

ORIGINAL ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

Perceived Social Mobility and Populist Attitudes

Robert Liñeira¹  | Guillem Rico²¹University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK | ²Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra, Spain**Correspondence:** Robert Liñeira (robert.lineira@glasgow.ac.uk)**Received:** 27 June 2024 | **Revised:** 3 March 2025 | **Accepted:** 23 March 2025**Keywords:** perceived downward mobility | populism | populist attitudes

ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study aims to investigate the impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes. Intergenerational downward mobility breaks the promise that new generations should meet the living standards of their parents, a crucial component of the order and political legitimacy of the postwar decades in high-income democracies. We argue that this frustrated expectation fuels populism.

Methods: We use data from a cross-national survey conducted in eight European countries in the aftermath of the Great Recession. The survey includes a valid and reliable measure of populist attitudes and a measure of perceived social mobility.

Results: Results show a direct effect of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes. The relationship is robust to different controls and consistent across the eight countries. We also find that socioeconomic factors moderate this relationship due to diverse expectations of social mobility and the different appeal that the populist discourse generates among various social groups.

Conclusions: These findings refine the literature on the socioeconomics of populism by nuancing the established connection between low educational attainment, socioeconomic factors and populist attitudes. The article also contributes to the literature on the consequences of downward mobility.

1 | Introduction

Post-industrial occupational change has ended an era of unprecedented upward mobility. The decline of the traditional industrial sector and the expansion of the welfare state during the post-war decades increased the demand for skilled workers and the availability of middle-class occupations, while possibilities for manual jobs in the extractive and manufacturing industries decreased. Opportunities for intergenerational upward mobility exceeded those for downward mobility. By contrast, the late 20th century coincided with declining demand for skilled labor: deindustrialization, globalization, and automation put an end to the era of upward mobility rates (Autor and Dorn 2013; Goos et al. 2009; Oesch 2013).

This transformation has reinvigorated the interest in the political impact of downward mobility. The diminishing rate of occupa-

tional upgrading has been conceptualized as status loss (Gest et al. 2018), status discordance (Kurer and Staaldin 2022), and status anxiety (Bell 1963b; Gidron and Hall 2017). Downward mobility has been identified as a driver of political alienation, non-voting, and lack of partisanship (Kurer and Staaldin 2022) as well as a source of radicalism and support for radical right parties (Gest et al. 2018; Gidron and Hall 2017) and radical left parties (Bolet 2023), particularly among young adults (Mitrea et al. 2021).

In this article, we develop and test the idea that perceived downward mobility fosters populist attitudes, a set of predispositions, which explain support for non-mainstream across the ideological spectrum. We also test the idea that the impact of downward mobility on political attitudes is heterogeneous and particularly intense among groups that either suffer economic hardship or feel frustrated for not meeting their parents' living standards.

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) License, which permits use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

© 2025 The Author(s). *Social Science Quarterly* published by Wiley Periodicals LLC on behalf of Southwestern Social Science Association.

Failed expectations and unrewarded merit fuel frustration, and populism appeals to those who feel unfairly treated.

The article is structured as follows. The theory is presented in Sections 2 and 3. We first discuss the main findings that relate downward social mobility to political attitudes and behavior and present our argument linking perceived downward mobility to populist attitudes. Subsequently, we present the mechanisms that should modify the effect of the relationship across various social groups. The fourth section presents the measures used and describes the data. The fifth section shows the results of the empirical analysis. The last section summarizes and discusses the findings.

2 | Perceived Downward Mobility and Populist Attitudes

The post-war decades coincided with a period in which new generations found themselves in higher-status jobs than previous generations. A large proportion of the population found occupations considerably different from those of parents and most of them could reasonably expect to meet, if not exceed, status standards set by their progenitors (Lipset and Bendix 1959). The expectation of upward mobility gave way to a societal and political consensus of progress, which facilitated the dominance of moderate party families on both ends of the ideological spectrum, social democrats on the center-left, and Christian democrats and conservatives on the center-right, enabling parties from these families became mainstream in most democracies. The evidence from this period of progress shows that the downwardly mobile shifted their preferences toward left-wing parties, whereas the upwardly mobile made their political outlook more conservative (Abramson 1972; Abramson and Books 1971; Lipset and Bendix 1959; Martinussen 1992).

Post-industrial occupational changes at the end of the 20th century terminated the predominance of upward mobility over downward mobility. Empirical studies report a striking contrast between the fortunes of those born in the 1950s and 1960s and those born in the 1980s and early 1990s, a pattern that holds both in the United States (Chetty et al. 2017; Hout 2018) and across many high-income economies (Y. Berman 2022; Breen and Müller 2020; Bukodi et al. 2020). The downwardly mobile could feel that they have been neglected the opportunity to secure the status they expected based on childhood standards and the post-war political consensus (Kurer and Staaldunin 2022). Occupational change and social mobility became salient political issues (Kriesi et al. 2012) and a source of concern (Ludwinek et al. 2017), boosting the public's awareness of social mobility and its potential impact on political attitudes (Turner 1992).

The fear of status loss and its connection to support for the radical right was first advanced in works by Lipset (1955) and Bell (1955, 1963a, 1963b). This interest has reemerged in an era of downward mobility, which has been pointed out as a cause for the rise of parties on the radical right and the radical left, as well as the corresponding crisis of mainstream parties. Voters who are worse off intergenerationally would blame traditional politics and mainstream parties for the current hardships and lack of opportunities. Recurrent disillusionment with standard political

responses, either the government-based policies of the center-left or the market-based solutions of the center-right, eventually leads to the perception that the political establishment as a whole has failed (Guiso et al. 2019). The perception of downward mobility heightens the likelihood that these voters demand more radical change than those offered by mainstream parties' policies (Kurer and Staaldunin 2022).

Different behaviors have been associated with this perception of downward mobility and enduring disillusionment with traditional politics. Alienation and dissatisfaction with mainstream parties would discourage electoral turnout and partisanship in some voters (Kurer and Staaldunin 2022). By contrast, other voters would choose to voice their discontent in elections (Gidron and Hall 2017; Kurer 2020) supporting radical parties (Bolet 2023; Gest et al. 2018; Gidron and Hall 2017; Kurer and Staaldunin 2022; Mitrea et al. 2021), especially when there are compelling anti-establishment vote alternatives available (Guiso et al. 2019).

