

**Strategic Eurosceptics and Polite Xenophobes : Support for the UK  
Independence Party (UKIP) in the 2009 European Parliament Elections<sup>1</sup>**

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**Abstract.** Britain has long been identified with a strong tradition of Euroscepticism, yet we know little about the drivers of support for openly Eurosceptic parties. In this article, we draw on a unique large-scale dataset to undertake the first ever individual-level analysis of the social and attitudinal drivers of support for the UK Independence Party (UKIP) at the 2009 elections to the European Parliament. We find that while Euroscepticism is the most important driver of UKIP support it is not the whole story. Other attitudinal drivers, namely dissatisfaction towards mainstream parties and xenophobia, are also important. Examining vote-switching between first and second order elections we also find evidence of a distinction between two types of supporter: more affluent and middle class ‘strategic defectors’ from the mainstream Conservative Party who support UKIP to register their Euroscepticism; on the other are more economically marginal and politically disaffected ‘core loyalists’ who are attracted to UKIP by its xenophobic, increasingly Islamophobic and populist anti-establishment strategy. UKIP also succeeds in attracting core support from groups such as women who have traditionally rejected extreme right parties such as the British National Party (BNP). Our analysis suggests that UKIP is well positioned to recruit a broader and more enduring base of support than the BNP and become a significant vehicle of xenophobia and, more specifically, Islamophobia in modern Britain.

## **Introduction**

Britain has a strong tradition of Euroscepticism. The presence of this tradition (e.g. Aspinwall 2000; Gifford 2006), its evolution (e.g. Forster 2002) and manifestation in electoral politics (e.g. Evans 1998, 1999) have attracted considerable interest. In recent years this tradition has found an organized political outlet in the UK Independence Party (UKIP) which was founded in 1993 by members of the Anti-Federalist League that opposed the Maastricht Treaty. Since its formation UKIP has polled stronger in second-order elections to the European Parliament (EP) than first-order general elections, seeing its share of the vote in EP elections increase from one per cent in 1994 to 16 per cent in 2004. In the most recent elections to the European Parliament in 2009, UKIP finished in second place and above the incumbent Labour government after polling 2.5 million votes (16.5 per cent of the total) and elected 13 candidates. Though UKIP has received some attention in studies based on aggregate voting patterns (Borisjuk et al. 2007; Curtice, Fisher & Steed 2005; John & Margetts 2009) and party organization (Abedi & Lundberg 2009; Hayton 2010; also Lynch, Whitaker & Loomes, 2010), the social and attitudinal drivers of individual support for the party remain poorly understood. This lack of research is particularly striking when we consider the vast literatures on British Euroscepticism, party-based Euroscepticism (e.g. Taggart & Szczepiak 2008) and second-order elections (e.g. Hix & Marsh 2007; Marsh & Mikhaylov 2008).

The absence of systematic research on UKIP support is mainly the consequence of a lack of reliable data on minor party voters which renders individual level analysis difficult.<sup>2</sup> Systematic investigation of minor party voters, however, is not impossible, as demonstrated in a series of innovative individual and aggregate-

level studies of another minor party in British politics, the extreme right-wing British National Party (BNP) (e.g. Cutts et al. 2011; Eatwell & Goodwin 2010; Ford & Goodwin 2010). These studies contribute to a wider pan-European literature on the social and attitudinal profile of extreme right party voters (e.g. Lubbers et al. 2002; Rydgren 2008; also Mudde 2007).

In fact, aggregate research provides evidence of high correlations between support for UKIP and the extreme right BNP which suggests both parties are drawing support from the same social groups. As John and Margetts (2009: 501; also Borisyuk et al. 2007) observe, the BNP and UKIP adopt similar discourses on issues of immigration and national identity and thus the media and public often perceive the two parties to be ‘part of the same phenomenon’. Findings from their aggregate data suggest that ‘the right-wing UKIP draws upon the same source of social and political attitudes among the public as the BNP and has the potential to convert such attitudes into votes’ (Ibid: 508). Others similarly suggest that populist Eurosceptic parties appeal to ‘new politics, old far left politics through regionalism to new populism and neo-fascism’ and mobilize ‘strange bedfellows’ with different ideologies (Szczerbiak & Taggart 2000: 5). More accurately, however, and as we will show, the populist Eurosceptic UKIP and extreme right BNP are not simply mobilizing a diverse array of voters disconnected from mainstream politics but are recruiting electorates that share several key attitudinal features, in particular populism and anti-immigrant hostility.

In this study we employ a unique large scale dataset of UKIP supporters surveyed before the 2009 European Parliament elections to provide new insights into their social and attitudinal profile. Our aims are three-fold: first, we examine the socio-demographic profile of UKIP supporters; second, we examine their attitudes and policy-based concerns; and third, we investigate a distinction between ‘core’

UKIP supporters who remain loyal to the party in both second-order and first-order elections and ‘strategic’ supporters who only support UKIP in the context of second-order European Parliament elections.

Overall, we find UKIP support is concentrated among middle aged, financially insecure men with a Conservative background and is significantly higher among the skilled working classes who have been most exposed to competition from the European Common Market. UKIP supporters are also more likely than voters in general to regularly read one of Britain’s Eurosceptic right-wing ‘tabloid’ newspapers, though such papers are also popular with supporters of the mainstream Conservative Party. Consistent with our expectations, the main attitudinal driver of UKIP support is Euroscepticism but it is not the sole motive correlated with support for the party. Even after controlling for Euroscepticism, hostility to immigration and disaffection with mainstream political elites are associated with significantly higher UKIP support overall. This provides evidence that some voters are indeed using UKIP as a vehicle for expressing discontent with domestic politics and have some important continuities with supporters of the extreme right BNP (Cutts et al. 2011).

