question: if its coefficient were positive, then there would be no limited redistribution puzzle.

The outcomes of my second technique to investigate the varied effects of media consumption on partisans and non-partisans are provided in table 4.6. The results for news

Table 4.6: Media consumption on preference for redistribution (OLM)

Preferences for redistribution	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**
News about politics and current affairs	0.000458**	0.000512***	0.000552***	0.000555***
	(0.000183)	(0.000188)	(0.000187)	(0.000173)
Internet use	-0.000644**	-0.000731***	-0.000756***	-0.000760***
	(0.000258)	(0.000239)	(0.000231)	(0.000136)
Posted	0.0672	-0.0240	-0.0898	-0.0901
	(0.107)	(0.115)	(0.119)	(0.0806)
*Posted*News*	0.000883***	0.000579**	0.000548*	0.000551
	(0.000263)	(0.000280)	(0.000283)	(0.000369)
*Posted*Internet*	-0.000428	-0.000305	-0.0000481	-0.0000487
	(0.000280)	(0.000287)	(0.000278)	(0.000250)
Age of respondent	-0.00634**	-0.00586**	-0.00450	-0.00452***
	(0.00298)	(0.00271)	(0.00332)	(0.00149)
Female	0.147***	0.105**	0.0399	0.0405
	(0.0520)	(0.0440)	(0.0529)	(0.0407)
Minority	0.0670	0.0439	-0.0289	-0.0289
	(0.119)	(0.0986)	(0.0971)	(0.0940)
How religious				
1. Somewhat religious	0.180***	0.187***	0.277***	0.278***
	(0.0566)	(0.0505)	(0.0524)	(0.0477)
2. Very Religious	0.300***	0.221**	0.328***	0.329***
	(0.0840)	(0.0871)	(0.102)	(0.0529)
Married	-0.0344	-0.00145	-0.0150	-0.0152
	(0.0737)	(0.0679)	(0.0686)	(0.0661)
Highschool	-0.0613	-0.0777	-0.0177	-0.0185
	(0.306)	(0.297)	(0.321)	(0.135)
College	-0.444***	-0.475***	-0.552***	-0.555***
	(0.0757)	(0.0770)	(0.0708)	(0.0472)
Income	-0.101***	-0.0950***	-0.0810***	-0.0815***
	(0.0172)	(0.0150)	(0.0167)	(0.00794)
POUM Father	-0.00255	0.0134	0.00694	0.00712
	(0.0575)	(0.0582)	(0.0648)	(0.0469)
POUM Mother	0.149**	0.125**	0.114*	0.115**
	(0.0682)	(0.0633)	(0.0628)	(0.0490)
Baseline model	√	√	√	√
Fairness control		√	√	√
Ideology controls			√	√
Random effects				√
Observations	11,008	10,635	8,753	8,753
Pseudo R^2	0.0208	0.0409	0.0512	-

Clustered (1-3) and standard (4) errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

intake and internet use are similar to those previously described. The dummy "posted" is never significant, even when controls or random effects are added, which is consistent with the previous results. However, the interaction term *Posted*News* is significant in columns (1) and (2). According to the data, the desire for redistribution develops as partisans spend more time reading, watching, or listening to the news. Nevertheless, when I add controls, the effect becomes smaller and eventually disappears completely in columns (3) and (4), where the model is complete and random effects were applied. This implies that there would be OVB in the absence of the controls, and I would have assigned to *Posted*News* an explanatory power that it does not have. Another improve-

ment of this second strategy is that now the POUM dummy that takes value 1 if the respondent is more educated than their mother is significant. Although, the sign of the correlation is not the one that I expected. The POUM hypothesis argues that not all impoverished people embrace redistributive measures because they hope to advance up the income ladder in the future (Benabou and Ok, 2001). The assumption is that individuals who are better educated than their parents should have a negative correlation with redistribution preferences. My results state the contrary. Again, one should consider that these are rough proxies to test the POUM hypothesis. Ideally, it is preferable to have continuous variables rather than dummies, as their effect is not necessarily linear. Second, as Alesina and Giuliano (2011) find out, the POUM effect is significant when we look at the increase of income between the respondent an their parents rather than the difference in education, as the latter could be influenced by the parents themselves or by external factors rather than by the prospect of upward mobility.

To summarize, **these results reject my hypotheses**: hypothesis number two is mostly inconclusive, as it stated that there was a negative correlation between media consumption and preferences for redistribution. Data show that there actually is a negative relationship between internet consumption and PfR, but this turns positive when we look for the relationship with media intake. Hypothesis number three asserted that partisans individuals are not affected by media consumption, since their testes have been set prior to this survey and study. Although, the results show that there is no difference in the effect on partisans and non-partisans, and when I controlled for the former, the interested variable was not statistically significant. One justification for this output could be the lack of more detailed variables that could have been useful in casting light on how European citizens use social and other types of media as well as the low number of observations.

4.3 Does Media Plurality Affects Attitudes?

The last two hypotheses are tested through equation (3.2): here we have a set of four variables that make up the authoritarian index and another set that makes up the

libertarian index, both of which range between 0 and 1. These have been regressed against the media consumption variables, the MPM Index, and the correspondent interaction terms. The same has been done for the redistribution index and the variable "preferences for redistribution", which I transformed from ordered to continuous, with the aim to control for my previous results. Also these two variables range between 0 and 1. The MPM Index, which measures how great the danger to media pluralism is in a specific country, is the explanatory variable of interest for my fourth hypothesis. H_4 asserted that there should be a positive association between media plurality risk and support for authoritarian values: as the number of media outlets drops, bribing them becomes easier. If the incumbent craves power, he may want to control the media and use it to influence citizens' sentiments regarding redistribution; as greater wealth is associated with greater power, this may be a mean of staying in office. As a consequence, I also expected the libertarian index to be in a negative relationship with the MPM Index.

The fifth and last hypothesis of this research is strictly linked to the previous one, as it was meant to be a further support to hypothesis number four. According to my argument, the more the exposure to political news, the lower the "pro-equity ideals," especially in nations where media diversity is at peril. Conversely, I assumed that those who consumed more media in countries with a high MPM Index would be more predisposed to authoritarianism. To summarise, I expected the interaction terms to be positive when regressed on Autindex and negative when regressed on Libindex, Redindex and the PfR Index. The results for the baseline model are shown in table 4.7, additional results for the Autindex and Libindex and each of their components can be found in the Appendix (Tables B.5 and B.6). As I build my model from table 4.7 to table 4.10, my explanatory variables become more significant and their magnitude increases as well. I consider this to be an indication of the superior accuracy of the complete model shown in table 4.10.

In table 4.7, the number of observation is quite uneven: while for the regression in (2) I have $N = 22,853$, the figure decreases to $N = 9,955$ in (3), and increases only slightly in (4). The reason for this is that almost half of the respondents did not provide an answer to the questions that made up the Redistribution index and the PfR Index.

Table 4.7: Attitudes on MPM Index (OLS)

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.0000126	0.0000327**	0.0000712	0.000211**
	(0.0000307)	(0.0000126)	(0.0000696)	(0.0000953)
MPM Index	0.345***	0.117***	-0.0477	0.188
	(0.0688)	(0.0386)	(0.110)	(0.199)
*MPM*News*	0.0000486	-0.0000629**	-0.0000878	-0.000278
	(0.0000917)	(0.0000293)	(0.000196)	(0.000255)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.0000671	-0.0000257	0.000136	0.000267
	(0.0000872)	(0.0000604)	(0.000155)	(0.000240)
Internet use	-0.0000477	0.00000502	-0.0000678	-0.000212**
	(0.0000339)	(0.0000270)	(0.0000611)	(0.0000994)
Age of respondent	0.000321	0.000108*	-0.0000827	-0.000503
	(0.000215)	(0.0000555)	(0.000196)	(0.000349)
Female	-0.0134***	0.00112	0.00757*	0.0131*
	(0.00281)	(0.00225)	(0.00396)	(0.00722)
Minority	-0.00580	-0.00330	-0.0110	-0.00272
	(0.00857)	(0.00427)	(0.0124)	(0.0171)
Religious	0.0260***	0.00430**	0.0201***	0.0278***
	(0.00652)	(0.00190)	(0.00411)	(0.00657)
Married	0.0205***	0.000464	-0.00967	-0.0103
	(0.00411)	(0.00227)	(0.00613)	(0.00954)
Highschool	-0.0106	-0.00437	-0.00421	-0.0172
	(0.00944)	(0.00731)	(0.0201)	(0.0413)
College	-0.0410***	-0.00521***	-0.0149**	-0.0660***
	(0.00501)	(0.00173)	(0.00584)	(0.0119)
Family income	-0.00413***	-0.000333	-0.00587***	-0.0137***
	(0.000569)	(0.000491)	(0.00135)	(0.00250)
Constant	0.296***	0.515***	0.820***	0.715***
	(0.0263)	(0.0198)	(0.0496)	(0.116)
Ideology controls				
Fairness controls				
Random effects				
Observations	22,422	22,853	9,955	10,045
Adjusted R^2	0.183	0.019	0.096	0.100
Countries	23	23	23	23
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Indeed, such indexes are made up by roughly 40 thousand observations out of over 89 thousand, a 56 percent decrease from the original sample. Almost 20 thousands observations from the ESS10 are absent since the fairness questionnaire was not used in this round, and the remainder are missing data.