Failed expectations have been mainly related to support for the radical right and its views. The radical right attributes the status loss to the mismanagement of globalization by mainstream parties, as well as financial and cultural elites that promote a global knowledge economy (Gest et al. 2018; Gidron and Hall 2017). The radical right also blames the advancement of outgroups such as immigrants, minorities, and women for the loss of status of the traditional working class (Bolet 2023), advancing nostalgic views of Western societies (Steenvoorden and Harteveld 2018). Failed expectations and anxiety about the future have also been related to support for radical left parties that blame mainstream politics and institutions for economic insecurity (Bolet 2023; Simiti 2015).

Perceptions of downward intergenerational mobility can be more generally related to populist attitudes as an antecedent of all these behaviors. As populist forces have gained electoral significance globally, scholarly attention has increasingly converged on an ideational understanding of populism (see Hawkins et al. 2019). This approach views populism as a set of ideas that "considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and argues that politics should be the expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde 2004, 562). By identifying the core components of the populist worldview, the ideational interpretation facilitates the empirical study of populism from a demand-side perspective, measuring populist attitudes at the mass level (Akkerman et al. 2014).

Recent research on the demand side suggests that populist attitudes are consequential (see Marcos-Marne et al. 2023). Although the connection is seldom straightforward and often contingent on contextual characteristics and individuals' ideological orientation and issue positions, populist attitudes have been found to predict not only support for right- and left-wing populist parties in elections (Akkerman et al. 2017; Hawkins et al. 2020; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel 2018) but also variations in support for democracy and democratic values such as political tolerance (Bos et al. 2023; Guinjoan 2023; Zaslove et al. 2021).

Alongside cultural backlash, prevailing demand-side explanations of populism center on economic grievances. Research at

the macro level suggests a strong connection between the recent rise of populism and negative economic trends (see S. Berman 2021). However, empirical evidence often shows that individual socioeconomic conditions—such as unemployment, job conditions, income, and education levels—are only moderately and not consistently linked to populist attitudes (Rico and Anduiza 2019; Rovira Kaltwasser and Van Hauwaert 2020). Indeed, existing work suggests that populist beliefs are more closely associated with individuals' *perceptions* of economic insecurity and relative deprivation than with objective status indicators. For example, Elchardus and Spruyt (2016) show that economic vulnerability affects populist attitudes uniquely through feelings of relative group deprivation. Similarly, Rico and Anduiza (2019) find that, rather than objective measures of uncertainty and hardship, the main economic driver of populist attitudes is citizens' perceptions about the domestic economy.¹

We argue that a rise in populism attitudes results from the awareness of downward social mobility. Intergenerational social mobility has both objective and subjective dimensions (Duru-Bellat and Kieffer 2008; Gugushvili 2021), but it must be most relevant to the formation of public opinion and political attitudes to the extent that individuals are aware of this mobility (Turner 1992).

Moreover, the connection we establish between perceptions of downward mobility and populism relies on egotropic evaluations. This contrasts with most research on downward mobility and populism, which conceives status loss through sociotropic evaluations, that is, the politically relevant in-group that loses status, as in the case of working-class men who appreciate a decline in the living standards of their group (Gidron and Hall 2017). Egotropic and sociotropic perceptions of status are not necessarily contradictory and can produce similar effects, particularly if individuals perceive themselves as belonging to the same in-group as their parents and regard in-group membership as a salient political identity, but they are not necessarily linked either. In our explanation, it is the decline in the expected status vis-à-vis the parents rather than the decline in the status of the in-group that matters.

Our argument, in sum, is as follows. In the context of high-income capitalist democracies, there is a widespread expectation that new generations should secure at least the status achieved by their parents. Consequently, the perception of downward mobility fails expectations and produces disillusionment with mainstream politics. Failed expectations and disillusionment, in turn, fuel a populist conception of politics, that is, a worldview that sees elites with suspicion and resentment, and seeks to empower the people.

The connection between failed expectations and populism is due to the nature of the latter. First, populism offers a culprit for the persistent failure of expectations. It is the elite in general, not a particular government or policy, that prevents the people from achieving their legitimate expectations. Second, populism appeals to the type of resentment aroused by feelings of unfairness due to its focus on the people and its Manichaeian nature (Canovan 1999; Cramer 2016; Mudde 2004; Spruyt et al. 2016). Populism appeals to grievances built on resentment and frustration rooted in a feeling of unfairness, such as failed expectations (Rico et al. 2017; Vasilopoulos et al. 2019).

We therefore expect a direct connection between perceived downward mobility and populist attitudes.

H1. *Perceived downward mobility boosts populist attitudes.*

3 | Heterogeneous Effects

The effect of perceived intergenerational downward mobility on populist attitudes is heterogeneous across socioeconomic groups. This heterogeneity is due to: first, divergent expectations related to different life experiences; second, disparate assessments of downward mobility based on formal education levels; and third, the diverse appeal of populist discourse to different socioeconomic groups.

First, expectations depend on life experience. Factors like age and gender may moderate the effect of downward mobility on populist attitudes. Regarding age, we presume that older people transform perceived downward mobility into populist attitudes more strongly than younger people. Two alternative mechanisms could explain the moderating role of age. One is related to life cycle effects and the other to generational ones. Older people are more advanced in their life cycle and have less time and opportunities to reach their parents' standard of living, which should prompt feelings of failed expectations and boost its connection to populist attitudes. Generational differences should reinforce this. The perception of status loss regarding parents may be particularly resentful among older cohorts: they were socialized in a time of generalized upward mobility, while many of their generational peers upwardly mobile vis-à-vis parents. Both life cycle and generational effects reinforce the effect of downward mobility on populist attitudes. This expectation leads us to the second hypothesis.

H2. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes is stronger amongst the oldest.*

The moderation role of gender has been linked to the different experiences and expectations of men and women. Despite the numerous barriers that women still face in the labor market (Goldin 1990, 2021; Sauer et al. 2021), the latest generations of women have experienced a constant increase university attendance levels, boosting their prospects in white-collar and professional occupations (Breen and Müller 2020; DiPrete and Buchmann 2013). In contrast, downward mobility is most pronounced among men, particularly those without university degrees. Women would be less prone to downward mobility effects than men because they are less likely to experience it (Hertel 2017; Kurer and Staaldunin 2022).

These distinct labor market experiences lead to different expectations. Downward mobility fails men's expectations more strongly than women's, making the latter less vulnerable to the political effects of status loss and downward mobility (Gingrich and Kuo 2022; Kurer and Staaldunin 2022). Women have experienced gains in career prospects and the empowerment produced by movements favoring gender equality, which may moderate political reactions to perceived downward mobility (Hertel 2017; Kurer and Staaldunin 2022). By contrast, not only have men

not experienced a similar emancipatory experience, but some have lived the challenge to the balance of power of men vis-à-vis women as a declining felt sense of power (Mansbridge and Shames 2008), increasing the frustration associated with perceived downward mobility. Thus, there is an expectation that women who perceive downward mobility will not undergo the same intense experience of failed expectations and, consequently, will be less attracted by populist appeals. Therefore, our third hypothesis is the following:

H3. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes is weaker amongst women.*

Second, expectations and assessments of downward mobility also depend on educational attainment. Education is frequently associated with merit and modifies expectations about socioeconomic positions. In democratic societies, there is a widespread belief that prosperity and status must be earned and that jobs with better pay and prestige must be related to formal educational qualifications. The dominance of this view of education leads to a widespread belief that education is (and should be) key to social mobility (Goldthorpe 2016, 101).