We also find that UKIP voters are divided into two groups. There are important differences between ‘strategic’ supporters who only vote UKIP at European Parliament elections and ‘core’ supporters who also vote UKIP at Westminster elections. Strategic supporters appear principally to be Conservative voters registering their hostility to the EU while core supporters are a poorer, more working class, and more deeply discontented group who closely resemble supporters of the BNP and European radical right parties (Ford & Goodwin 2010; Mudde 2007). In conclusion, we argue that UKIP’s credentials as a legitimate party of right-wing protest over Europe may make it a ‘polite alternative’ for voters angry about rising immigration

levels or elite corruption but who are repelled by the stigmatized image of the more extreme BNP which, as polling data reveals, has struggled to appear as a credible alternative to voters (Goodwin 2010; John & Margetts 2009). One piece of evidence in favour of this hypothesis is that almost half of UKIP's core support is female, unlike the extreme right BNP which is driven mainly by men. This success in recruiting women who seem to be more sensitive about party reputations for racism and intolerance (Campbell & Harris 2010) suggests UKIP may be able to appeal to the large pool of voters in modern Britain who are sympathetic to extreme right-wing policies but unwilling to endorse the BNP (Ford 2010).

**Insert Table 1 about here**

### **Why vote UKIP? Theory and hypotheses**

Given the absence of research on the UKIP vote one useful theoretical starting point are older sociological models which underscore the influence of background characteristics as predictors of vote choice (Berelson et al. 1954; Heath, Jowell and Curtice 1985). As noted above, some suggest UKIP and the BNP mobilize support from similar social groups. Support for the latter is concentrated heavily among older working class men who are pessimistic over future economic prospects, tend to reside in England's industrial north, Midlands and outer-east London and read tabloid newspapers hostile toward immigration (Cutts et al. 2011; Ford & Goodwin 2010). Britain also has an unusually Eurosceptic media, with many papers adopting a

stridently anti-EU position and highlighting the perceived corruption and failings of the European Parliament. Regular readers of such papers may express a more hostile view of the EU. This leads us to the hypothesis that support for UKIP is similarly concentrated among such discontented and economically insecure groups, particularly if they have reasons to be more Eurosceptic. Older members of discontented social groups who grew up before the onset of European integration may be less accepting of EU membership than those who grew up with EU institutions as an accepted part of the British political landscape. However, the regional distribution of UKIP support may be somewhat different – the party may have greater success with voters based in regions of the country that have not benefitted from European structural funds, which tend to be the more prosperous regions such as the South East and East Anglia.

Social background, however, provides only a partial explanation of voting behaviour. This is especially the case in less salient second-order elections when voters may depart from habitual political loyalties (Reif & Schmitt 1980). Academic interest in second-order voting behaviour has recently reignited, with a series of individual-level analyses of voters' choices in European elections (Schmitt et al. 2008; Hobolt & Wittrock 2009). Four quite distinct hypotheses emerge from this literature. First, voting behaviour may be driven by more strategic – or insincere – considerations, not least because 'the vote in European Parliament elections does not result in any process of government formation, voters are less concerned with the strategic outcomes of their vote' (Marsh & Mikhaylov 2008: 9). Citizens may use second-order elections instrumentally to register dissatisfaction with the performance of the incumbent national government or main party of choice (Heath et al. 1999; Oppenhuis et al. 1996). Rather than express sincere support for UKIP, citizens may use the party as a vehicle to register protest or dissatisfaction over domestic issues and

events. Our data was gathered in the immediate aftermath of a wide ranging scandal over abuse of expenses by legislators in the House of Commons. The domestic situation at the time of second-order elections is important (Reif 1985: 8-9) and so we might expect this event to heighten dissatisfaction with mainstream parties. Indeed, during the campaign UKIP sought to recruit protest voters by framing itself as the ‘real opposition’ and urging voters to ‘sod the lot’.<sup>3</sup> This leads us to hypothesize that, after controlling for socio-demographic characteristics, UKIP may derive support from citizens dissatisfied with established mainstream parties.

The second and third hypotheses posit that the decision to vote for a challenger party like UKIP may be driven by more sincere preferences for policies offered by the party. As elsewhere in Europe British voters consider second order elections less consequential (Heath et al. 1999) and may take the opportunity to express ideological affinity with smaller and more ideologically extreme minor parties. Under a regionalist list proportional representation system there is also a greater likelihood that these votes will translate into seats while, by contrast, minor parties suffer at first-order elections and particularly under a majoritarian system which severely penalises parties that lack a geographically concentrated base of support, such as UKIP.

These sincere voting decisions could manifest in two forms. Our second hypothesis is that UKIP support may be driven foremost by preferences over the party’s core issue of Europe, an issue which is relevant to voting in EP contests (Rohrschneider & Clark 2008; Van der Brug & Van der Eijk 2007). As comparative research has shown, the division between elites’ enthusiasm about the EU and electorates who are more sceptical has been an important driver behind the emergence of a range of Eurosceptic parties (Hobolt, Spoon & Tilley, 2009). This leads us to the



expectation that the party will be a bastion of the most strident Eurosceptics. Clearly, it will not be surprising if Euroscepticism is a major driver of support for UKIP, a party whose most salient policy is complete withdrawal from the EU. What is unclear, however, is the *extent* to which Euroscepticism is the dominant – or even only – driver of support for UKIP and whether, once we control for this motive, other factors make no significant contribution to the party's vote.