Moving forward to the results, in table 4.7 one can see that news consumption is not significantly correlated with both the Autindex and the Redindex, and this is also supported in tables 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10, which include controls and random effects. It

Table 4.8: Attitudes on MPM Index with ideology controls (OLS)

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.00000159	0.0000331**	0.0000510	0.000253***
	(0.0000350)	(0.0000128)	(0.0000832)	(0.0000896)
MPM Index	0.343***	0.118***	-0.0619	0.198
	(0.0715)	(0.0394)	(0.113)	(0.197)
*MPM*News*	0.0000320	-0.0000612**	-0.0000310	-0.000356
	(0.0000990)	(0.0000293)	(0.000233)	(0.000243)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.0000394	-0.0000131	0.000152	0.000276
	(0.0000819)	(0.0000609)	(0.000154)	(0.000226)
Internet use	-0.0000579	-0.000000185	-0.0000710	-0.000209**
	(0.0000359)	(0.0000281)	(0.0000601)	(0.0000921)
Age of respondent	0.000282	0.000121*	-0.000126	-0.000371
	(0.000263)	(0.0000652)	(0.000212)	(0.000416)
Female	-0.0111***	0.00133	0.00518	0.0119
	(0.00241)	(0.00211)	(0.00429)	(0.00806)
Minority	-0.0113	-0.00326	-0.00754	-0.00460
	(0.00866)	(0.00427)	(0.0136)	(0.0157)
Religious	0.0256***	0.00369*	0.0195***	0.0283***
	(0.00662)	(0.00208)	(0.00428)	(0.00707)
Married	0.0206***	-0.000822	-0.00911	-0.0127
	(0.00386)	(0.00253)	(0.00657)	(0.0102)
Highschool	-0.00722	-0.00336	0.00146	-0.00692
	(0.00904)	(0.00707)	(0.0217)	(0.0432)
College	-0.0441***	-0.00465**	-0.0165***	-0.0691***
	(0.00706)	(0.00187)	(0.00562)	(0.0111)
Family income	-0.00374***	-0.000580	-0.00595***	-0.0130***
	(0.000655)	(0.000503)	(0.00147)	(0.00271)
Constant	0.311***	0.509***	0.823***	0.714***
	(0.0297)	(0.0210)	(0.0529)	(0.118)
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls				
Random effects				
Observations	19,833	20,224	8,927	9,006
Adjusted R^2	0.189	0.020	0.094	0.103
Countries	23	23	23	23

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

does, however, have a positive and significant effect on both the Libindex and redistribution preferences. This is consistent with the findings in paragraph 4.2, which showed that news intake had a beneficial influence on PfR. Another finding from paragraph 4.2 that has been verified here is that internet use is negatively correlated with PfR and the Redindex, albeit with a modest effect: one unit increase in internet use reduces PfR by 0.000212 points, which drops to 0.000208 when the model is complete (table 4.10). This suggests that in order to reduce preferences for redistribution by 0.2 points (which is a considerable amount, given that the variable takes values from 0 to 1), an individual

Table 4.9: Attitudes on MPM Index with fairness and ideology controls (OLS)

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.0000210	0.0000484**	0.0000627	0.000253***
	(0.0000423)	(0.0000230)	(0.0000430)	(0.0000890)
MPM Index	0.393***	0.154***	0.0111	0.230
	(0.0820)	(0.0470)	(0.0644)	(0.176)
*MPM*News*	0.0000797	-0.000111*	-0.0000639	-0.000359
	(0.000130)	(0.0000634)	(0.000113)	(0.000231)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000204	-0.000141*	0.0000973	0.000259
	(0.000119)	(0.0000710)	(0.0000715)	(0.000191)
Internet use	0.0000102	0.0000460	-0.0000684**	-0.000208**
	(0.0000481)	(0.0000320)	(0.0000258)	(0.0000769)
Age of respondent	0.000269	0.000202**	0.000183	-0.000261
	(0.000239)	(0.0000962)	(0.000151)	(0.000379)
Female	-0.00564	-0.00474**	-0.00240	0.00868
	(0.00439)	(0.00202)	(0.00294)	(0.00741)
Minority	0.0122	0.00765	-0.00453	-0.00280
	(0.0145)	(0.00812)	(0.00587)	(0.0125)
Religious	0.0275***	-0.000678	0.00958***	0.0225***
	(0.00541)	(0.00271)	(0.00245)	(0.00714)
Married	0.0301***	0.000235	-0.00735	-0.00742
	(0.00676)	(0.00379)	(0.00453)	(0.00934)
Highschool	0.00938	-0.00945	0.000227	-0.00830
	(0.00826)	(0.00702)	(0.0167)	(0.0401)
College	-0.0369***	-0.00460**	-0.0213***	-0.0697***
	(0.00653)	(0.00208)	(0.00446)	(0.0110)
Family income	-0.00389***	0.000102	-0.00452***	-0.0126***
	(0.000734)	(0.000550)	(0.000984)	(0.00250)
Constant	0.210***	0.179***	0.190***	0.405***
	(0.0424)	(0.0279)	(0.0367)	(0.0974)
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Random effects				
Observations	8,531	8,714	8,733	8,753
Adjusted R^2	0.231	0.247	0.523	0.132
Countries	23	23	23	23

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

would have to spend at least 16.7 hours per day on the web, which is not realistic.

For what concerns the explanatory variable, I observed that the MPM Index was significantly and positively correlated with all of my dependent variables except the Redindex. When I include the controls, the size of the MPM Index's effect grows, and when I apply the random effects, also the coefficient on PfR becomes significant. This implies that the MPM Index and my controls are correlated. The results for Autindex (1), Libindex (2), and PfR (4) are all positive. The coefficient on Autindex has the greatest magnitude, while the one on the Libindex has the smallest. Moreover, because the

Table 4.10: Attitudes on MPM Index with random effects

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.0000210	0.0000485	0.0000627*	0.000252***
	(0.0000516)	(0.0000301)	(0.0000378)	(0.0000852)
MPM Index	0.393***	0.153***	0.0111	0.230***
	(0.0252)	(0.0151)	(0.0185)	(0.0437)
*MPM*News*	0.0000797	-0.000112	-0.0000639	-0.000357**
	(0.000118)	(0.0000704)	(0.0000835)	(0.000181)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000204**	-0.000140***	0.0000973	0.000259*
	(0.0000852)	(0.0000502)	(0.0000644)	(0.000152)
Internet use	0.0000102	0.0000456**	-0.0000684**	-0.000208***
	(0.0000352)	(0.0000214)	(0.0000268)	(0.0000646)
Age of respondent	0.000269**	0.000201***	0.000183**	-0.000262
	(0.000122)	(0.0000744)	(0.0000892)	(0.000215)
Female	-0.00564*	-0.00473**	-0.00240	0.00872
	(0.00339)	(0.00205)	(0.00252)	(0.00604)
Minority	0.0122	0.00764	-0.00453	-0.00270
	(0.00837)	(0.00507)	(0.00593)	(0.0141)
Religious	0.0275***	-0.000680	0.00958***	0.0225***
	(0.00219)	(0.00131)	(0.00159)	(0.00386)
Married	0.0301***	0.000220	-0.00735*	-0.00741
	(0.00580)	(0.00344)	(0.00423)	(0.00994)
Highschool	0.00938	-0.00955	0.000227	-0.00854
	(0.0113)	(0.00743)	(0.00852)	(0.0198)
College	-0.0369***	-0.00459**	-0.0213***	-0.0697***
	(0.00379)	(0.00224)	(0.00283)	(0.00670)
Family income	-0.00389***	0.000101	-0.00452***	-0.0126***
	(0.000637)	(0.000386)	(0.000477)	(0.00116)
Constant	0.210***	0.180***	0.190***	0.405***
	(0.0221)	(0.0139)	(0.0170)	(0.0401)
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Random effects	√	√	√	√
Observations	8,531	8,714	8,733	8,753

Robust errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only.

constant for the Autindex is greater than the one for the Libindex, and given than the the impact size on (1) is larger, the final result shows a general tendency to the right when only these two dependent variables are considered. Table B.5 shows, for instance, that the MPM Index is also positively correlated with attachment to traditions (defined as "conservatism"), being embarrassed of homosexual relatives, considering immigration as a threat, and desire for a strong government. Nevertheless, another major effect is the one on redistribution preferences: as the MPM Index rises, individuals are more likely to redistribute, and this effect is bigger (taking the constant into account) than the one on Autindex.

What is intriguing is that when we look at the interaction between the MPM Index and news intake, the relationship becomes negative for both the Libindex and redistribution preferences. The interaction terms between the MPM Index and the media consumption variables are intended to provide an individual-level assessment of the degree of media bias, by focusing on people who spend a certain amount of time, each day, following the news. The implication is that when media is less free, readers and non-readers appear to become more polarised. Although, the effect on (2) only holds in tables 4.7 and 4.8, and disappears afterwards. As a result, my best estimate of this effect is equal to -0.000112 points, with an uncertainty from -0.00025 to 0.000026 (95% confidence interval). Because 0 appears in the interval, current data do not allow me to determine the direction of the effect with certainty, and the size of the effect is, in any case, relatively limited. The second interaction involves the use of the internet. The effect is significant for both the Autindex and the Libindex, and it is negative in both situations. This finding suggests that as one uses the internet more in a country where the media is less open, attitudes toward both democracy and autocracy decrease. Basically, this indicates that the use of internet is not correlated with an increase in polarization between those who use internet to inform themselves. Indeed, given that both results in (2) and (3) in table 4.10 have a negative sign, their constant is reduced by a similar amount: it is as, in general, attitudes towards left and right are left untouched. On the other hand, polarization between internet users and non-internet users should increase, as for the latter there is no change in their constant.

To summarise, **the findings of these analyses are somewhat ambiguous**: the threat to media plurality raises both democratic and authoritarian ideals, while its interaction with media consumption demonstrates the opposite. Similarly, the MPM index stimulates and depresses desires for redistribution depending on how it interacts with news consumption. The MPM index is always (when significant) in a positive relationship with the Redindex - or PfR - contrary to my expectation. One of the reasons might be the inability to discern between news from radio, newspapers, and television, for example, such that I am unable to identify individuals who spend all of their time on one platform from those who adhere to multiple sources. The limitations of my research are

discussed in Chapter 6. In the next section, robustness checks for model (3.2), which proved successful, are presented.