The dominance of these expectations leads us to anticipate that downward mobility has a greater impact on the attitudes of those with higher levels of formal education. Educational attainment produces an expectation of reward commensurate with the merits achieved. People with higher educational qualifications who perceive their prosperity and status as inferior to their parents, perceive the mismatch between merit and reward as particularly unfair, reinforcing the sense of failed expectations and unfulfilled promises.

Populism can channel the senses of strong failed expectations and frustration by offering a culprit and a moral story. This may appeal particularly to those who perceive downward mobility despite their high educational qualifications. We, therefore, expect that individuals with high levels of formal education who perceive downward mobility favor a populist outlook. This leads to our fourth hypothesis.

H4. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes is stronger amongst individuals with high levels of formal education.*

Given that intergenerational downward mobility is a relative measure—the social position achieved vis-à-vis the parent's position—we could expect that the real moderator of downward mobility on populist attitudes is relative rather than absolute education. Whereas the latter refers to the highest level of qualification achieved by an individual, relative education is the educational attainment relative to others, more specifically, relative to the father's level of formal education. If this is the case, we should expect that those who have surpassed the level of education achieved by their father should be particularly sensitive to the perception of downward mobility. The effort of surpassing the father's educational attainment without meeting generational progress should reinforce the feelings of failed expectations and unfairness, boosting a populist conception of politics. Therefore, our fifth hypothesis is the following:

H5. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes is stronger amongst those who achieved higher educational attainment than their father.*

Third, populist discourse may appeal more to marginalized and low-status groups, making socioeconomic position a moderator between perceived downward mobility and populist attitudes.

Populism shares a redemptive nature with radical and deliberative democratic theories (Pateman 1970), where the ideal of unmediated citizens' is a crucial political value. This redemptive nature may be interpreted as a reaction against the failure of democratic political systems to guarantee democratic inclusiveness (Mény and Sured 2002). Populism is expected to appeal particularly to the marginalized and excluded, as one of populism's core ideas is to bring "the average person" into the political arena (Canovan 1999). Therefore, the failed expectations may translate into dissatisfaction with mainstream politics and populist ideas particularly among groups that experience economic hardship and feel marginalized.

The appeal of populism should therefore vary by income level. The reference to "the people" used by populism may take different meanings in different contexts, but it refers to the people both as an underdog (the plebs) and as the holder of sovereignty (the demos), an excluded part of the community whose claims are being denied by the political establishment (Panizza 2017, 411). The mobilization against the privileged (Canovan 1999) is particularly appealing to marginalized members of the community. Low-income citizens are more likely to consider themselves "the common people" and to identify the wealthier citizens as the elites, so they can only sympathize with "the people" (Aslanidis 2016). Hence, citizens with fewer resources are more likely to experience identity-based motivations to participate around the idea of a homogeneous people comprised of "ordinary men" as opposed to the rich and powerful elite.

The varying identification with "the people" by the different income groups should also moderate the effect of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes. Perceived downward mobility and low income are different phenomena that correlate in real life.² The feedback between low income and downward mobility will boost populist attitudes. In contrast, the weaker identification of high-income individuals with the people will lessen the relationship between downward mobility and populist attitudes. Therefore, we should expect that the impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes exists mainly for low-income individuals.

H6. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes decreases as income increases.*

Populism should also attract socioeconomically marginalized groups, such as the unemployed. The experience of having no job is broader and more encompassing than struggling financially. Unemployment has additional social and psychological consequences well-identified in numerous studies. The unemployed have no workplace, which produces a thinner network of social relations, weaker social links, and fewer social activities (Lorenzini and Giugni 2012; Schur 2003; Verba et al. 1995). The

unemployed also accumulate less social capital (Maloney and Deth 2010) and experience a loss of self-esteem and a sense of personal efficacy (Jahoda et al. 1971; Schur 2003).

The marginalization and psychological impact of unemployment boosts the frustration of perceived downward mobility and the appeal of populism. In contrast, employed people are more integrated into the job market and the wider society, weakening the frustration produced by downward mobility and the appeal of populism. Therefore, we expect that unemployment intensifies the effect of perceived downward mobility. Our hypothesis is the following:

H7. *The impact of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes is stronger amongst unemployed individuals.*

4 | Data and Measurements

We rely on the study “Living with Hard Times How Citizens React to Economic Crises and Their Social and Political Consequences” (Giugni and Grasso 2015), a cross-sectional survey conducted in nine European countries: France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The samples are quota-balanced to match national population statistics in terms of sex, age, and education level using the methodologies available in each country. The data were gathered by YouGov between May and August 2015. To the best of our knowledge, this is the only cross-national study that includes valid and reliable measures of perceived social mobility and populist attitudes. The dataset was collected in the aftermath of the Great Recession, a period of significant economic uncertainty and social discontent, making the study particularly relevant for examining the question at hand.

Populist ideas can be measured in sources related to the supply side of politics, such as party platforms (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011) and leaders’ speeches (Hawkins 2009), but may also be measured in citizens’ attitudes (Akkerman et al. 2014). Populist attitudes have been found to constitute a singular attitudinal dimension (Geurkink et al. 2020), distinct from other attitudinal dispositions such as trust, efficacy, or dissatisfaction with democracy (Akkerman et al. 2014). Populist attitudes can predict the vote of both populist right and populist left parties (Akkerman et al. 2014, 2017).

We measure populist attitudes via responses to eight Likert-type-scale items, combining the six items of the original scale established by Akkerman et al. (2014) with two additional items to reinforce the anti-elitism dimension (see Van Hauwaert et al. 2020, for a validity assessment). The internal consistency of the resulting populism scale is good, with a Cronbach’s α score of 0.88. The correlates of populist attitudes in our data confirm previous descriptions: men are more populist than women, the middle-aged more than the youngest and the oldest, the least educated more than the most educated, the unemployed more than the employed and the non-active, and the low-income more than the high-income (Erisen et al. 2021; Huber 2020; Santana-Pereira and Cancela 2020; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel 2018).