Our third hypothesis posits that citizens may instead use their vote in European Parliament elections to register concern over domestic issues which they perceive are not currently being addressed by the incumbent government and mainstream parties, in particular anxieties over immigration and Islam. Rather than driven solely by Euroscepticism, the UKIP vote may be motivationally diverse and driven by citizens concerned over a range of alternative and mainly right-wing issues on which the party also campaigns, such as crime, law and order and immigration. Beyond its opposition to European integration, UKIP seeks to mobilize a broader coalition of voters by advocating, for example, stricter sentencing for criminals, reducing council tax, greater use of referenda and decentralization (UKIP 2010). In particular, UKIP has put stronger programmatic emphasis on opposition to immigration, multiculturalism and Islam. In 2009, the party's (now former) leader Lord Pearson invited the populist right-wing Dutch politician Geert Wilders to present his anti-Islamic film *Fitna* in the House of Lords and in recent elections UKIP has advocated banning the burqa and niqab in public and certain private buildings and deporting radical Islamist preachers. Like the BNP, UKIP demands an immediate halt on further immigration (through a five-year freeze), the expulsion of illegal immigrants from the country, ending policies designed to promote multiculturalism and repealing human rights legislation. Such policies appear designed to mobilize

voters anxious over more symbolic threats stemming from rising ethno-cultural diversity and new waves of immigration which followed the accession of states such as Lithuania, Poland and Slovakia to the EU. Immigration and anxiety over growing Muslim communities have been highly salient issues in recent electoral cycles (Clarke et al. 2009; McLaren & Johnson 2007; Voas & Ling 2010) and are important drivers of support for the extreme right BNP (Ford and Goodwin 2010).

This embrace of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim campaigns has led some commentators to describe UKIP as the ‘BNP in blazers’ and claim that despite its attempt to present a moderate image UKIP is supported mainly by ‘angry old men’.<sup>4</sup> It may be that UKIP – which has attracted support from senior Conservative politicians and enjoys access to media and political allies – is recruiting support from citizens who view the party as a ‘polite alternative’ to the extreme right BNP which is regarded by most voters as illegitimate due to its associations with violence, biological racism and anti-Semitism. This leads us to the hypothesis that xenophobia and racism will be important motives driving support for UKIP, even after including social controls.

One final question centres on the lesser-studied phenomenon of vote-switching, and whether there is a distinction between ‘core’ and ‘strategic’ supporters. By strategic supporters we mean citizens who vote UKIP in the context of a second-order election but who make a different vote choice in a first order election. By core supporters we mean citizens who vote UKIP in both second-order and first-order elections. Second-order election theory leads us to expect that the background and motivations of these two types of supporters could be quite different. Core voters who remain loyal to a minor party in national elections where its prospects of electoral success are reduced are either likely to have a much stronger attachment to the party

in question, have more intense concern about its policies or be strongly hostile to the mainstream parties. We therefore hypothesise that ‘core’ UKIP supporters who back the party in first-order and second-order elections will be more intensely concerned about its core issue of Europe, and will be more hostile to the mainstream political parties than ‘strategic’ supporters who back the party in second-order European elections but return to the mainstream at Westminster polls.

### **Data and Methods**

We use survey data gathered from the YouGov online panel over the week prior to the European Parliament election.<sup>5</sup> This nationally representative panel only contains adults who were eligible to vote at the time of the election.<sup>6</sup> The data are weighted to the profile of eligible voters in the United Kingdom on the basis of age, gender, social class, region, party identity, and newspaper readership. Targets for the weighted data were derived from the 2001 census, a national readership survey made up from 34,000 random face to face interviews conducted annually, and YouGov estimates of party identity. After asking each respondent their voting intention the survey produced a total of 4,306 self-identified supporters of UKIP, 17 per cent of the weighted total sample.<sup>7</sup>

We commence by comparing the background and attitudes of UKIP supporters with those of other parties. After this we progress to a series of multivariate models to test our hypotheses about the background and motivations predicting UKIP support. Our dependent variable in these models is vote intention, with UKIP voters coded 1 and all other voters coded 0. We employed factor analysis to aggregate groups of

questions on the YouGov sample which touch upon the same core issues – specifically Euroscepticism, xenophobic hostility to immigration, populist hostility to the mainstream political parties and racial prejudice.<sup>8</sup> The factor analysis confirmed that each set of questions loaded on a single factor, and pair wise correlations between the factors suggested that they are weakly related, with correlations of 0.2-0.4, except for xenophobia and Euroscepticism which correlate at 0.54 and racial prejudice and xenophobia which correlate at 0.65. These relatively strong correlations suggest that hostility to one out-group tends to correlate with hostility to others; those who dislike immigrants tend to dislike racial minorities and to dislike the ‘foreigners’ from the EU encroaching on British politics. Nevertheless, the correlations are not overwhelmingly strong and the factor analysis confirms these factors are distinct. However, to ensure against the possibility that results are influenced by collinearity between the two most strongly related factors, we present results from separate models with and without racism.<sup>9</sup> Predicted factor scores for each factor are employed as measures for these concepts in our regression models. These scores are standardized with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one to allow comparison of the factor effects.

The use of multiple item factors lead to one complication: the level of missing data in the final factors was quite high, perhaps as a result of the sensitive nature of some questions touching on racial attitudes and views of immigrants. In our initial analysis cases with any missing data were deleted from the model. This resulted in a very high level of data loss, with over 40 per cent of cases excluded from the final models. This introduced a risk of bias in the final models. To reduce the level of missing data we imputed the missing values on each attitudinal factor using a multiple imputation procedure (Little & Rubin 1987; Rubin 1996).<sup>10</sup> This generates multiple estimates of the missing values using a multivariate normal regression implemented

using an iterated Markov-chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) process. Twenty completed datasets are generated. Analysis is carried out on each and then pooled into a single set of estimates which incorporate the cases missing data on some variables while properly accounting for the added uncertainty introduced by the missing data.<sup>11</sup>

Other issues such as attitudes to homosexuals or views of the mainstream political parties are tapped by single survey items. After specifying a fully elaborated model of UKIP support, we use predicted probabilities to illustrate the substantive importance of the different factors which are significantly correlated with UKIP support. Finally, we specify a further logistic regression model to test which factors separate ‘core’ UKIP voters who intend to support the party in national elections from ‘strategic’ supporters who only intend to vote for the party in second-order European contests.