Chapter 5

Robustness checks

Unobserved confounders In this section, I conducted a sensitivity analysis to quantify the fragility of my results when the no unobserved confounding assumption is challenged. To do that, I used the command `sensemakr`, which let me measure how significant an unobserved confounder has to be for my study results to change and how strong confounding needs to be, in comparison to the strength of observable factors, to alter my output by a given amount (Cinelli et al., 2020). To proceed, one needs to identify the treatment variable of interest, here the MPM Index; and the main outcome of interest, here Autindex, an index measuring illiberal attitudes. Then I set "Internet use" as the covariate of choice to bound the plausible strength of the unobserved confounders, since it is arguably among the main determinants of exposure to political news and has been found empirically to be one of the major predictors of attitudes toward authority (see Table 4.7). The results are shown in the table below.

Table 5.1: Unobserved confounders robustness check
Outcome: *Autindex*

Treatment:	Est.	S.E.	t-value	$R^2_{Y\sim D\|\mathbf{X}}$	$RV_{q=1}$	$RV_{q=1,\alpha=0.05}$
MPM Index	0.331	0.01	33.404	4.74%	19.96%	18.91%
df = 22421		*Bound (1x Internet use)*: $R^2_{Y\sim Z\|\mathbf{X},D}$ = 0.67%, $R^2_{D\sim Z\|\mathbf{X}}$ = 0.02%				

First, we start with the partial R^2 of the treatment with the outcome. Cinelli et al. (2020) explain that it represents the percentage of variance in the outcome explained by the treatment after accounting for the remainder explained by the covariates. This suggests that if confounders accounted for 100percent of the remaining variability of the

result, they would have to contribute for at least 4.74 percent of the residual variation of the treatment to completely explain the reported estimated impact. Second, the robustness value for the point estimate defines the least amount of correlation that unobserved confounders must have, both with the treatment and with the final result, in order to lower the effect estimate to zero. To bring the calculated effect to zero, uncontrolled confounders would need to contribute to at least 19.96 percent of the residual variation in both the treatment and the outcome(Cinelli et al., 2020). Moving forward, the robustness value for the t-value describes the weakest association that brings the estimate into a frame where it is no longer statistically distinct from zero. As a result, for the null hypothesis that the actual treatment effect is equal to 0 to be rejected at the significance level of 0.05 citepsensemakr, unobserved confounders would need to explain at least 18.91 percent of the residual variance of both the treatment and the outcome (Cinelli et al., 2020).

After describing the objective data it is necessary to provide a possibility judgment, that is to assess whether the values of 4.74 percent and 19.96 percent are a signal of the robustness of my analysis or not. The bounds on strength of confounding show the maximum bias caused by an unobserved confounder which is as strong as the covariate "Internet use" in terms of variance explained of the treatment and the outcome. According to the findings in Table 5.1, such an unobserved confounder could only explain 0.02 percent of the residual variance of the treatment and 0.67 percent of the one of the outcome. Since both figures are below the robustness value of 19.96 percent, the model is solid.

Unobserved heterogeneity In this section, I performed different robustness checks to investigate the sensitivity of the empirical results to alternative sources of unobserved heterogeneity. First, following the exercise in Kotschy and Sunde (2022), I run model (3.2) without any further control other than gender, ethnicity and age. As explained in Kotschy and Sunde (2022), the aim of this exercise is to look at the variables trends and magnitude without any controls, so that one can understand if the introduction of the controls is actually beneficial in reducing biases affecting the research. The results of

this more limited specification corroborate the baseline results, as one can see in Table C.1. The qualitative trends are also quite comparable, despite some slight changes in the magnitude of the estimated coefficients, suggesting that the inclusion of the extra controls eliminates worries about OVB that could be biasing the estimations of interest.

The baseline results also show heterogeneity in democratic views once controlled for

Table 5.2: Unobserved heterogeneity robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000186	0.0000400**	0.0000692**	0.000225**
	(0.0000394)	(0.0000176)	(0.0000261)	(0.0000850)
MPM Index	0.397***	0.147***	0.0775	0.252
	(0.0716)	(0.0470)	(0.0550)	(0.179)
*MPM*News*	5.93e-10	-0.0000907*	-0.0000951	-0.000309
	(0.000117)	(0.0000459)	(0.0000676)	(0.000220)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000175	-0.000160*	0.0000898	0.000292
	(0.000117)	(0.0000794)	(0.0000640)	(0.000208)
Internet use	-0.0000131	0.0000567	-0.0000714**	-0.000232**
	(0.0000487)	(0.0000364)	(0.0000269)	(0.0000875)
Happiness controls				
How happy are you	-0.00952***	0.000442	-0.00137	-0.00446
	(0.00131)	(0.000713)	(0.000919)	(0.00299)
Subjective general health	-0.00999***	0.00314*	-0.00172	-0.00559
	(0.00330)	(0.00160)	(0.00156)	(0.00507)
Fairness controls				
Important that people have equal opportunities	-0.00812**	0.0517***	0.0872***	0.0335***
	(0.00309)	(0.00130)	(0.00175)	(0.00569)
Hard-working people should earn more than others	0.0190***	0.00683***	0.00402	0.0131
	(0.00284)	(0.00157)	(0.00241)	(0.00784)
People get what they deserve	0.00702**	0.00505***	-0.00414***	-0.0134***
	(0.00308)	(0.00173)	(0.000990)	(0.00322)
Justice always prevails over injustice	-0.00159	0.00382***	0.00488***	0.0159***
	(0.00372)	(0.00133)	(0.00170)	(0.00552)
Families with high social status should enjoy privileges	0.0150***	0.00376**	0.000848	0.00276
	(0.00379)	(0.00141)	(0.00299)	(0.00971)
Society fair when takes care of poor and in need	-0.0116***	-0.00702***	0.0936***	0.0542***
	(0.00288)	(0.00117)	(0.00259)	(0.00843)
Constant	0.349***	0.186***	-0.0554*	0.320***
	(0.0470)	(0.0278)	(0.0309)	(0.101)
Background controls	√	√	√	√
Observations	9,505	9,710	9,748	9,748
Adjusted R^2	0.226	0.253	0.745	0.149
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

the socioeconomic background, as assessed by income and education, which are important determinants of PfR. As a reference, in Chapter 4 education and income were found to be in a significant and negative relationship with preferences for redistribution in both models. This raises the possibility that additional controls for the socioeconomic status may interact meaningfully with the media consumption factors, while also influencing individual views, resulting again in OVB. This happens when some controls are

correlated both with the explanatory variables, here media consumption, and with the indexes that form my outcome variables. The implication is that, if one avoids adding such important controls, the model in analysis will suffer from OVB. More specifically, as seen in Chapter 4, if preferences for redistribution are caused by both media consumption, ideology, and perception of fairness, all of which are correlated with each other, and only one of them is included in the model, some of the variation in the response variable that is due to ideology will be incorrectly attributed to media consumption. This would cause for the value of the media consumption variables to be skewed; so that my results are afflicted by omitted variable bias.

I run a further regression with extra controls to accommodate for the possibility of OVB. I focused on the role of life happiness, general health, and fairness perceptions. The inclusion of these variables in the empirical specification has no effect on the baseline results, as one can see in Table 5.2. Furthermore, the findings of estimating these expanded models show that those who are happier and healthier are more likely to embrace democratic principles: as one can see, there is a negative correlation between happiness and health variables and Autindex, while the relationship turns positive for the Libindex.

Model Misspecification This robustness check considers the chance that my model has been misspecified. The MPM Index, as discussed in earlier chapters, is calculated as the average of four subindices: social inclusivity, political independence, media pluralism, and fundamental protection. Given that not all of them directly pertain to a country's political status, my results may be underestimated if I use the general index rather than the specific one. To accommodate for this concern, I ran two additional regressions: in Table C.2, I used the media plurality index instead of the MPM Index, and in Table C.3, I used the political independence index. Background controls were employed in both regressions. As can be shown, when market plurality is considered, the explanatory variables lose relevance; nonetheless, those that remain meaningful exhibit qualitative patterns comparable to the baseline specification, despite minor variations in the size of the calculated coefficients. In the second regression, where political indepen-

dence is substituted for the MPM Index, the explanatory variables remain relevant and corroborate the baseline model's trends. The findings reveal that the greater the risk to the media's political independence, the higher the illiberal values. Its link with the liberal index is also positive, but to a lesser extent. In (2), the interaction term between political independence and news consumption is significant and negative, as it was in the baseline regression, but it is still essentially null.

Weighted Estimates Because there is no weighting of observations in the baseline analysis - a limitation that will be discussed in the following section - all observations are treated equally. I reproduced the estimations while using sample weights to investigate the robustness of the results (Tables C.4, C.5, C.6). I used the weights supplied by the ESS, which compensate for differential selection probabilities within each nation as described by sample design, missing response, sampling error and population size disparities across countries. The main limitation of this measure is the unavailability of such weights for the latest ESS round, which was released in June 2022. As a result, the weighted estimations lack the most recent set of data at my disposal. However, estimates based on these weights applied to individual observations support the baseline results and imply that weighting is unnecessary for the overall conclusions.

Chapter 6

Discussion

This study sought to determine whether media consumption aids in solving the limited redistribution puzzle. Starting with the fundamentals, I developed a series of hypotheses and sub-hypotheses that led to the central one: there is a positive relationship between MPM Index and Authoritarian attitudes. Conversely, the correlation between the MPM Index and Libertarian values ought to be negative. First, I hypothesised that people who believe in equal opportunity for all are more likely to redistribute. Hypothesis one was tested by regressing a series of fairness and background controls on PfR, using a GOLM. According to Di Gioacchino and Verashchagina (2020), perception of fairness is an indicator of the respondent's value system, hence it may be used to explain the individual qualities that define a person's proclivity for redistribution prior to any external bias.