Intergenerational social mobility can be studied as an experience or as a perception. Objective intergenerational mobility is often measured by the association between social background and individuals’ educational, occupational, or income attainment (Goldthorpe 2013), whereas subjective approaches are based on respondents’ perceptions of how well they have done in life, compared with their parents (Hill and Duncan 1987). Both phenomena are associated (Duru-Bellat and Kieffer 2008; Kelley and Kelley 2009; Singh-Manoux et al. 2003), although inconsistencies exist (Duru-Bellat and Kieffer 2008).

Several reasons make using a subjective measure more useful for our purposes rather than an objective one. First, objective measures such as educational attainment, income, and occupation may show alternative trajectories, and there is no full agreement on which factor should be used to assess social mobility (Goldthorpe 2013). Second, analyses that contrast objective and subjective measures of social mobility conclude that mobility is a multidimensional phenomenon (Duru-Bellat and Kieffer 2008; Gugushvili 2021). Multidimensionality is better grasped by subjective measures. Third, and more importantly, social mobility can only matter for public opinion if it affects perceptions. As Turner (1992) argued, the effects of social mobility on individuals’ worldviews might be relevant only if they are aware of experiencing intergenerational mobility.

Our main independent variable uses answers to the following question: “On a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means ‘Much worse’ and 10 means ‘Much better’, would you say that your own current standard of living is better or worse, compared to your parents when they were your age?” In our analysis, we reverse the values of the scale—0 corresponds to better and 10 to worse—to produce a *downward* mobility scale. Our data show that downward mobility is perceived stronger among women and young adults (31–45 years old), among low education levels, unemployed, and low-income individuals.

The next section tests the hypotheses by regressing the measure of perceived intergenerational downward mobility on the measure of populist attitudes using controls. First, the models use socio-economic factors and other covariates as controls and, second, socio-economic factors as moderators. Education is measured in nine levels following a standardized coding scheme from primary education to PhD, which has been recoded to range from 0 to 1. Income is measured in deciles based on the respondent’s country distribution adjusted for the household’s size using the OECD-modified equivalence score, recoded to range from 0 to 1. Relative education is measured by contrasting respondents’ educational attainment with their father’s educational attainment and creating two categories, those who achieved a higher level of formal education than their father and those with the same or less level of formal education. The relationship with the labor market is measured with three categories—economically active, non-active, and unemployed. We also use measures of gender (male) and age (coded in years). Finally, we control for respondents’ ideological orientation (an 11-point scale from left to right) and a measure of media exposure (frequency of newspaper reading). Table 1 reports the summary statistics of all our covariates.

TABLE 1 | Summary statistics.

	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Populist attitudes scale	2.831	0.710	0	4	15,229
Perceived downward mobility	0.553	0.287	0	1	15,229
Age	44.954	14.618	18	95	15,229
Male	0.489	0.500	0	1	15,229
Educational attainment scale	0.462	0.233	0	1	15,229
Higher educational attainment than father	0.373	0.484	0	1	15,229
Household income decile adjusted by household size	0.266	0.196	0	1	15,229
Economic activity					
Active	0.595	0.491	0	1	15,229
Unemployed	0.117	0.322	0	1	15,229
Non-active	0.287	0.453	0	1	15,229
Left-right orientations	0.478	0.251	0	1	15,229
Regular readership of a newspaper (3+ days a week)	0.546	0.498	0	1	15,229

5 | Results

Table 2 shows the results of regressing the perceived downward mobility measure on the populist attitudes scale, controlling for socioeconomic factors (age, gender, education, income, and economic activity), ideological orientations and media exposure, and using country fixed effects. The results show the positive effect of perceived intergenerational downward mobility on populist attitudes, that is, those who perceive having a standard of living worse than the one experienced by their parents score higher on the populist attitudes scale.³

The coefficient at the top of Table 2 shows that moving from a perception of upward mobility to a perception of downward mobility increases the score of the populist attitudes scale by 0.318 points. If we put the magnitude of this effect relative to the standard deviation of the populism scale ($s_p = 0.710$), we find that the perception of downward mobility increases populist attitudes by 0.448 standard deviations. Figure 1 illustrates this effect by showing predicted probabilities based on the model displayed in Table 2. It shows graphic evidence that the relationship between perceived intergenerational downward mobility and stronger populist attitudes stated in Hypothesis 1 holds.

In Table 3, age, gender, income, educational attainment, relative education, economic activity, and unemployment are introduced as moderators to estimate the heterogeneous effects of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes as stated in Hypotheses 2 to 7. All interaction terms show that socioeconomic factors moderate the effect of perceived intergenerational downward mobility on populist attitudes as stated in the hypotheses. All interaction terms are also statistically significant at the 95% level, except for the gender and the relative education terms.

Figure 2 shows the estimation of marginal effects to illustrate the moderation effect caused by the socioeconomic factors. Perceived downward mobility translates into stronger populist attitudes among the oldest, the unemployed, those with more years of formal education, and those with lower incomes. Age, education,

TABLE 2 | The impact of perceived intergenerational mobility on populist attitudes.

Perceived downward mobility (0–1)	0.318*** (0.030)
Age (in years)	0.006** (0.001)
Male (female)	0.057* (0.020)
Educational attainment scale (0–1)	–0.139+ (0.064)
Income decile (0–1)	–0.146+ (0.064)
Activity (active)	
Unemployed	–0.003 (0.022)
Non-active	0.018 (0.022)
Left-right orientations (0–1)	–0.036 (0.119)
Regular newspaper reader (no)	–0.058* (0.017)
Country fixed effects	X
Constant	2.383*** (0.122)
R-squared	0.098
Number of clusters	9
N	15,229

Note: DV: populist attitudes (0–4). Entries are partial OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.1$.

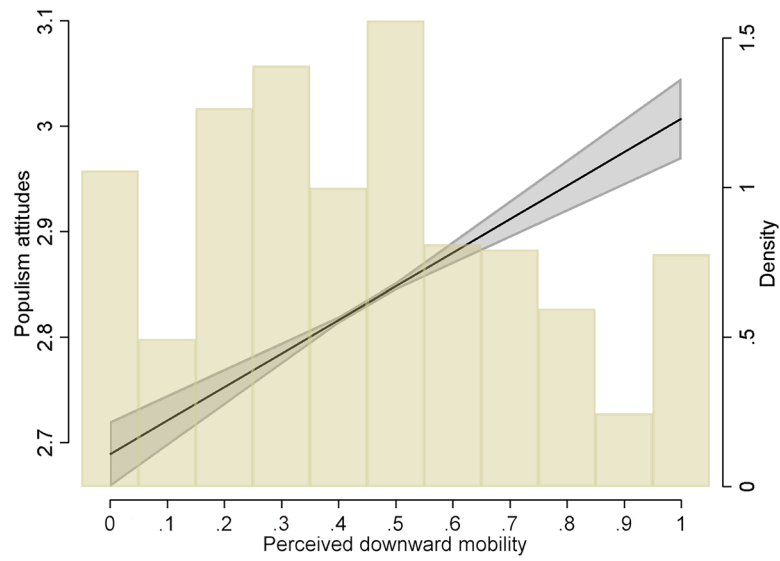


FIGURE 1 | Predicted probabilities of populist attitudes by perceived downward mobility.
Note: All other variables at their observed values as estimated in Table 2.