### **Who Votes UKIP?**

Table 2 presents a comparison of the socio-economic and political characteristics of citizens intending to vote UKIP at the 2009 European Parliament elections with those planning to support the three mainstream parties, the BNP and those planning to abstain. UKIP supporters are predominantly male (only the extreme right BNP are more male-dominated) and also come from older age groups. UKIP support is concentrated strongly among older age groups: the average age of UKIP supporters in our sample was 55, seven years older than the average supporter of the three main parties, six years older than the average BNP voter, and eleven years older than the average abstainer. This finding suggests that a generational effect may be at work,

with British citizens who grew up prior to the Maastricht Treaty and the acceleration of European integration being more likely to oppose EU membership. An alternative explanation is that this pattern is the result of a greater sense of social obligation to vote among older cohorts (Butt and Curtice 2010). Younger voters who dislike the EU may be more likely to register their dissatisfaction by staying at home on polling day.

The regional distribution of UKIP support also meets our expectations: support is stronger in the relatively prosperous regions of England – the Midlands and South –which have not benefited from EU structural funds and where voters are therefore less likely to notice tangible benefits from EU membership. In contrast, UKIP is weaker in the more economically deprived northern region of England and in Scotland and Wales where the party faces competition from Celtic nationalists focussing discontent on England and Westminster. The geographical distribution of UKIP support is quite different to the extreme right BNP and Labour, both of which are strongest in the more industrial north, and is most similar to the Conservatives who are strongest in the South but weak in the north and Celtic fringe.

The social class distribution of UKIP support suggests it enjoys support from a broad cross-section of society, with only one group – skilled manual workers –over-represented. This is quite different to the BNP, whose support is strongly concentrated in the working classes and largely absent from the professional classes. However, despite the large differences in their class distribution, there is some evidence to support our hypothesis that UKIP, like the BNP, benefits from economic insecurity. This distribution fits with our hypothesis that anxiety over economic competition may drive support for UKIP. Anxieties about unemployment, living standards and future earnings are all more common among UKIP supporters. We also find evidence to support the hypothesis that UKIP draws support particularly from disaffected

Conservatives: UKIP supporters are more likely to claim that their parents voted Conservative. Again, this differentiates the party from the BNP, whose supporters are drawn more from Labour backgrounds (Goodwin 2011).

**Insert Table 2 about here**

Table 3 compares the attitudinal profile of UKIP supporters with those of supporters of other parties and allows us to make three observations. First, UKIP supporters are clearly distinguishable from supporters of other parties by their intense levels of Euroscepticism: they are the most strongly Eurosceptic on all measures. Second, on issues of immigration and racism UKIP fall between the extreme right BNP – who are the most racist and xenophobic – and the centre right Conservatives. This provides some evidence for the popular claim that UKIP supporters are, like supporters of the BNP, hostile to ethnic minorities and angry about immigration although they express slightly lower levels of intolerance than BNP supporters. Third, we find evidence of considerable hostility among supporters of UKIP toward mainstream political parties. UKIP supporters are much more likely to regard politicians as corrupt, to distrust their MPs and perceive no difference between the main parties. UKIP supporters are also more disaffected with the main parties – they are more likely to say that both Labour and the Tories used to care about people like them, but no longer do. Once again, they share this characteristic with the BNP, although supporters of UKIP are characterized by slightly lower levels of political dissatisfaction.

**Insert Table 3 about here**

### **Multivariate analysis**

Table 4 presents results from a series of logistic regression analyses of UKIP support. The first model introduces demographic predictors. We find that UKIP support is significantly higher among men, those living in the Midlands and the South of England and the economically insecure. Support is significantly weaker in Wales and particularly in Scotland, suggesting UKIP has limited appeal in the Celtic nations where the alien political power of greatest concern is not Strasbourg but Westminster. Social class remains a poor predictor of UKIP support, but all forms of economic insecurity are associated with elevated support for the party. In contrast to extreme right supporters who are more likely to come from Labour family backgrounds UKIP supporters are significantly more likely to come from Conservative family backgrounds, suggesting the ideological orientation of the party is most attractive to disillusioned former Conservatives. Like BNP supporters, however, those who read right-wing tabloid newspapers which run prominent anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic campaigns are more likely to support the UKIP (Ford & Goodwin 2010).

**Insert Table 4 about here**



Model 2 introduces Euroscepticism, to test the hypothesis that UKIP support is driven solely by opposition to the EU. Euroscepticism is clearly a very strong driver of UKIP support.<sup>12</sup> Some of the demographic predictors of UKIP support are reduced or rendered insignificant when it is added. The higher rates of UKIP support among older voters, skilled manual workers, those with Conservative families and those who read anti-immigrant tabloid papers look to be largely a consequence of higher Euroscepticism amongst these groups. After controlling for Euroscepticism, support for UKIP among the unskilled manual classes is significantly lower than in other economic groups. However, other demographic predictors remain significant in the new model: the greater support for UKIP among those who expect their economic position to worsen in the near future, and those in the Midlands and the South cannot be explained by higher Euroscepticism alone, while lower support for UKIP in Scotland is not the result of greater enthusiasm for the EU among the Scots. After controlling for Euroscepticism we also find lower than expected support for UKIP among the most economically deprived groups, namely the unskilled manual classes and those who say they are struggling to cope on their current income. In short, while Euroscepticism is clearly the most important driver of support for UKIP it is not the whole story.

This becomes even clearer in Model 3 when we introduce the other attitudinal variables. Both xenophobia and populism are significantly correlated with UKIP support, although the impact of these motivations (as shown by the standardised coefficients) is roughly one tenth of that of Euroscepticism. Citizens hostile to the British political elite or toward new migrants clearly regard UKIP as a legitimate outlet for expressing these concerns. There is also evidence that political alienation from the 'big two' parties are driving UKIP support: citizens who support the party

are much more likely to believe that Labour and the Conservatives used to care about people like them, but do no longer. UKIP voters are also more likely to say that Labour never cared about them, perhaps reflecting the stronger roots of UKIP in the Conservative support base, which expresses similar views about Labour.