The results from my first model, shown in Table 4.2, are consistent with the previous literature. Moreover, it was demonstrated that different perception of where justice comes from - weather the State or external forces - also helps determine preferences for redistribution. Finally, based on Alesina and Giuliano (2011), I tried to test the "work vs luck" hypothesis: people who believe that hard work is the main determinant of wealth tend to be less redistributive than people who acknowledge that luck is also important. Their analysis was based on a large number of individuals from the US. My result show that Europeans believe that hard working people should be paid more than others *and* support redistributive policies, which was unexpected. This could be due to the cultural differences in the societies in analysis; as in Nettle and Saxe (2020), the authors

suggest that people have various perspectives on redistribution because they value different aspects of their society differently. The authors highlight how understanding the operational principles of redistributive psychology may aid in explaining variance and change in support for, and hence the presence of, redistributive institutions across countries and across time.

The second hypothesis stated that media consumption had a detrimental impact on redistribution preferences. The mechanism is such that as income rises, the desire to redistribute decreases. As a result, the individual with the largest wealth should be the least likely to redistribute it. Given that extreme wealth equates to more political power, lobbies are developed to influence public opinion against pro-equity ideas and to maintain such political power over time. The media is one of the tools that such groups employ to disseminate sentiments of preference for inequality. To put this to the test, I used a OLM to regress a set of media, fairness, and background parameters on PfR. The companion theory was that partisan individuals are unaffected by news consumption, since their political attitude is already established, and slanted media - which they sought - can only strengthen rather than modify their principles. The literature has identified this so-called *demand-driven bias* as being prompted by consumers' interest in hearing news that validate their opinions, which can then cause political polarisation and radicalization through the reinforcing effect that biased media has on these individuals (Alesina et al., 2020; Santos et al., 2021).
I also included controls for the POUM test and the subject's voting turnout to this model. In contrast to my theory, news intake has a positive relationship with PfR. Internet usage, on the other hand, has a negative affiliation with the dependent variable. However, because of the conflicting results, any qualitative assessment of the data is difficult. The primary limitation in testing these hypotheses was presumably the ambiguity of the questions asked to the respondents. To offer a more accurate analysis, knowing whether or not an individual has posted anything political online is insufficient to select an individual into the partisan or non partisan category. Furthermore, I was unable to distinguish between the different sources of news consumption: respondents were asked to estimate how many minutes per day they spent viewing, reading, or listening

to political news. As a result, distinguishing between sources such as radio, television, newspapers, and social media is impossible. Moreover, because of this limitation, I was unable to distinguish between individuals who gain information only from one source to those who attain from multiple ones, which would have been useful to identify the partisans individuals. "Internet use" is associated with similar issues as well. Finally, also the dependent variable of choice is too vague to provide a solid answer: in Dallinger (2022), the author contends that the traditional experiment simply reflects a broad propensity toward the concept of equality, and because the question phrasing is usually vague, other inclinations muddle the replies, resulting in a low prediction potential in terms of political behaviour. She also asserts that the typical response assesses democratic inclinations with inconsistency, so that few inferences can be taken regarding voting for left-wing parties or support for redistributive programs. Her conclusion is that methodological inquiry and innovation have been notably missing in the manner that the political demand for state redistribution to decrease income inequality has been expressed thus far. Future research based on this same research question could try to avoid this issue by focusing on sets of single countries, with more detailed datasets used for each nation in analysis (for example, Banca d'Italia for Italy, LISS for the Netherlands), to overcome any language barrier that could cause misinterpretation of the research statements and to further research the actual effect of each media component, other than to better control how such media are used.

The study's central hypothesis (H_4) is that there is a positive association between authoritarian attitudes and the MPM Index. Heinrich and Pleines (2018) and Rollberg and Laruelle (2015) have already highlighted a link between authoritarian governments and restricted media pluralism, as the more illiberal a society, the greater the control over its media. This is considered as a necessity to preserve the general status quo. According to my hypothesis, the opposite might also be true: if an interest group limits the plurality of the media, turnout levels should fall and more power should be concentrated in the hands of those in control. If the lobbies want to maintain the status quo, everything external - such as foreign customs and immigration - might be regarded to as a threat (as is typical of authoritarian attitudes) and communicated to the population via

slanted media. On the long-run, citizens internalize the bias, so that there is a positive association between media plurality risk and support for authoritarian ideologies. To confirm this hypothesis shows that media freedom is indeed correlated with people's values, but further research is necessary to better understand how media capture shapes preferences for redistribution. To provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact of biased media, I also assumed (H_5) that the more the exposure to biased political news the lower the pro-equity values, implying that there is a negative association between the interaction terms between the MPM Index and media consumption and libertarian ideals. The findings indicate that only the interaction term between the MPM Index and internet use is significant, and it has a negative effect on both the Autindex and the Libindex. While the latter relationship was expected, the former was not. Looking at the broader context, the data show that the European citizens who use internet to inform themselves are less polarised than projected, because both attitudes are declining when one looks at the interaction between internet use and MPM Index. However, as the interaction between the index and news intake is not significant (so the constant should not change), the general result indicates an increase in polarization between internet users and non-internet users. The former result, stating that polarisation is decreasing between internet users, is consistent with a previous publication from the European Strategy & Policy Analysis System (2018), which documented how the most strident or extreme opinions among rival parties frequently characterise public discussions and attitudes on identity issues, and how this can skew public perceptions of the genuine status of community attitudes. Also the analysis sample, which was made up of European democratic nations only, may account for this outcome. Gitmez and Molavi (2022) offer an interpretation of this result: their study proposes a model of partisan media attempting to persuade an intelligent and diversified audience. They discovered, by developing a theoretical model, that as a society grows more polarised - which in my setting is represented by the lessening of the liberal values without a corresponding decrease of the autocratic ones - the media becomes less biased. As a result, Gitmez and Molavi (2022) states that polarisation may have an unanticipated effect: it may encourage partisan media to be less biased and more informative. Indeed, because polarisation increases the proportion of persons with strong beliefs and attitudes compared to the

number of moderates, partisan media stands to benefit more from reaching out to the moderates. Because such citizens are more difficult to persuade, the media must become more informational and less biased. The implication is that if media are strategic and citizens are sophisticated, polarization reduces media bias (Gitmez and Molavi, 2022). Once again, their findings are based on the American model. On the contrary, my findings indicate low polarisation and a medium threat to media pluralism, which is more in line with the European reality. Given that Europe is less subject to the polarisation process than the U.S. (Financial Times, 2022), one interpretation of this result is that European media are at a different stage of the information cycle: because European citizens are more moderate, there is still a mean for media to be more polarised, a strategy that does not work as well in the U.S.

Other limitations As mentioned in Chapter 4, both the first and the second models do not satisfy the parallel regression assumption. Then, as explained in Williams (2016), the possible methodological approaches could have been: (i) proceeding with a method whose assumptions are recognised to be breached; (ii) moving to a multinomial logit model, which although is often described as far less parsimonious and more confusing, since it makes no use of information about the ordering of categories; (iii) using the Generalized Ordered Logit, which selectively relaxes the ordered logit model's assumptions only as needed, producing an output that do not have the problems of the ordered logit model while being similar in interpretation. For the first model (Table 4.2), I choose to switch to the GOLM: after running a Brant test, I could see that the explanatory variables of interest were among the ones violating the proportional odds assumption. If I had decided to stick to the OLM, my results could have been under or over-estimated. For instance, if I had only used the ordinal logistic regression, the ordinal beta coefficient for my main explanatory variable "Important that people have equal opportunities" would have been equal to 0.2682, which underestimates its real impact. Another example is the variable "female", which has a value of 0.0546 and is also not significant in the ordinal output. When the binary logistic regression coefficients are compared to the ordinal logistic ones, the ordinal beta coefficient (0.0546) underrates the influence of gender on moving people away from the lowest category while overestimating gender's effect on

pushing people towards the highest bracket. Women clearly exceed males in terms of support for redistribution, but the ordered logit model fails to adequately reflect the nature of the effect. Conversely, in the second model the explanatory variables of interest (news about politics and internet use) did not violate the parallel regression assumption. Moreover, the POUM dummies would not get more meaningful by adopting the binary regression instead of the ordinal one. As a consequence, I decided to stick to the OLM because of its easier interpretation.

Another limitation stems from the complexity that my study's application of analytical weights had represented. As previously stated, I employed three sets of data in my study: the ESS8 (released in 2016), the ESS9 (2018), and the ESS10 (2022). The ESS provides their researchers with specific analysis weights to be applied in their study. Although, these were absent in the 2022 publication, since it is just a subset of the entire dataset that should be released in November 2022. As a result, I had to pick between utilising the entire dataset and being able to weight the data. The decision was challenging since, in published studies, many empirical scientists make contradictory decisions on whether and how to weight, and frequently offer little or no explanation for their judgments. Some of the benefits of weighting data include: (i) the ability to correct a dataset so that the findings more properly depict the population of interest; (ii) reducing the biases of the survey mode in use; and (iii) ensuring the perspectives of "hard-to-reach demographic groups" are still regarded in an equal share to the citizenry in the data collected (Elliott, 2020). As a result, the cost of not weighing the data is a loss of generality of my results. The third point, in particular, is more relevant to my situation: while the gender partition is fairly equal (53.7 percent females, 46.3 percent males), the average age (50.56) is near to the median of my sample (age goes from 15 to 100), and the mean income percentile (5 out of 10) corresponds to its average value, minorities are largely underrepresented (just 25 percent of the sample). Furthermore, while the number of those who attended college and those who did not is equally balanced (50.9 versus 49.1), there is a significant over-representation of those who completed high school (94.15 percent). One consequence of weighing my data, on the other hand, would have been the danger of over-representing the views of one or several individuals who

may not be an accurate representative of their whole demographic group. (Zamboni, 2018). Furthermore, weighting can induce extra biases into the dataset and can make the results more volatile by increasing the standard deviation of responses provided.