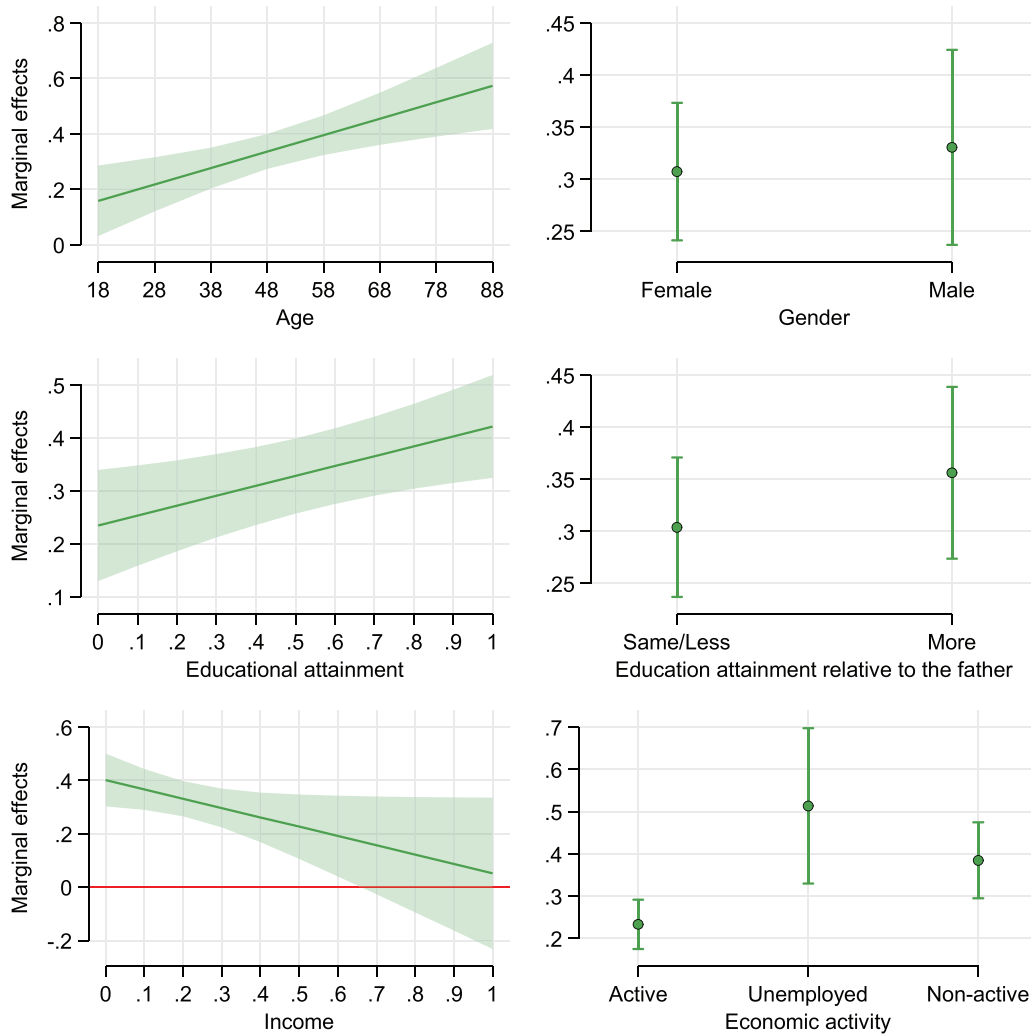


FIGURE 2 | The effect of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes moderated by socioeconomic factors.
Note: Marginal effects of perceived intergenerational mobility on populist attitudes as estimated in Table 3. All other variables at their observed values. Confidence intervals at the 95% level.

TABLE 3 | Heterogeneous effects.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Perceived downward mobility (PDM)	0.05 (0.08)	0.31*** (0.03)	0.23*** (0.05)	0.30*** (0.03)	0.40*** (0.04)	0.23*** (0.03)
Age (in years)	0.00+ (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)
PDM × Age	0.01** (0.00)					
Male (female)	0.06* (0.02)	0.05 (0.03)	0.06* (0.02)	0.06* (0.02)	0.06* (0.02)	0.06* (0.02)
PDM × Male		0.02 (0.03)				
Education (0–1)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.22* (0.07)	−0.17* (0.06)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.14+ (0.06)
PDM × Education			0.19* (0.06)			
More education than father (0–1)				0.03 (0.02)		
PDM × More education than father				0.05+ (0.03)		
Income (0–1)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.15+ (0.06)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.14+ (0.06)	−0.00 (0.12)	−0.15* (0.06)
PDM × Income					−0.35* (0.15)	
Activity (active)						
Unemployed	0.00 (0.02)	−0.00 (0.02)	−0.00 (0.02)	−0.00 (0.02)	−0.01 (0.02)	−0.16* (0.05)
Non-active	−0.01 (0.02)	−0.02 (0.02)	−0.02 (0.02)	−0.02 (0.02)	−0.02 (0.02)	−0.08** (0.02)
PDM × Unemployed						0.28** (0.08)
PDM × Non-active						0.15** (0.03)
Left-right orientations (0–1)	−0.04 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.12)	−0.03 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.12)	−0.04 (0.12)
Regular newspaper reader (no)	−0.06* (0.02)	−0.06* (0.02)	−0.06* (0.02)	−0.06* (0.02)	−0.06* (0.02)	−0.06* (0.02)
Country fixed effects	X	X	X	X	X	X
Constant	2.49*** (0.13)	2.39*** (0.12)	2.42*** (0.12)	2.38*** (0.13)	2.35*** (0.13)	2.42*** (0.12)
R-squared	0.099	0.098	0.098	0.099	0.099	0.100
Number of clusters	9	9	9	9	9	9
N	15,229	15,229	15,229	15,229	15,229	15,229

Note: DV: populist attitudes (0–4). Entries are partial OLS coefficients. Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses.