In the final model we introduce measures of racial prejudice which are considered separately due to possible collinearity with the xenophobia measure. The majority of coefficients in the new model are unchanged. Xenophobia becomes more strongly related to UKIP support while racism shows a significant negative correlation. This suggests that UKIP are particularly successful at attracting votes from citizens who are alarmed about immigration and hostile to immigrants, but who are not (or at least not openly) hostile to British ethnic minorities. Our measure of Islamophobia is not significantly associated with UKIP support while belief in a Jewish conspiracy is negatively correlated with support for the party, confirming that not all forms of intolerance are currently associated with UKIP support. Those who agree with open statements of hostility toward ethnic minorities, Muslims and Jews are perhaps more likely to vote for the more openly intolerant BNP (Goodwin 2011).

The substantive importance of the different factors which our models suggest drive support for UKIP is illustrated in Figure 1. This reveals the increase in support for UKIP generated by changing different predictors while holding other predictors constant at their means (continuous variables), or at a reference value (categorical or nominal variables). Variables found to be insignificant in previous models are dropped in this prediction model, to provide a more parsimonious model and more accurate estimates of effects by removing possible sources of collinearity.<sup>13</sup>

## **Insert Figure 1 about here**

In summary, Euroscepticism was clearly the most important driver of support for UKIP at the 2009 European elections: a two standard deviation change in Euroscepticism increases UKIP predicted support by 13.5 per cent, much larger than any other effect. However, Euroscepticism is not the whole story. We find that other factors also had an important effect on UKIP support. Regional differences in support amount to over four percentage points, while disillusionment with Labour raised UKIP support by a similar amount. The other attitudinal factors have lower effects, but still raise support for UKIP by between one and two percentage points.

## **Core versus strategic UKIP supporters**

Impressive levels of support for UKIP in European Parliament elections have not been mirrored at first-order general elections. While the party secured 2.5 million votes at each of the last two sets of European elections its vote at general elections remains below one million. As noted above, under a first-past-the-post system minor parties struggle to appear to voters as a credible alternative with a realistic prospect of achieving parliamentary representation. A lack of media attention, limited party finance and small grassroots activist base are also likely relevant factors in UKIP's inability to make a wider breakthrough. The most important explanation, however, may lie in the salience of the European issue. As the previous analysis has shown, UKIP support is driven primarily, though not exclusively, by Euroscepticism. Europe

is a central issue in European elections but is much less salient in domestic elections to the Westminster Parliament. In these latter contests where the issue of Europe is a less important factor, many UKIP voters may direct their support elsewhere.

Some clear evidence of this vote switching is revealed in the YouGov sample. When asked ‘how would you vote in a general election tomorrow’, only 40.1 per cent of UKIP supporters who voted for the party in the European election stated that they would also vote UKIP in a domestic general election. The Conservatives were by far the most popular alternative for such strategic UKIP voters in domestic elections, with 62 per cent of strategic UKIP voters claiming they would support the Conservatives in the next Westminster election.<sup>14</sup> This reveals how the UKIP electorate is comprised of two parts: a smaller group of core supporters (40 per cent of the total UKIP vote) who support UKIP in all elections and a larger periphery of strategic supporters who vote UKIP only in European elections, most of whom switch to the Conservatives in general elections.<sup>15</sup>

At the outset we hypothesized that core supporters of UKIP may be more concerned about the party’s main issue of Europe and more disaffected with mainstream parties than strategic supporters who abandon UKIP at general elections. In contrast, the latter may be voters who retain links to mainstream parties but are motivated to defect in EP elections by an instrumental desire to register their opposition to the EU. We test these hypotheses in Table 5 by replicating the logistic regression analyses conducted in Table 4 to examine predictors of loyalty to UKIP in general elections among the total sample of European Parliament UKIP voters. The dependent variable here is scored 1 for voters loyal to UKIP in European and general elections and 0 for those who support the party in European Parliament elections but

switch to another party in general elections. The models replicate those presented in Table 4, but the racism model is dropped as it has no significant effect in this case.

**Insert Table 5 about here**

The results confirm our expectation that these two types of UKIP voters are quite distinct, both in terms of their demographics and attitudes. The social background model reveals that core UKIP supporters are relatively more likely to be working class, to report difficulty living comfortably on their current income, and to report growing up in a Labour household than those who switch their votes at general elections. Core supporters are also slightly less likely than strategic supporters to read anti-immigrant papers, however both groups are much more likely than the broader sample to read such papers.<sup>16</sup> These demographic differences suggest a core support for UKIP which is more akin to the support base for the BNP: economically struggling working class voters from traditional Labour backgrounds.

In Model 2 we add Euroscepticism and find little evidence that more intense levels of Euroscepticism produce stronger loyalty to UKIP: core supporters are only slightly more Eurosceptic than strategic supporters and this effect becomes insignificant once other attitudes are controlled for in Model 3. This latter model reveals that the distinctive motivations of core UKIP supporters are instead on the issues of populism and xenophobia. These core supporters are much more dissatisfied with the mainstream political elite than strategic supporters who intend to switch their allegiance to another party, and are also more hostile to immigrants. These two types

of supporters are also distinguishable by their attitudes toward the two main parties: core supporters are hostile to the Conservative Party and regard it as a party that either has never represented their interests or has ceased to do so; strategic supporters express quite positive views toward the Conservatives. By contrast, core supporters have more positive feelings toward Labour; they are less likely than strategic supporters to regard the centre-left party as a party that ‘never cared about people like me’.