A larger sample size, on the other hand, improves the validity of the sample mean as an estimate of the population parameter. This is because the mean will have included a large portion of the population. Working with large samples is also beneficial since it aids in removing outliers from the sample. Large samples, however, carry the danger of over/under-representation, as is the case with minorities here. (Zamboni, 2018). Even though data from the ESS10 was not used extensively - another constraint of this research - it was vital to include this dataset in order to have a longer time period in analysis: for example, using the ESS10 allowed me to also leverage data from the MPM2021. My outcomes are more reliable when I have a longer time period. To conclude, considering the type of data and the topic of my research, I believed that a bigger sample would have been more appropriate than weighing it. In tables C.4, C.5, C.6 of Appendix C the main regression has been reproduced with weighting for the reader to see how the results would have changed.

Future research Every year, the dataset and information published by the Media Pluralism Monitor gets more sophisticated. In this analysis, I only used the average value of the four MPM indexes per European country [1], but it would be fascinating to consider the specific invoices. For example, the newly issued 2022 report from the CMPF shows that the risk to social inclusivity, specifically access to media for minorities, is now at an average risk of 54 percent. New immigrants' arrival ought to reduce the intended degree of redistribution for the locals to the extent that they are close to the bottom of the economic spectrum. Given the consistent waves of African immigration that have been occurring in Europe since 2013, this should have already occurred. With the recent surge of Ukrainian immigrants, some research questions that arise include: does a lack of media coverage of minorities damage their potential to be cared for by politics? More specifically, given that access to media for minorities and access to media for women

[1] Basic protection, Social Inclusiveness, Media Plurality, and Political Independence

are the two top scoring risks under social inclusion[2], what effect does this have on these populations? Does under representation in the media jeopardise these people's basic rights? Minorities and redistribution studies could be an interesting area for future research.

While my work relied on correlation analysis, future researchers may concentrate their efforts on determining causation. The findings of this thesis suggest that internet use, rather than news consumption, is associated with a decrease in preferences for redistribution. An intriguing approach would be to perform a Regression Discontinuity Design in which the arrival of the internet - or, more precisely, the emergence of so-called digital journalism, which dates back to 1996 - is the exogenous shock at the cut-off. The time spent reading, listening to, or watching the news would be the running variable. The treatment group will consist of "news consumers," whereas the control group will include those who never care for the news. However, considering that the US Media Consumption Report 2021 reveals that Generation Z[3] is the least interested in newspapers, radio, TV news, or news websites, this setting would almost certainly result in sample selection. With these risks in mind, I will leave further investigation of this subject to future academics.

[2]from CMPF, MPM2022 publication
[3]young adults aged 18 to 24 years old

Chapter 7

Conclusions

Income redistribution has long been a matter of concern for politicians and economists. Regardless of the theoretical model developed by Meltzer and Richard (1981), which states that rising economic inequality leads to more redistribution under majority vote, there is a paucity of supporting empirical evidence. To address the so-called 'limited redistribution puzzle', various hypotheses have been advanced and tested: according to Alesina and Giuliano (2011), left-wing respondents have a higher demand for redistribution, showing that ideology is important in shaping redistribution preferences. Karabarbounis (2011) shows that the Meltzer-Richards model fails experimentally because it ignores the argument that the exceedingly affluent may have more power in the political process, but the poor have a lower turnout rate, giving them less weight in the same. Furthermore, Stantcheva (2020) demonstrates that the perception of the fairness of inequality and taxation has a significant impact on forming human preferences for redistribution. All of the above are confirmed by the findings of my study: people who believe in equal opportunities also believe that income should be redistributed, and there is a positive relationship between the desire to retain the status quo and opposition to redistribution. The concepts of fairness and justice are inextricably linked. The model demonstrates that different perceptions of justice influence preferences for redistribution, especially when respondents have faith in the State's ability to function properly. The second model revealed that media and internet usage had almost no effect on PfR, but the last model proved that the MPM Index is positively correlated with authoritarian leanings. This indicator was likewise found to be positively connected with democratic

principles, albeit to a lower level. Also, the findings show that an individual-level measure of the intensity of the media bias, targeting those who spend a certain amount of time, per day, gathering information of sort, is in a negative relationship with the Libindex, hence with democratic values. The research issue addressed by this study was, "Does media consumption contribute to solving the redistribution puzzle?" To put it another way, since the media is known to be biased, is it possible that this bias impacted the public to become more individualistic, resulting in a rise in authoritarian principles, which in turn influences our preferences for redistribution? The study's findings are inconclusive. There is a negative correlation between internet use and democratic principles, which persists even when looking at authoritarian attitudes. However, because the Autindex constant is greater than the Libindex constant, there should be a general leaning in sentiments toward the right. On the other hand, news consumption was always positively related to redistribution preferences, implying that, in this context, news consumption is not a possible solution for the limited redistribution puzzle.

Still, these findings have important implications for the debate about the expected effects of limited media plurality on popular support for authoritarian ideologies. While media consumption and internet use indicate different patterns, the findings suggest that higher levels of risk for media freedom are connected with weaker support for democratic principles and stronger support for conservative ideology. Nevertheless, initiatives to promote media transparency are increasing, for example, by establishing media standards to verify the legitimacy and reliability of sources, or by designing algorithms to expose disinformation (KEA European Affairs; Le Gall, 2021) [1]. Furthermore, it is critical to monitor and supervise the evolution of national media legislation and practises, as well as their influence on media freedom and plurality in the EU. The ultimate goal would be to deliberate on the evolving situation in the EU and explore paths for strengthening independence and better protecting journalists' right to free speech. Finally, further research is required to understand the processes behind the systemic effects of media and internet consumption.

[1]For instance, the "SocialTruth" platform, a Horizon 2020 project, aims to counteract fake news around the Covid pandemic. By bringing together search engines, media organisations, research institutions, and consumer associations, this platform has made it feasible to eradicate the spread of fake news using algorithms (KEA European Affairs; Le Gall, 2021)

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Appendices

Appendix A

Data and Methodology

Countries in analysis Complete list of countries in analysis for each ESS round.

- **ESS Round 8:** Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.
- **ESS Round 9:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.
- **ESS Round 10:** Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

MPM Index As defined on their website, the MPM is a tool created by the CMPF to analyze the threats to media pluralism in a specific nation. It is based on 20 variables that define media pluralism in its wide and comprehensive sense, encompassing Basic (or Fundamental) Protection, Market Plurality, Political Independence, and Social Inclusiveness. The MPM attempts to capture all conceivable characteristics and traits that may pose a risk to media pluralism, such as a lack of specific legislative safeguards, media market concentration, and socio-political deficiencies in media industries. The MPM research does not produce a rating of the nations studied or a description of the current level of media plurality in any specific country, but rather an assessment of possible weaknesses in the media system that may impede media pluralism. The CMPF had to define the object of the Media Pluralism Monitor to account for an evolving definition of media or, better, to include within the scope of the assessment all the various channels, both online and offline, that offer news and current affairs. In particular, the areas and indicators covered by the MPM are:[1]

- **Basic Protection:** The indicators that define the Fundamental Protection are intended to measure the prerequisites for a pluralistic and democratic society. The first and most important factor considered in this category is the degree of freedom of speech protection. The right to expess oneself includes not only the freedom to have opinions and to receive and communicate knowledge and information without intervention from state authorities, but also the level of freedom and pluralism of the media. Respect for freedom of speech in a certain country is regarded as having a special consideration in realizing this basic right in the online environment.

  Along with - and as a result of - freedom of expression, the ability to access information is another vital prerequisite for democracy. It is critical to ensure the transparency of public administration, and that crucial information is distributed to the public in order to fuel the political discourse and, ultimately, improve democracy. Thus, the CMPF believes that modern democracies should ensure access to public information and records while simultaneously protecting whistleblowers.

[1] Because the CMPF must identify all channels that "contribute to the definition of public opinion," it must be updated every year, which is why the indicators in the MPM2022 may differ slightly from those in previous years.

The independency of the journalistic profession is necessary for a free and pluralistic media environment. Hence, the MPM regards journalist safety, both physical and digital, as an essential issue in determining if the basic prerequisites for a pluralistic media environment are met. Other key characteristics of a pluralistic media environment include the impartiality and independence of the institutions that regulate the media market, because the form of the market influences market plurality and the political independence of the media environment.
Finally, the Fundamental Protection domain includes an assessment of media reach and Internet access. These are the conditions that help determine whether citizens have possible access to a wide range of material.

To summarize, the five factors reviewed in the Fundamental Protection area are: freedom of expression, right to knowledge, journalistic profession, standards and protection, independence and effectiveness of the media authority, universal reach of traditional media, and Internet access.

- **Market Plurality:** this field seeks to analyze the dangers to media pluralism posed by the legal and economic environment in which market participants operate. It is concerned with the structure of the media market, but it is not limited to this aspect, as other legal, social, and economic factors such as ownership transparency, the economic sustainability of the media industry, and the economic independence of journalism may have an impact on the relationship between competitive and open markets and media pluralism.
  To assess the risks in the Market Plurality area, a broad definition of the media has been adopted: it also includes those actors who create and distribute media content, as well as other actors whose role influences how media content is distributed and accessed, as well as the financing of the media industry. The third variable in this category, *online platforms and competition enforcement*, focuses on external participants of the media industry, evaluating the role of digital intermediaries in the media market and consumption.

The Market Plurality area is made up of five indicators: media ownership transparency; news media concentration; online platforms and competition enforcement; media viability and commercial and owner influence on journalistic content.

- **Political Independence:** this field investigates possible flaws and vulnerabilities in connection to the factors that should ensure a country's political plurality. The availability and efficacy of regulatory and other protections against political control over media outlets and news agencies, as well as political bias and the exploitation of media and internet platforms in elections, are crucial factors against which the dangers to political independence are measured. The indicators also investigate the existence and efficacy of self-regulation in guaranteeing editorial independence, as well as the State's and, more broadly, political power's influence on the operation of the media market. Lastly, they analyze public service media independence.

  Political independence is measured by five indicators: editorial autonomy, audiovisual media, internet platforms and elections, governmental regulation of resources and assistance to the media industry, and independence of public service media governance and funding.