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; † $p < 0.1$.

and economic activity affect the strength of the relationship between perceived downward mobility and populism, whereas in the case of income, the relationship weakens for higher incomes to the point that it becomes a non-existent relationship for individuals over the seventh income decile.

The evidence does not support that gender and relative education moderate the effect of perceived downward mobility and populist attitudes.

In the case of gender, the difference in the marginal effect of perceived downward mobility on populist attitudes for women and men is statistically negligible. Thus, our evidence departs from a recent study that using data from Germany found that the relationship between status discordance (measured as the difference between the socioeconomic status of parents and children using objective socioeconomic factors) and political behavior (abstention and support for radical parties) is weaker in the case of women (Kurer and Staalduin 2022). In contrast, we find no evidence of such a moderation effect, so Hypothesis 3 does not hold.

Finally, there is some evidence that relative education—the individual level of education vis-à-vis the father's level of education—moderates the relationship, but the evidence is not strong enough. The interaction term in Table 3 between perceived downward mobility and relative education is only significant at the 90% level, so evidence does not support Hypothesis 5.

6 | Conclusion

Findings show that the perception of downward mobility fosters populist attitudes, which is a finding compatible with claims that attribute to downward mobility dissatisfaction with the dominant politics responsible for behavior such as non-voting and support for populist parties. In the context of high-income representative democracies, downward mobility fails the expectation that new generations should meet the standards of living of their parents and produces disillusionment with mainstream politics. Populism offers an outlook to channel these feelings. On the one hand, it presents the elites as the culprit for the political system's failure to deliver. On the other hand, it empowers the people to become sovereign and make political decisions.

The evidence also shows that the relationship between downward mobility and populism is moderated by socioeconomic characteristics. Differences are produced by either different expectations of mobility or by the different appeal of the populist discourse across socioeconomic groups. Specifically, age, unemployment, income, and educational attainment intensify the impact of perceived downward mobility. Thus, the older, the unemployed, low-income earners and those who attained high levels of education are particularly attracted by populist ideas when they perceive falling short of their parents' standard of living.

These findings refine previous theories on the socioeconomics of populism. Previous literature has established a connection between low educational attainment and populist attitudes. However, our findings illustrate that this relationship is more nuanced. High levels of educational attainment may also boost populist attitudes, but they will only do so in the presence of a perception

of downward mobility. Individuals with high levels of education feel particularly frustrated when they perceive experiencing downward mobility, boosting their populist attitudes. This has consequences for the strategies of populist entrepreneurs who can exploit this and appeal to individuals from all educational levels. The populist discourse may attract the support of individuals with low levels of education, but it may also appeal to individuals with high levels of education if the populist discourse stresses intergenerational downward mobility.

The findings also bring nuance to the relationship between populism and other socioeconomic factors. It is a well-established fact that populist attitudes are more prevalent among unemployed and low-income individuals. We find that the relationship is strengthened if these individuals also perceive that they have moved downward from the standard of living enjoyed by their parents. This reinforcement is due to the greater identification of individuals in disadvantaged economic positions with the people, whom they identify with the unprivileged, and their greater rejection of the elites, whom they identify with the privileged. As it is well established, the people and the elites are the subjects that populism praises and censures, respectively. Populism aims redemption against the failure of the political system to include the economically marginalized, and this appeal is strengthened when economic marginalization goes in hand with the perception of downward mobility.

By contrast, we do not find that gender moderates the relationship between perceived downward mobility and populism. Previous research using objective measures of intergenerational social mobility and political behavior found evidence of this moderation effect using panel data. This moderation by gender does not emerge when we move to the attitudinal world and focus on perceptions of intergenerational mobility and the more general populist attitudes. Further research should establish the reasons behind the diverging picture that emerges when analyzing attitudes and behaviors regarding gender.

Future research should establish the validity of our results beyond the European context. In any case, like other literature on social mobility and political attitudes, our findings highlight the relevance of upward mobility as a stabilizing factor in the politics of postwar democracies. The increase of downward mobility across high-income democracies means that increasing shares of citizens feel declining opportunities for mobility, disappointing their expectations and fueling populist attitudes. Unless future generations adapt their expectations, we would expect that the desire in the future for disruptive change is in line with expectations of social mobility.

Endnotes

¹ Relatedly, comparative research shows that populist beliefs are associated with preferences for increased welfare spending (Lee et al. 2023), although relevant exceptions have been reported (Jung 2025).

² The data we use, presented in the following section, show a correlation between our measure of perceived intergenerational mobility and income of -0.34 .

³The results remain consistent across all cases when the analysis is replicated separately for each country.