Adding in controls for attitudes in Model 3 produces some important changes to the pattern of social background effects: age and gender both emerge as significant predictors in this model. The age effect is nonlinear and suggests that younger respondents are more likely to be core UKIP supporters than we would expect from their attitudes. This effect is concentrated among the youngest cohorts, particularly those under 35 years old. One plausible explanation for this is the decline in partisan identification among younger voters. Older UKIP voters are more likely to have an established attachment to a political party (usually the Conservatives) and at general elections this continued partisan attachment may be sufficient to induce them to return to the mainstream fold. In contrast, younger voters who are less likely to feel a strong affinity for any of the main parties will not be moved by such concerns and therefore remain loyal to their preferred minor party even in general elections

The gender difference between core and strategic UKIP should not be interpreted as suggesting that core UKIP supporters are predominantly female. In fact, both types of UKIP supporter are more likely to be male but strategic support for UKIP is much more male dominated than its core support. Only 41 per cent of strategic UKIP voters are women compared with 48 per cent of core UKIP voters. Once we control for other attitudes and background circumstances, we thus find that

men more likely to engage in strategic UKIP voting while women are more likely to remain loyal to the party. One possible explanation for this finding is that strategic defection is more common among voters with higher levels of political interest, engagement, and efficacy as it requires a high level of knowledge about the parties and their positions and the relative stakes in different election contexts. Those who believe that their strategic defection will make a difference will be more motivated to engage in this activity. Previous research has shown that men have higher levels of political knowledge, engagement and efficacy than women, which may account for this difference in behaviour (Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997). A second possibility is that UKIP's core support base consists of women who might otherwise be attracted to the extreme right but are put off by the BNP's reputation for violence and extremism. Previous research reveals that BNP voting is a largely male phenomenon, even though the principal motivations for BNP support – racism, xenophobia and dissatisfaction with mainstream political elites – are nearly as common amongst women as amongst men (Ford, 2010).

In summary, at the 2009 European elections UKIP rallied support based on an uneasy coalition of two very different groups. The 'strategic' UKIP voter is typically an affluent middle class, middle aged Conservative-leaning man who votes instrumentally for UKIP in European Parliament elections to express hostility to the EU but retains positive feelings towards the political mainstream, and returns to the Conservative Party at general elections. By contrast, the 'core' UKIP voter is typically a younger working class man or woman who is struggling financially. Though his family background and traditional loyalties lie with Labour he is now deeply disaffected about the mainstream political establishment and alarmed about immigration. Such a profile has a lot of similarities with the profile of extreme right

BNP supporters (Cutts et al. 2011) and indeed the profile of populist radical right supporters in other European states (see Mudde 2007).

The contrasting profile of these two types of supporters is illustrated in Table 6. Core and strategic supporters of UKIP are clearly differentiated in terms of their demographics and attitudes. Core supporters share many demographic features with BNP supporters – they are more likely to be working class, to recall growing up in Labour supporting household and to report struggling to live on their current incomes. Like BNP voters they also express higher than average levels of racism, xenophobia and populist disaffection with the political mainstream, though in all these cases they are somewhat more moderate than BNP voters. Core UKIP supporters, however, are much older than BNP supporters and more likely to live in the South. Core UKIP supporters are also much more likely to be women. UKIP then is mobilizing a core support base that has a similar demographic profile and set of concerns to the electorate of the extreme right BNP. However, UKIP seems to have mobilized a broader and somewhat more moderate radical right electorate – core UKIP supporters outnumber BNP supporters two to one in our sample – including winning over significant numbers from groups, such as women and the old, who tend to shun the BNP. This evidence suggests that in domestic elections UKIP is emerging as a ‘polite alternative’ to the BNP that is mobilizing many of the same concerns but is free of the extremist reputation (Goodwin, 2010).

In contrast, the strategic supporter of UKIP who only supports the party in European Parliament elections is a different animal and is closer in background and attitudes to the Conservatives than the BNP; strategic supporters are more middle class, more likely to have grown up in a Conservative household and more financially secure. Though strategic supporters express higher levels of racism and xenophobia



than Conservative voters these levels are lower than core UKIP and BNP supporters. Strategic supporters do not, however, share in the populist rejection of mainstream parties that is expressed strongly by BNP and core UKIP supporters. Strategic UKIP voters are, unsurprisingly, much more Eurosceptic than Conservative voters. They are also older and more likely to be men. In sum, the strategic UKIP electorate appears to be a large grouping of older, right-wing Conservative men who use European Parliament elections to register their hostility to the EU.

## **Conclusions**

At the outset of the article we put forward three distinct models to account for support for the UK Independence Party (UKIP) in a second-order European election: socio-structural, strategic and sincere voting approaches. Our analysis of the background characteristics of UKIP voters finds that the popular description of these supporters as ‘angry old men’ does contain an element of truth, although ‘insecure old men’ is a more accurate description. The UKIP vote is concentrated among men, older generations, the financially insecure and citizens who read anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic newspapers. With regard to the attitudinal drivers of UKIP support, Euroscepticism is by far the most important predictor of this support. The party’s strong performance in elections to the European Parliament is thus more a reflection of the strength of British Euroscepticism than evidence that UKIP has successfully mobilized concerns over other social and political issues.

However, we also find evidence that other motivations are driving UKIP support. While traditional racist hostility is a less important driver of support for

UKIP than it is for the BNP, political dissatisfaction and xenophobia remain important drivers of support for the party. Importantly, it may well be that the context of the campaign, which has been shown to have a significant effect on defection rates (Hobolt et al. 2009), is playing an important role. As noted at the outset, the ‘expenses scandal’ dominated media coverage of the campaign and it appears likely that this event fuelled protest sentiment or abstention.

Our data also allowed an examination of ‘core’ and ‘strategic’ UKIP voters which provides strong evidence that that the party has mobilized a coalition comprised of two relatively distinct types of supporters. Strategic support for UKIP is concentrated among more affluent middle class voters who view EP elections as an opportunity to register their dislike of the EU. Some suggest citizens may use second-order elections in an expressive tactical manner, whereby they use their vote ‘to warn their own party to mend its ways’ (Heath et al. 1999: 407). We find evidence that disillusioned Conservatives are making an expressive tactical choice to vote UKIP as a means of sending a message to their main party of choice on the issue of Europe. More than half of UKIP’s support in 2009 came from such strategic defectors.