- **Social Inclusiveness:** This field investigates media access by diverse socioeconomic and cultural groups, including minorities, local communities, individuals with impairments, and women. Access to the media by different social groups is a critical component of a participatory media system and a vital component of media pluralism. Media literacy, as a prerequisite for effective media use, is also included in the Social Inclusiveness domain, as is the battle against disinformation and hate speech, in order to maintain a safe media environment for everyone.

  The indicators covered by the social inclusiveness domain are as follows: Minorities' access to media, local/regional communities' access to media and community media, women's access to media, media literacy, and protection against unlawful and damaging speech.

Table A.1: Level of risk per area and country - 2016

Country	Basic Protection	Market Plurality	Political independence	Social Inclusiveness	MPM Index
Austria	0.36	0.43	0.55	0.43	0.44
Belgium	0.15	0.44	0.15	0.25	0.25
Czech Republic	0.18	0.64	0.48	0.55	0.46
Estonia	0.2	0.58	0.38	0.56	0.43
Finland	0.17	0.61	0.44	0.43	0.41
France	0.22	0.21	0.11	0.25	0.20
Germany	0.13	0.24	0.11	0.38	0.22
Hungary	0.58	0.54	0.85	0.46	0.61
Ireland	0.26	0.47	0.39	0.51	0.41
Italy	0.32	0.43	0.51	0.56	0.46
Lithuania	0.18	0.57	0.35	0.66	0.44
Netherlands	0.14	0.37	0.26	0.26	0.26
Poland	0.36	0.66	0.63	0.47	0.53
Portugal	0.15	0.27	0.11	0.46	0.25
Slovenia	0.33	0.5	0.76	0.64	0.56
Spain	0.35	0.42	0.54	0.41	0.43
Sweden	0.13	0.5	0.07	0.19	0.22

Note: the MPM Index is given by the average of the four areas

Table A.2: Level of risk per area and country - 2018

Country	Basic Protection	Market Plurality	Political independence	Social Inclusiveness	MPM Index
Austria	0.29	0.65	0.49	0.5	0.48
Albania	0.55	0.8	0.62	0.69	0.67
Belgium	0.24	0.62	0.18	0.42	0.37
Bulgaria	0.48	0.78	0.67	0.74	0.67
Croatia	0.45	0.69	0.58	0.65	0.59
Cyprus	0.35	0.74	0.59	0.83	0.63
Czech Republic	0.24	0.74	0.56	0.5	0.51
Denmark	0.19	0.5	0.26	0.38	0.33
Estonia	0.2	0.61	0.36	0.41	0.40
Finland	0.26	0.7	0.43	0.5	0.47
France	0.26	0.45	0.08	0.26	0.26
Germany	0.14	0.38	0.13	0.35	0.25
Hungary	0.43	0.71	0.82	0.53	0.62
Ireland	0.23	0.65	0.36	0.47	0.43
Italy	0.36	0.63	0.51	0.51	0.50
Latvia	0.31	0.75	0.44	0.41	0.48
Lithuania	0.22	0.62	0.51	0.49	0.46
Netherlands	0.21	0.53	0.24	0.34	0.33
Poland	0.45	0.62	0.69	0.5	0.57
Portugal	0.31	0.54	0.19	0.54	0.40
Romania	0.41	0.76	0.74	0.7	0.65
Slovakia	0.32	0.72	0.47	0.51	0.51
Slovenia	0.41	0.67	0.69	0.65	0.61
Spain	0.41	0.65	0.47	0.49	0.51
Sweden	0.26	0.59	0.15	0.17	0.29

Note: the MPM Index is given by the average of the four areas

Table A.3: Level of risk per area and country - 2020

Country	Basic Protection	Market Plurality	Political independence	Social Inclusiveness	MPM Index
Austria	0.3	0.63	0.52	0.45	0.48
Belgium	0.22	0.66	0.12	0.38	0.35
Czech Republic	0.26	0.85	0.54	0.62	0.57
Estonia	0.25	0.64	0.26	0.45	0.40
Finland	0.25	0.74	0.48	0.48	0.49
France	0.38	0.58	0.27	0.37	0.40
Germany	0.12	0.37	0.8	0.22	0.38
Hungary	0.43	0.82	0.78	0.64	0.67
Ireland	0.23	0.75	0.35	0.53	0.47
Italy	0.37	0.66	0.49	0.6	0.53
Lithuania	0.31	0.7	0.34	0.43	0.45
Netherlands	0.27	0.57	0.23	0.32	0.35
Poland	0.43	0.74	0.69	0.6	0.62
Portugal	0.28	0.6	0.24	0.56	0.42
Slovenia	0.48	0.76	0.73	0.7	0.67
Spain	0.42	0.75	0.47	0.62	0.57
Sweden	0.23	0.62	0.11	0.2	0.29

Note: the MPM Index is given by the average of the four areas

Table A.4: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	*Mean*	*Std.Dev.*	*Obs*	*Min*	*Max*
Fairness controls					
Society fair when income and wealth is equally distributed	3.301436	1.148778	39272	1	5
Hard-working people should earn more than others	3.977726	.845668	39463	1	5
Families with high social status should enjoy privileges	2.206632	1.050199	38692	1	5
Confident that justice always prevails over injustice	2.927172	1.08545	39188	1	5
By and large, people get what they deserve	2.959949	1.041734	39200	1	5
Libertarian attitudes					
Important to understand different people	2.413021	1.085887	87872	1	6
Important to have equal opportunities	4.81405	1.07886	88029	1	6
Important to make own decisions and be free	4.771721	1.111889	88164	1	6
Important to do what is told and follow rules	3.763324	1.388027	87584	1	6
Society fair when takes care of poor and in need	3.843815	.8912211	39338	1	5
Authoritarian attitudes					
Ashamed if close family member gay or lesbian	2.203295	1.255489	85698	1	5
Country's cultural life undermined immigrants	5.626513	2.548859	86675	1	10
Important that government is strong and ensures safety	4.681732	1.176834	87687	1	6
Important to follow traditions and customs	4.278887	1.358616	88265	1	6
Media consumption and political involvement					
News about politics and current affairs	84.42406	135.8376	88443	0	1440
Internet use	200.1352	170.5018	61457	0	1440
Posted politcal news on social media in the last year	.1555399	.3624207	89694	0	1
Voted last national elections	.7679967	.4221137	81904	0	1
How interested in politics	2.331043	.9134013	89508	1	4
Background controls					
Age of respondent	50.55738	18.6087	89346	15	100
Female	.5369367	.4986366	89694	0	1
Income percentile	5.280994	2.761246	72603	1	10
Placement on left right scale	5.152181	2.266829	77973	0	10
College	.5089638	.4999224	89694	0	1
Highschool	.9415457	.2346018	89694	0	1
Female	.5369367	.4986366	89694	0	1
Minority	.2485116	.4321524	89694	0	1
Married	.225448	.4178815	45984	0	1
Prospect of upward mobility variables					
POUM father	.5433808	.4981173	89694	0	1
POUM mother	.6194729	.4855192	89694	0	1
Indexes					
MPM Index	.4417533	.1305047	89694	.1975	.6675
Autindex	.5517364	.1754762	81832	0	1
Libindex	.5665404	.110357	86348	0	1
Redindex	.6877096	.1649294	38327	0	1
PfR	.575359	.2871945	39272	0	1

Appendix B

Analysis and Results

Table B.1: Collinearity Diagnostics for model 4.1

Variable	VIF	SQRT - VIF	Tolerance	R-Squared
sofrdst	1.10	1.05	0.9111	0.0889
sofrwrk	1.02	1.01	0.9798	0.0202
ppldsrv	1.32	1.15	0.7551	0.2449
jstprev	1.29	1.14	0.7752	0.2248
sofrprv	1.06	1.03	0.9417	0.0583
agea	1.69	1.30	0.0265	0.9735
female	1.09	1.04	0.9215	0.0785
minority	1.02	1.01	0.9779	0.0221
religious	1.17	1.08	0.8573	0.1427
married	1.67	1.29	0.5988	0.4012
working	1.61	1.27	0.6229	0.3771
highschool	1.14	1.07	0.8779	0.1221
college	1.21	1.10	0.8276	0.1724
hinctnta	1.30	1.14	0.7696	0.2304
lrscale	1.08	1.04	0.9277	0.0723
MEAN VIF	**1.21**			

Table B.2: Collinearity Diagnostics for model 4.3-4.5

Variable	VIF	SQRT - VIF	Tolerance	R-Squared
sofrdst	1.12	1.06	0.8936	0.1064
nwspol	1.03	1.01	0.9720	0.0280
netustm	1.13	1.06	0.8840	0.1160
agea	1.54	1.24	0.6488	0.3512
female	1.08	1.04	0.9282	0.0718
minority	1.03	1.01	0.9746	0.0254
religious	1.11	1.05	0.9028	0.0972
married	1.30	1.14	0.7693	0.2307
highschool	1.07	1.03	0.9374	0.0626
college	1.21	1.10	0.8299	0.1701
hinctnta	1.14	1.07	0.8785	0.1215
voted	1.08	1.04	0.9220	0.0780
lrscale	1.10	1.05	0.9071	0.0929
poumf	1.43	1.20	0.6978	0.3022
poumm	1.51	1.23	0.6605	0.3395
sofrwrk	1.03	1.01	0.9730	0.0270
ppldsrv	1.33	1.15	0.7511	0.2489
jstprev	1.26	1.12	0.7921	0.2079
sofrprv	1.09	1.04	0.9215	0.0785
MEAN VIF	**1.18**			