References

- Abramson, P. R. 1972. "Intergenerational Social Mobility and Partisan Choice." *American Political Science Review* 66, no. 4: 1291–1294. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1957180>.
- Abramson, P. R., and J. W. Books. 1971. "Social Mobility and Political Attitudes: A Study of Intergenerational Mobility Among Young British Men." *Comparative Politics* 3, no. 3: 403–428. <https://doi.org/10.2307/421474>.
- Akkerman, A., C. Mudde, and A. Zaslove. 2014. "How Populist Are the People? Measuring Populist Attitudes in Voters." *Comparative Political Studies* 47, no. 9: 1324–1353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414013512600>.
- Akkerman, A., A. Zaslove, and B. Spruyt. 2017. "'We the People' or 'We the Peoples'? A Comparison of Support for the Populist Radical Right and Populist Radical Left in the Netherlands." *Swiss Political Science Review* 23, no. 4: 377–403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12275>.
- Aslanidis, P. 2016. "Populist Social Movements of the Great Recession." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 21, no. 3: 301–321. <https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-20-3-301>.
- Autor, D. H., and D. Dorn. 2013. "The Growth of Low-Skill Service Jobs and the Polarization of the US Labor Market." *American Economic Review* 103, no. 5: 1553–1597. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.103.5.1553>.
- Bell, D. ed. 1955. *The New American Right*. Criterion Books.
- Bell, D. 1963a. "The Dispossessed." In *The Radical Right: The New American Right*, edited by D. Bell. Anchor.
- Bell, D. 1963b. *The Radical Right: The New American Right*. Anchor.
- Berman, S. 2021. "The Causes of Populism in the West." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24, no. 1: 71–88. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-041719-102503>.
- Berman, Y. 2022. "The Long-Run Evolution of Absolute Intergenerational Mobility." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 14, no. 3: 61–83. <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.20200631>.
- Bolet, D. 2023. "The Janus-Faced Nature of Radical Voting: Subjective Social Decline at the Roots of Radical Right and Radical Left Support." *Party Politics* 29, no. 3: 475–488. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688221085444>.
- Bos, L., L. Wichgers, and J. van Spanje. 2023. "Are Populists Politically Intolerant? Citizens' Populist Attitudes and Tolerance of Various Political Antagonists." *Political Studies* 71, no. 3: 851–868. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00323217211049299>.
- Breen, R. and W. Müller, eds. 2020. *Education and Intergenerational Social Mobility in Europe and the United States*. Stanford University Press.
- Bukodi, E., M. Paskov, and B. Nolan. 2020. "Intergenerational Class Mobility in Europe: A New Account." *Social Forces* 98, no. 3: 941–972. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soz026>.
- Canovan, M. 1999. "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy." *Political Studies* 47, no. 1: 2–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00184>.
- Chetty, R., D. Grusky, M. Hell, N. Hendren, R. Manduca, and J. Narang. 2017. "The Fading American Dream: Trends in Absolute Income Mobility Since 1940." *Science* 356, no. 6336: 398–406. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aal4617>.
- Cramer, K. J. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. University of Chicago Press. <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/P/bo22879533.html>.
- DiPrete, T. A., and C. Buchmann. 2013. *The Rise of Women: The Growing Gender Gap in Education and What It Means for American Schools*. Russell Sage Foundation.
- Duru-Bellat, M., and A. Kieffer. 2008. "Objective/Subjective: The Two Facets of Social Mobility." *Sociologie Du Travail* 50: e1–e18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socotra.2008.07.001>.
- Elchardus, M., and B. Spruyt. 2016. "Populism, Persistent Republicanism and Declinism: An Empirical Analysis of Populism as a Thin Ideology." *Government and Opposition* 51, no. 1: 111–133. <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2014.27>.
- Erisen, C., M. Guidi, S. Martini, S. Toprakkiran, P. Isernia, and L. Littvay. 2021. "Psychological Correlates of Populist Attitudes." *Political Psychology* 42, no. S1: 149–171. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12768>.
- Gest, J., T. Reny, and J. Mayer. 2018. "Roots of the Radical Right: Nostalgic Deprivation in the United States and Britain." *Comparative Political Studies* 51, no. 13: 1694–1719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414017720705>.
- Geurkink, B., A. Zaslove, R. Sluiter, and K. Jacobs. 2020. "Populist Attitudes, Political Trust, and External Political Efficacy: Old Wine in New Bottles?" *Political Studies* 68, no. 1: 247–267. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321719842768>.
- Gidron, N., and P. A. Hall. 2017. "The Politics of Social Status: Economic and Cultural Roots of the Populist Right." *British Journal of Sociology* 68, no. S1: S57–S84. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12319>.
- Gingrich, J., and A. Kuo. 2022. "Gender, Technological Risk, and Political Preferences." In *Digitalization and the Welfare State*, edited by M. R. Busemeyer, A. Kemmerling, K. Van Kersbergen, and P. Marx. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780192848369.003.0009>.
- Giugni, M., and M. Grasso. 2015. *Austerity and Protest: Popular Contention in Times of Economic Crisis*. Routledge.
- Goldin, C. 1990. *Understanding the Gender Gap: An Economic History of American Women*.
- Goldin, C. 2021. *Career and Family*. Princeton University Press.
- Goldthorpe, J. H. 2016. "Social Class Mobility in Modern Britain: Changing Structure, Constant Process." *Journal of the British Academy* 4: 89–111. <https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/004.089>.
- Goldthorpe, J. H. 2013. "Understanding—and Misunderstanding—Social Mobility in Britain: The Entry of the Economists, the Confusion of Politicians and the Limits of Educational Policy." *Journal of Social Policy* 42, no. 3: 431–450. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S004727941300024X>.
- Goos, M., A. Manning, and A. Salomons. 2009. "Job Polarization in Europe." *American Economic Review* 99, no. 2: 58–63.
- Gugushvili, A. 2021. "Why Do People Perceive Themselves as Being Downwardly or Upwardly Mobile?" *Acta Sociologica* 64, no. 1: 3–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001699320929742>.
- Guinjoan, M. 2023. "How Ideology Shapes the Relationship Between Populist Attitudes and Support for Liberal Democratic Values. Evidence From Spain." *Acta Politica* 58, no. 2: 401–423. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-022-00252-9>.
- Guiso, L., H. Herrera, M. Morelli, and T. Sonno. 2019. "Global Crises and Populism: The Role of Eurozone Institutions." *Economic Policy* 34, no. 97: 95–139. <https://doi.org/10.1093/epolic/eiy018>.
- Hawkins, K. A. 2009. "Is Chávez Populist? Measuring Populist Discourse in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Political Studies* 42, no. 8: 1040–1067.
- Hawkins, K. A., R. E. Carlin, L. Littvay, and C. Rovira Kaltwasser. eds. 2019. *The Ideational Approach to Populism: Concept, Theory, and Analysis*. Routledge.