By contrast, the ‘core’ UKIP electorate who remain loyal to the party in both first-order and second-order elections are a more economically marginal and politically disaffected group. Their social profile overlaps with that of the extreme right BNP who have also mobilised economically insecure working class men (Ford & Goodwin 2010). However, when set against their more northern and working class BNP rivals, core supporters of UKIP are older, more moderate in their views (particularly on race) more likely to be based in the more prosperous southern regions of England, and more likely to be women. In domestic politics UKIP may be consolidating support as a ‘polite alternative’ to the BNP, mobilising the same

concerns over immigration and disaffection with mainstream politicians. However, given that UKIP is not handicapped like the BNP by a reputation for violent extremism it can potentially mobilise a larger electorate: the core UKIP support base outnumbered BNP supporters in our sample more than two to one.

What are the implications for UKIP and the wider arena of minor party politics? In terms of intra-party politics our evidence reveals that UKIP is based on an uneasy coalition. On one side are highly disaffected, more working class and more intolerant core UKIP supporters who, while strongly Eurosceptic, are also driven by traditional extreme right issues such as immigration and hostility to elites. On the other side are more affluent right-wing Conservative voters who defect strategically to UKIP in European Parliament elections to register their opposition to the EU. The more strident Euroscepticism of the Conservative Party under David Cameron who has withdrawn the party from the pro-integration European People's Party, appointed the strongly Eurosceptic William Hague as foreign secretary and fielded the most Eurosceptic slate of Westminster candidates in recent history suggest the centre-right has recognized the discontent among strategic UKIP supporters and is attempting to win them back. If this is correct then it suggests that strategic voting in second-order elections can indeed succeed in 'sending a message' to mainstream parties and deliver a change in policy stance. Whether changes implemented by the Conservatives will be sufficient to satisfy UKIP defectors remains to be seen, but UKIP will almost certainly find it harder to mobilize hostility to Europe under a Conservative government that is dominated by figures hostile to further European integration than it did in the past thirteen years of a Labour government which was broadly sympathetic to the EU.

However, our analysis also suggests that UKIP are likely to retain a core base of loyalists who are too deeply disaffected with mainstream politics and angry about immigration and the changes they believe it has brought to be won over by shifts in policy or a change of government. The more recent shift by UKIP toward these latter issues suggests the party is keenly aware of the potential for these more divisive issues to recruit a more stable and enduring coalition of voters. Indeed, UKIP is well positioned to recruit support from the BNP which failed to engineer a wider breakthrough at the general election in 2010 and has since been weakened by internal factionalism (Goodwin 2011; see also Ford & Goodwin 2011).<sup>17</sup> In contrast to the BNP, UKIP possesses a ‘reputational shield’ in that it holds its roots in a Eurosceptic tradition that is widely regarded as legitimate in British politics and hence enjoys regular access to mainstream media and political elites (Ivarsflaten 2006). In other words, our analysis provides evidence to support the earlier suggestion that UKIP may ‘act as a bridge to the supporters of the main parties who identify with the policies of the BNP but who do not wish to do so directly’ (John & Margetts 2009: 508). At the same time, however, if UKIP continues to put strong emphasis on divisive issues such as immigration and Islam then it risks alienating strategic supporters who are primarily motivated to defect from the Conservatives by their Euroscepticism. In the future, much will depend upon how the party manages this difficult trade-off: while much of its current European Parliament support comes from Eurosceptic but otherwise mainstream Conservative voters its best prospect for developing a lasting electoral presence under a more Eurosceptic Conservative government is to focus instead on mobilizing the angry, alienated, anti-immigrant voters who have been successfully mobilized elsewhere in Europe by the radical right, and who currently form the core of the party’s support base in domestic elections.

**Table 1**  
**Support for UKIP in House of Commons and European Parliament (EP)**  
**Elections**

| <b>Election year</b>       | <b>Votes received<br/>(% of vote)</b> | <b>Constituencies<br/>contested* (% of total)</b> | <b>Votes per candidate</b> |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <i>House of Commons</i>    |                                       |   |                            |
| <b>1997</b>                | 103,817<br>(0.3)                      | 183<br>(28)                                       | 567                        |
| <b>2001</b>                | 375,122<br>(1.5)                      | 393<br>(60)                                       | 955                        |
| <b>2005</b>                | 605,973<br>(2.2)                      | 496<br>(77)                                       | 1,222                      |
| <b>2010</b>                | 920,334<br>(3.1)                      | 572<br>(88)                                       | 1,609                      |
| <i>European Parliament</i> |                                       |   |                            |
|                            | <b>Votes received</b>                 | <b>Seats won</b>                                  | <b>Best region (%)</b>     |
| <b>1994</b>                | 150,251<br>(1.0)                      | 0   | -                          |
| <b>1999</b>                | 696,057 (7.0)                         | 3   | South West<br>(10.6)       |
| <b>2004</b>                | 2,650,768 (16.1)                      | 12  | East Midlands<br>(26.1)    |
| <b>2009</b>                | 2,498,226 (16.5)                      | 13  | South West<br>(22.1)       |