Table B.3: Collinearity Diagnostics for model 4.6

Variable	**VIF**	**SQRT - VIF**	**Tolerance**	**R-Squared**
sofrdst	1.12	1.06	0.8936	0.1064
nwspol	1.34	1.16	0.7454	0.2546
netustm	1.56	1.25	0.6417	0.3583
pstdxnws	1.76	1.33	0.5682	0.4318
pstdxint	3.36	1.83	0.2980	0.7020
posted	3.13	1.77	0.3200	0.6800
agea	1.55	1.24	0.6457	0.3543
female	1.08	1.04	0.9269	0.0731
minority	1.03	1.01	0.9740	0.0260
religious	1.11	1.05	0.9027	0.0973
married	1.23	1.11	0.8098	0.1902
highschool	1.07	1.03	0.9370	0.0630
college	1.21	1.10	0.8248	0.1752
hinctnta	1.13	1.06	0.8839	0.1161
voted	1.09	1.04	0.9166	0.0834
lrscale	1.11	1.05	0.9012	0.0988
poumf	1.43	1.20	0.6982	0.3018
poumm	1.51	1.23	0.6644	0.3356
sofrwrk	1.03	1.01	0.9732	0.0268
ppldsrv	1.33	1.15	0.7516	0.2484
jstprev	1.26	1.12	0.7907	0.2093
sofrprv	1.09	1.04	0.9197	0.0803
MEAN VIF	**1.43**			

Table B.4: Media consumption on preferences for redistribution in odds ratio

Preferences for redistribution	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**
	Non-partisans		*Partisans*	
News about politics and current affairs	1.0006***	1.0006***	1.0009***	1.001***
	(0.000193)	(0.000174)	(0.000209)	(0.000402)
Internet use	0.9992***	0.9992***	0.9993***	0.9992***
	(0.000235)	(0.000139)	(0.00026)	(0.0036)
Age of respondent	0.9943	0.9945***	0.9991	0.9996
	(0.0036)	(0.00170)	(0.00359)	(0.00363)
Female	1.0572	1.067	0.999	1.023
	(0.0728)	(0.0471)	(0.0722)	(0.0977)
Minority	0.9996	0.9818	0.8965	0.8769
	(0.144)	(0.110)	(0.145)	(0.1858)
Very Religious	1.4149***	1.2063***	1.323***	1.750***
	(0.1740)	(0.0363)	(0.138)	(0.0735)
College	0.5671***	0.5638***	0.6013***	0.5668***
	(0.0379)	(0.0305)	(0.852)	(0.709)
Income	0.9197***	0.9147***	0.9255***	0.9112***
	(0.0151)	(0.00852)	(0.0219)	(0.0187)
L/R Scale	0.8751***	0.8749***	0.834***	0.807***
	(0.0193)	(0.0107)	(0.0208)	(0.0249)
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Random Effects		√		√
Observations	6,505	6,505	2,248	2,248
Countries	23		23	
Clustered (1)-(3) and standard (2)-(4) errors in parentheses				

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table B.5: Authoritarian attitudes on MPM Index

	Autindex	*Importance traditions*	*Ashamed gay relative*	*Anti Immigration*	*Strong government*
News about politics and current affairs	-0.0000210	0.00121**	0.0000829	-0.000660	-0.000507
	(0.0000423)	(0.000606)	(0.000675)	(0.000489)	(0.000410)
MPM Index	0.393***	2.584***	6.076***	2.191***	2.136***
	(0.0820)	(0.562)	(1.072)	(0.838)	(0.702)
*MPM*News*	0.0000797	-0.00281*	0.000238	0.00125	0.00180*
	(0.000130)	(0.00160)	(0.00153)	(0.00135)	(0.000955)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000204	-0.00229	-0.00255	-0.000988	0.00186*
	(0.000119)	(0.00172)	(0.00212)	(0.00187)	(0.00113)
Internet use	0.0000102	0.000511	0.000312	-0.000208	-0.00102***
	(0.0000481)	(0.000756)	(0.000922)	(0.000800)	(0.000379)
Age of respondent	0.000269	0.00768***	0.0109***	-0.00300	0.00190
	(0.000239)	(0.00127)	(0.00322)	(0.00268)	(0.00260)
Background controls	√	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√	√
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√	√
Observations	8,531	8,759	8,653	8,707	8,738
Adjusted R^2	0.231				
Clustered errors in parentheses					
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$					

Table B.6: Libertarian attitudes on MPM Index

	Libindex	***Equal opportunities***	***Understanding others***	***Imp. Freedom***	***Imp. Follow Rules***
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000457*	0.0000348	0.000461	0.000297	0.000599
	(0.0000228)	(0.000656)	(0.000857)	(0.000583)	(0.000657)
MPM Index	0.157***	-0.157	1.846***	-0.521	2.927***
	(0.0466)	(0.847)	(0.632)	(0.839)	(0.788)
*MPM*News*	-0.000108	0.0000735	-0.00124	-0.00117	-0.00114
	(0.0000629)	(0.00160)	(0.00246)	(0.00157)	(0.00165)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000145*	0.000246	-0.00424***	0.00265***	-0.00285**
	(0.0000710)	(0.000951)	(0.00143)	(0.00100)	(0.00132)
Internet use	0.0000475	0.0000932	0.00118**	-0.000662	0.000830
	(0.0000322)	(0.000335)	(0.000566)	(0.000476)	(0.000560)
Age of respondent	-0.000927**	-0.000326	0.00138	-0.00558	-0.0158**
	(0.000434)	(0.00645)	(0.00682)	(0.00734)	(0.00771)
Background controls	√	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√	√
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√	√
Observations	8,714	8,779	8,765	8,769	8,733
Adjusted R^2	0.248				
Clustered errors in parentheses					
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$					

Table B.7: Attitudes on MPM Index with year fixed effects (OLS)

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.0000210	0.0000484*	0.0000627*	0.000253***
	(0.0000487)	(0.0000291)	(0.0000357)	(0.0000857)
MPM Index	0.393***	0.154***	0.0111	0.230***
	(0.0247)	(0.0148)	(0.0182)	(0.0436)
*MPM*News*	0.0000797	-0.000111*	-0.0000639	-0.000359*
	(0.000114)	(0.0000674)	(0.0000827)	(0.000198)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000204**	-0.000141***	0.0000973	0.000259*
	(0.0000827)	(0.0000494)	(0.0000610)	(0.000146)
Internet use	0.0000102	0.0000460**	-0.0000684***	-0.000208***
	(0.0000348)	(0.0000209)	(0.0000257)	(0.0000617)
Age of respondent	0.000269**	0.000202***	0.000183**	-0.000261
	(0.000121)	(0.0000729)	(0.0000898)	(0.000215)
Female	-0.00564*	-0.00474**	-0.00240	0.00868
	(0.00341)	(0.00205)	(0.00253)	(0.00606)
Minority	0.0122	0.00765	-0.00453	-0.00280
	(0.00787)	(0.00475)	(0.00583)	(0.0140)
Religious	0.0275***	-0.000678	0.00958***	0.0225***
	(0.00215)	(0.00129)	(0.00159)	(0.00382)
Married	0.0301***	0.000235	-0.00735*	-0.00742
	(0.00556)	(0.00333)	(0.00410)	(0.00984)
Highschool	0.00938	-0.00945	0.000227	-0.00830
	(0.0112)	(0.00672)	(0.00821)	(0.0197)
College	-0.0369***	-0.00460**	-0.0213***	-0.0697***
	(0.00376)	(0.00226)	(0.00278)	(0.00667)
Family income	-0.00389***	0.000102	-0.00452***	-0.0126***
	(0.000635)	(0.000382)	(0.000472)	(0.00113)
Constant	0.210***	0.179***	0.190***	0.405***
	(0.0220)	(0.0132)	(0.0162)	(0.0389)
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Observations	8,531	8,714	8,733	8,753
Adjusted R^2	0.231	0.247	0.523	0.132

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table B.8: Attitudes on MPM Index with country fixed effects (OLS)

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000178	0.0000188	-0.0000221	0.0000533
	(0.0000272)	(0.0000220)	(0.0000485)	(0.0000797)
MPM Index	-0.0180	0.0201	0	0
	(0.0545)	(0.0225)	(.)	(.)
*MPM*News*	-0.0000519	-0.0000308	0.0000927	-0.0000666
	(0.0000731)	(0.0000504)	(0.000141)	(0.000204)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.0000329	0.0000172	-0.00000932	0.0000134
	(0.0000718)	(0.0000407)	(0.0000984)	(0.000160)
Internet use	-0.0000408	-0.00000675	0.00000378	-0.0000674
	(0.0000300)	(0.0000178)	(0.0000366)	(0.0000635)
Age of respondent	0.000570***	0.000134*	0.0000533	-0.0000509
	(0.000152)	(0.0000682)	(0.000168)	(0.000334)
Female	-0.0169***	0.00311	0.0123***	0.0166***
	(0.00300)	(0.00189)	(0.00226)	(0.00551)
Minority	-0.0137**	0.00805**	0.00376	0.0174
	(0.00608)	(0.00323)	(0.00658)	(0.0108)
Religious	0.0304***	0.00408***	0.0127***	0.0148**
	(0.00274)	(0.00125)	(0.00226)	(0.00549)
Married	0.0146***	0.000720	-0.00322	-0.00545
	(0.00332)	(0.00218)	(0.00508)	(0.00841)
Highschool	-0.0173**	0.00205	-0.000643	-0.0171
	(0.00621)	(0.00708)	(0.0141)	(0.0200)
College	-0.0397***	-0.00803***	-0.0162***	-0.0675***
	(0.00337)	(0.00142)	(0.00286)	(0.00663)
Family income	-0.00422***	-0.000213	-0.00443***	-0.0118***
	(0.000519)	(0.000270)	(0.000737)	(0.00129)
Constant	0.439***	0.543***	0.776***	0.762***
	(0.0263)	(0.0125)	(0.0204)	(0.0362)
Ideology controls				
Fairness controls				
Observations	22,422	22,853	9,955	10,045
Adjusted R^2	0.121	0.004	0.072	0.071
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Appendix C