- Hawkins, K. A., C. R. Kaltwasser, and I. Andreadis. 2020. "The Activation of Populist Attitudes." *Government and Opposition* 55, no. 2: 283–307. <https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2018.23>.
- Hertel, F. R. ed. 2017. *Social Mobility in the 20th Century: Class Mobility and Occupational Change in the United States and Germany*. Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Hill, M. S., and G. J. Duncan. 1987. "Parental Family Income and the Socioeconomic Attainment of Children." *Social Science Research* 16, no. 1: 39–73. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X\(87\)90018-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/0049-089X(87)90018-4).
- Hout, M. 2018. "Americans' Occupational Status Reflects the Status of Both of Their Parents." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115, no. 38: 9527–9532. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1802508115>.
- Huber, R. A. 2020. "The Role of Populist Attitudes in Explaining Climate Change Skepticism and Support for Environmental Protection." *Environmental Politics* 29, no. 6: 959–982. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2019.1708186>.
- Jahoda, M., P. Lazarsfeld, and H. Zeisel. 1971. *Marienthal: The Sociography of an Unemployed Community*. Aldine.
- Jung, Y. J. 2025. "Navigating Populism in America: Unveiling the Socioeconomic and Ideological Roots of Populist Attitudes." *Social Science Quarterly* 106, no. 2: e13488. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13488>.
- Kelley, S. M., and C. G. Kelley. 2009. "Subjective Social Mobility: Data From 30 Nations." In *The International Social Survey Programme 1984–2009: Charting the Globe*, edited by M. Haller, R. Jowell, and T. W. Smith, 106–125. Routledge.
- Kriesi, H., E. Grande, M. Dolezal, et al. 2012. *Political Conflict in Western Europe*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139169219>.
- Kurer, T. 2020. "The Declining Middle: Occupational Change, Social Status, and the Populist Right." *Comparative Political Studies* 53, no. 10–11: 1798–1835. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414020912283>.
- Kurer, T., and B. V. Staaldin. 2022. "Disappointed Expectations: Downward Mobility and Electoral Change." *American Political Science Review* 116, no. 4: 1340–1356. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055422000077>.
- Lee, K. S., K. Goidel, and C. Young. 2023. "The System Is Broken: Can We Have Some More?" *Social Science Quarterly* 104, no. 1: 39–53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13208>.
- Lipset, S. M. 1955. "The Sources of the 'Radical Right'." In *The New American Right*, edited by D. Bell. Criterion Books.
- Lipset, S. M., and R. Bendix. 1959. *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*. University of California Press.
- Lorenzini, J., and M. Giugni. 2012. "Employment Status, Social Capital, and Political Participation: A Comparison of Unemployed and Employed Youth in Geneva." *Swiss Political Science Review* 18, no. 3: 332–351. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1662-6370.2012.02076.x>.
- Ludwinek, A., R. Anderson, D. Ahrendt, J.-M. Junblut, and T. Leončikas. 2017. *Social Mobility in the EU*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2017/social-mobility-in-the-eu>.
- Maloney, W. A. and J. W. V. Deth, eds. 2010. *Civil Society and Activism in Europe: Contextualizing Engagement and Political Orientations*. Routledge.
- Mansbridge, J., and S. L. Shames. 2008. "Toward a Theory of Backlash: Dynamic Resistance and the Central Role of Power." *Politics & Gender* 4, no. 4: 623–634. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X08000500>.
- Marcos-Marne, H., H. Gil de Zúñiga, and P. Borah. 2023. "What Do We (not) Know About Demand-side Populism? A Systematic Literature Review on Populist Attitudes." *European Political Science* 22, no. 3: 293–307. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41304-022-00397-3>.
- Martinussen, W. 1992. "Social Mobility and Political Attitudes: Comparative Perspectives." In *Social Mobility and Political Attitudes: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by F. C. Turner, 103–125. Transaction Publishers.
- Mény, Y., and Y. Surel. 2002. *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*. Palgrave.
- Mitrea, E. C., M. Mühlböck, and J. Warmuth. 2021. "Extreme Pessimists? Expected Socioeconomic Downward Mobility and the Political Attitudes of Young Adults." *Political Behavior* 43, no. 2: 785–811. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-020-09593-7>.
- Mudde, C. 2004. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4: 542–563. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x>.
- Oesch, D. 2013. *Occupational Change in Europe: How Technology and Education Transform the Job Structure*. Oxford University Press.
- Panizza, F. 2017. "Populism and Identification." In *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, edited by C. R. Kaltwasser, P. Taggart, P. O. Espejo, and P. Ostiguy, 406–425. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198803560.013.19>.
- Pateman, C. 1970. *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rico, G., and E. Anduiza. 2019. "Economic Correlates of Populist Attitudes: An Analysis of Nine European Countries in the Aftermath of the Great Recession." *Acta Politica* 54, no. 3: 371–397. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-017-0068-7>.
- Rico, G., M. Guinjoan, and E. Anduiza. 2017. "The Emotional Underpinnings of Populism: How Anger and Fear Affect Populist Attitudes." *Swiss Political Science Review* 23, no. 4: 444–461. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spsr.12261>.
- Rooduijn, M., and T. Pauwels. 2011. "Measuring Populism: Comparing Two Methods of Content Analysis." *West European Politics* 34, no. 6: 1272–1283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2011.616665>.
- Rovira Kaltwasser, C., and S. M. Van Hauwaert. 2020. "The Populist Citizen: Empirical Evidence From Europe and Latin America." *European Political Science Review* 12, no. 1: 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773919000262>.
- Santana-Pereira, J., and J. Cancela. 2020. "Demand Without Supply? Populist Attitudes and Voting Behaviour in Post-Bailout Portugal." *South European Society and Politics* 25, no. 2: 205–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2020.1864910>.
- Sauer, C., P. Valet, S. Shams, and D. Tomaskovic-Devey. 2021. "Categorical Distinctions and Claims-Making: Opportunity, Agency, and Returns From Wage Negotiations." *American Sociological Review* 86, no. 5: 934–959. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00031224211038507>.
- Schur, L. 2003. "Employment and the Creation of an Active Citizenry." *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 41, no. 4: 751–771. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1467-8543.2003.00297.x>.
- Simiti, M. 2015. "Rage and Protest: The Case of the Greek Indignant Movement." *Contention* 3, no. 2: 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.3167/cont.2015.030204>.
- Singh-Manoux, A., N. E. Adler, and M. G. Marmot. 2003. "Subjective Social Status: Its Determinants and Its Association With Measures of Ill-Health in the Whitehall II Study." *Social Science & Medicine* (1982) 56, no. 6: 1321–1333. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0277-9536\(02\)00131-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0277-9536(02)00131-4).
- Spruyt, B., G. Keppens, and F. Van Droogenbroeck. 2016. "Who Supports Populism and What Attracts People to It?" *Political Research Quarterly* 69, no. 2: 335–346. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912916639138>.
- Steenvoorden, E., and E. Harteveld. 2018. "The Appeal of Nostalgia: The Influence of Societal Pessimism on Support for Populist Radical Right Parties." *West European Politics* 41, no. 1: 28–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2017.1334138>.
- Turner, F. C. 1992. "Social Mobility and Political Attitudes in Comparative Perspective." In *Social Mobility and Political Attitudes: Comparative Perspectives*, edited by F. C. Turner, 1–20. Transaction Publishers.
- Van Hauwaert, S. M., C. H. Schimpf, and F. Azevedo. 2020. "The Measurement of Populist Attitudes: Testing Cross-National Scales Using Item Response Theory." *Politics* 40, no. 1: 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395719859306>.

- Van Hauwaert, S. M., and S. Van Kessel. 2018. "Beyond Protest and Discontent: A Cross-National Analysis of the Effect of Populist Attitudes and Issue Positions on Populist Party Support." *European Journal of Political Research* 57, no. 1: 68–92. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12216>.
- Vasilopoulos, P., G. E. Marcus, N. A. Valentino, and M. Foucault. 2019. "Fear, Anger, and Voting for the Far Right: Evidence from the November 13, 2015 Paris Terror Attacks." *Political Psychology* 40, no. 4: 679–704. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12513>.
- Verba, S., K. L. Schlozman, and H. E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Harvard University Press.
- Zaslove, A., B. Geurkink, K. Jacobs, and A. Akkerman. 2021. "Power to the People? Populism, Democracy, and Political Participation: A Citizen's Perspective." *West European Politics* 44, no. 4: 727–751. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2020.1776490>.