Robustness checks

Table C.1: No controls robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	-0.000000824	0.0000410***	0.000158**	0.000314***
	(0.0000313)	(0.0000117)	(0.0000572)	(0.0000856)
MPM Index	0.424***	0.112***	-0.00901	0.277
	(0.0554)	(0.0397)	(0.101)	(0.189)
*MPM*News*	0.0000345	-0.0000792***	-0.000213	-0.000391*
	(0.0000692)	(0.0000271)	(0.000151)	(0.000224)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.0000464	-0.0000186	0.0000352	0.000190
	(0.0000802)	(0.0000446)	(0.000115)	(0.000230)
Internet use	-0.0000815**	0.00000187	-0.0000447	-0.000218*
	(0.0000291)	(0.0000206)	(0.0000514)	(0.000107)
Age of respondent	0.000700***	0.0000591	-0.000144	-0.000665**
	(0.000182)	(0.0000433)	(0.000157)	(0.000245)
Female	-0.00444	-0.00277*	0.0170***	0.0273***
	(0.00333)	(0.00161)	(0.00368)	(0.00626)
Minority	-0.00212	-0.00125	0.0194**	0.0444***
	(0.0108)	(0.00504)	(0.00870)	(0.0146)
Constant	0.332***	0.517***	0.686***	0.456***
	(0.0225)	(0.0182)	(0.0451)	(0.0949)
Observations	57,268	59,408	26,328	26,763
Adjusted R^2	0.115	0.015	0.007	0.028

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table C.2: Market Plurality robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000331	0.0000263	0.0000412	0.000256*
	(0.0000722)	(0.0000222)	(0.000120)	(0.000133)
Market Plurality	0.184**	0.0782**	-0.115	0.0907
	(0.0865)	(0.0305)	(0.106)	(0.200)
*MP*News*	-0.0000228	-0.0000307	-0.0000106	-0.000269
	(0.000140)	(0.0000378)	(0.000225)	(0.000245)
*MP*Internet*	-0.0000696	0.0000221	0.000157	0.000119
	(0.0000815)	(0.0000465)	(0.000170)	(0.000336)
Internet use	-0.0000924***	-0.0000100	-0.0000144	-0.000114***
	(0.0000149)	(0.00000951)	(0.0000181)	(0.0000341)
Background controls	√	√	√	√
Observations	22,478	22,917	9,955	10,045
Adjusted R^2	0.131	0.014	0.097	0.093

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table C.3: Political Independence robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000248*	0.0000264***	0.0000466	0.000144**
	(0.0000137)	(0.00000701)	(0.0000277)	(0.0000527)
Political independence	0.227***	0.0764***	-0.0604	0.0550
	(0.0385)	(0.0251)	(0.0641)	(0.114)
*PI*News*	-0.0000175	-0.0000465***	-0.0000423	-0.000143
	(0.0000408)	(0.0000138)	(0.0000988)	(0.000145)
*PI*Internet*	-0.0000277	-0.0000238	0.0000465	0.0000766
	(0.0000438)	(0.0000391)	(0.0000898)	(0.000142)
Internet use	-0.0000651***	0.00000406	-0.0000331	-0.000136**
	(0.0000167)	(0.0000173)	(0.0000269)	(0.0000539)
Constant	0.396***	0.542***	0.819***	0.772***
	(0.0177)	(0.0158)	(0.0311)	(0.0828)
Background controls	√	√	√	√
Observations	22,478	22,917	9,955	10,045
Adjusted R^2	0.178	0.019	0.099	0.093
Clustered errors in parentheses				
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$				

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table C.4: Weighing robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.00000735	0.0000315	0.000101	0.000133
	(0.000107)	(0.0000466)	(0.0000650)	(0.000147)
MPM Index	0.278***	0.169***	-0.0321	0.163**
	(0.0405)	(0.0246)	(0.0346)	(0.0669)
*MPM*News*	0.0000264	-0.0000838	-0.000152	-0.000105
	(0.000224)	(0.000112)	(0.000146)	(0.000306)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000209	-0.0000569	-0.0000136	-0.000229
	(0.000128)	(0.0000826)	(0.000116)	(0.000214)
Internet use	-0.00000477	0.0000319	0.00000121	0.0000207
	(0.0000561)	(0.0000345)	(0.0000452)	(0.0000855)
Age of respondent	0.000378**	-0.0000822	0.000174	0.0000857
	(0.000184)	(0.000122)	(0.000171)	(0.000324)
Female	-0.0183***	-0.000240	0.0124**	0.0162
	(0.00527)	(0.00377)	(0.00509)	(0.0101)
Minority	0.0280**	0.00655	-0.00595	-0.000154
	(0.0134)	(0.00817)	(0.0132)	(0.0224)
Religious	0.0352***	0.00787***	0.0137***	0.0231***
	(0.00347)	(0.00246)	(0.00317)	(0.00611)
Married	0.0265***	0.00187	-0.00743	-0.00468
	(0.00971)	(0.00671)	(0.00942)	(0.0173)
Highschool	-0.0134	-0.00878	0.00321	-0.0376
	(0.0266)	(0.0146)	(0.0173)	(0.0266)
College	-0.0310***	-0.00543	-0.0144**	-0.0743***
	(0.00574)	(0.00408)	(0.00572)	(0.0112)
Income	-0.00335***	0.000671	-0.00587***	-0.0163***
	(0.00101)	(0.000665)	(0.000957)	(0.00194)
Constant	0.257***	0.492***	0.824***	0.767***
	(0.0312)	(0.0190)	(0.0262)	(0.0444)
Ideology controls				
Fairness controls				
Observations	9,753	9,972	9,955	10,045

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table C.5: Weighting with ideology controls robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000526	0.00000578	0.0000490	0.000302***
	(0.000129)	(0.0000465)	(0.0000799)	(0.000112)
MPM Index	0.267***	0.167***	-0.0487	0.201***
	(0.0430)	(0.0265)	(0.0373)	(0.0724)
*MPM*News*	-0.0000691	-0.0000203	-0.0000400	-0.000449*
	(0.000272)	(0.000116)	(0.000180)	(0.000247)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000165	-0.0000418	0.00000229	-0.000207
	(0.000133)	(0.0000886)	(0.000123)	(0.000229)
Internet use	-0.0000244	0.0000209	0.00000209	0.0000213
	(0.0000568)	(0.0000368)	(0.0000482)	(0.0000918)
Age of respondent	0.000133	-0.000205	0.0000660	0.000152
	(0.000189)	(0.000130)	(0.000196)	(0.000354)
Female	-0.0165***	-0.00137	0.00860	0.00927
	(0.00558)	(0.00383)	(0.00539)	(0.0106)
Minority	0.00684	0.0175*	-0.00179	-0.0147
	(0.0153)	(0.00973)	(0.0128)	(0.0245)
Religious	0.0345***	0.00577**	0.0129***	0.0256***
	(0.00362)	(0.00252)	(0.00339)	(0.00663)
Married	0.0266***	0.00286	-0.00318	-0.00431
	(0.00992)	(0.00680)	(0.00932)	(0.0176)
Highschool	-0.0123	0.000380	0.0191	-0.0226
	(0.0288)	(0.0152)	(0.0189)	(0.0292)
College	-0.0357***	-0.00511	-0.0168**	-0.0737***
	(0.00648)	(0.00432)	(0.00664)	(0.0123)
Family income	-0.00322***	0.000691	-0.00645***	-0.0162***
	(0.00107)	(0.000698)	(0.00104)	(0.00205)
Constant	0.280***	0.482***	0.830***	0.769***
	(0.0317)	(0.0215)	(0.0299)	(0.0499)
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Fairness controls				
Observations	8,741	8,931	8,927	9,006
Countries	23	23	23	23

Clustered errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.

Table C.6: Weighting with fairness and ideology controls robustness check

	(1) Autindex	(2) Libindex	(3) Redindex	(4) PfR
News about politics and current affairs	0.0000897	0.0000388	0.000103**	0.000347***
	(0.000131)	(0.0000475)	(0.0000468)	(0.000103)
MPM Index	0.289***	0.213***	0.0234	0.224***
	(0.0423)	(0.0240)	(0.0305)	(0.0720)
*MPM*News*	-0.000168	-0.000100	-0.000159	-0.000560**
	(0.000275)	(0.000110)	(0.000105)	(0.000231)
*MPM*Internet*	-0.000229*	-0.0000721	-0.0000704	-0.000215
	(0.000130)	(0.0000817)	(0.000104)	(0.000233)
Internet use	0.000000375	0.0000269	0.0000147	0.0000157
	(0.0000550)	(0.0000347)	(0.0000416)	(0.0000936)
Age of respondent	0.000199	0.0000582	0.000331**	0.0000925
	(0.000188)	(0.000120)	(0.000150)	(0.000350)
Female	-0.0119**	-0.00544	-0.00267	0.00298
	(0.00550)	(0.00356)	(0.00408)	(0.0106)
Minority	0.00736	0.0154*	-0.00788	-0.0130
	(0.0157)	(0.00878)	(0.00927)	(0.0234)
Religious	0.0334***	0.00183	0.00862***	0.0219***
	(0.00358)	(0.00224)	(0.00265)	(0.00662)
Married	0.0248**	0.000682	-0.00489	-0.00100
	(0.00988)	(0.00600)	(0.00633)	(0.0170)
Highschool	-0.0105	-0.00314	0.0151	-0.0245
	(0.0298)	(0.0138)	(0.0155)	(0.0300)
College	-0.0327***	-0.00671*	-0.0232***	-0.0768***
	(0.00639)	(0.00392)	(0.00530)	(0.0124)
Income	-0.00349***	0.000881	-0.00569***	-0.0157***
	(0.00105)	(0.000647)	(0.000887)	(0.00207)
Constant	0.203***	0.124***	0.206***	0.490***
	(0.0416)	(0.0238)	(0.0283)	(0.0649)
Fairness controls	√	√	√	√
Ideology controls	√	√	√	√
Observations	8,531	8,714	8,733	8,753

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Note: please keep in mind that the data utilized in columns (3) and (4) is from ESS rounds 8 and 9 only. This also explains the gap in the number of observations.