\*Out of a total of 659 in 1997 and 2001; 646 in 2005 and 650 in 2010

**Table 2**  
**Social background of party supporters and non-voters in the 2009 European Parliament elections**

|                                       | UKIP      | BNP       | Cons      | Lab       | LD        | Non-Voters | Full sample |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                         |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Male                                  | <b>55</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>45</b> | <b>53</b> | 48        | <b>46</b>  | 48          |
| <b>Age</b>                            |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| 18-29                                 | <b>10</b> | <b>17</b> | 22        | 22        | 23        | <b>30</b>  | 21          |
| 30-44                                 | <b>20</b> | <b>30</b> | 27        | 25        | 26        | 28         | 26          |
| 45-59                                 | <b>35</b> | 31        | 28        | 31        | 28        | 28         | 30          |
| 60 plus                               | <b>36</b> | 22        | 24        | 23        | 23        | <b>15</b>  | 23          |
| <b>Region*</b>                        |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| North of England                      | 23        | <b>32</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>32</b> | 24        | 27         | 24          |
| Midlands                              | <b>20</b> | <b>22</b> | 17        | 16        | 16        | 17         | 16          |
| South of England                      | <b>39</b> | <b>27</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>23</b> | 34        | 31         | 33          |
| London                                | <b>10</b> | 12        | <b>16</b> | 12        | 12        | 11         | 13          |
| Wales                                 | 4         | 4         | 4         | 6         | 5         | 6          | 5           |
| Scotland                              | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>  | <b>4</b>  | <b>11</b> | 7         | 9          | 9           |
| <b>Social Class</b>                   |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Professional/Managerial               | 35        | <b>23</b> | <b>42</b> | 36        | <b>42</b> | <b>28</b>  | 37          |
| Routine Non-Manual                    | 26        | <b>25</b> | 28        | 28        | 30        | 30         | 28          |
| Skilled Manual                        | <b>17</b> | <b>23</b> | 10        | 12        | 9         | 12         | 11          |
| Semi/Unskilled/Never worked           | 12        | <b>20</b> | <b>9</b>  | 14        | 10        | <b>18</b>  | 12          |
| Other                                 | 11        | 11        | 11        | 10        | 10        | 13         | 11          |
| <b>Political Background</b>           |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Parental Socialisation (Conservative) | <b>32</b> | 25        | <b>47</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>23</b> | <b>21</b>  | 27          |
| Parental Socialisation (Labour)       | 42        | <b>47</b> | <b>25</b> | <b>66</b> | 38        | 41         | 41          |
| Read Anti-Immigrant Papers            | <b>49</b> | <b>49</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>26</b> | 38         | 36          |
| <b>Economic Expectations</b>          |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Fear of losing job in next 12 months  | <b>45</b> | <b>49</b> | 42        | <b>36</b> | 38        | 42         | 40          |
| Not enough money to live comfortably  | <b>59</b> | <b>74</b> | 50        | 42        | 47        | <b>57</b>  | 52          |
| Resp Finances worsen in next 12 mths  | <b>55</b> | <b>53</b> | 42        | <b>28</b> | 37        | 42         | 41          |
| <hr/>                                 |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| <i>N (unweighted)</i>                 | 4306      | 985       | 6176      | 4546      | 4289      | 3099       |             |

All figures are weighted percentages. Bold figures are significantly different from the overall sample mean ( $p < 0.05$ ).

\*North of England: North East, North West and Yorkshire and Humberside; Midlands: West Midlands and East Midlands;

South of England: Eastern, South East, South West

**Table 3**  
**Attitudes of party supporters and non-voters in the 2009 European Parliament Elections**

| % agree or strongly agree                         | UKIP      | BNP       | Cons      | Lab       | LD        | Non-Voters | Full sample |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| <b><i>Euroscepticism</i></b>                      |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| EU promotes prosperity in Europe*                 | <b>73</b> | <b>61</b> | <b>45</b> | <b>17</b> | <b>20</b> | 33         | 37          |
| Britain should leave the EU                       | <b>82</b> | <b>70</b> | <b>44</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>21</b> | 38         | 39          |
| <b><i>Populism</i></b>                            |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Most Politicians are personally corrupt           | <b>67</b> | <b>78</b> | 50        | <b>36</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>64</b>  | 54          |
| Don't trust local MP to tell the truth**          | <b>73</b> | <b>81</b> | 60        | <b>48</b> | 60        | <b>71</b>  | 63          |
| No difference between the main parties            | <b>60</b> | <b>69</b> | <b>24</b> | <b>30</b> | 45        | <b>62</b>  | 46          |
| <b><i>Xenophobia</i></b>                          |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Govt should encourage imms to leave Britain       | <b>43</b> | <b>72</b> | <b>31</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>16</b> | 27         | 27          |
| Immigration not helped economy <sup>+</sup>       | <b>72</b> | <b>82</b> | <b>56</b> | <b>32</b> | <b>32</b> | 49         | 48          |
| Further immigration to the UK should be halted    | <b>87</b> | <b>94</b> | <b>68</b> | <b>46</b> | <b>43</b> | 65         | 61          |
| Councils allow imms to jump housing queue         | <b>77</b> | <b>87</b> | <b>64</b> | <b>43</b> | <b>43</b> | 59         | 57          |
| Immigrants responsible for most crime             | <b>32</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>12</b> | <b>10</b> | 21         | 19          |
| <b><i>Disaffection about the main parties</i></b> |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Cons never cared about people like me             | <b>29</b> | <b>43</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>70</b> | <b>46</b> | 36         | 36          |
| Cons no longer care about people like me          | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b> | <b>3</b>  | 7         | 8         | 10         | 8           |
| Lab never cared about people like me              | <b>35</b> | <b>31</b> | <b>42</b> | <b>1</b>  | <b>16</b> | 21         | 23          |
| Lab no longer care about people like me           | <b>54</b> | <b>54</b> | <b>46</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>54</b> | 42         | 45          |
| <b><i>Racism</i></b>                              |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Employers should favour white applicants          | <b>22</b> | <b>49</b> | 15        | 12        | <b>8</b>  | 16         | 15          |
| Black people less intelligent <sup>++</sup>       | <b>17</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>17</b> | 11        | <b>9</b>  | 15         | 13          |
| Non-white citizens not as British                 | <b>18</b> | <b>44</b> | 13        | <b>8</b>  | 7         | 14         | 12          |
| <b><i>Islamophobia</i></b>                        |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Islam a serious danger to Western civilization    | <b>64</b> | <b>79</b> | <b>49</b> | <b>37</b> | <b>31</b> | 44         | 44          |
| <b><i>Homophobia</i></b>                          |           |           |           |           |           |            |             |
| Oppose civil partnerships for gay couples         | <b>41</b> | <b>43</b> | 28        | <b>18</b> | <b>15</b> | 21         | 24          |
| <i>N (unweighted)</i>                             | 4306      | 985       | 6176      | 4546      | 4289      | 3099       |             |

All figures are weighted percentages. Bold figures are significantly different from overall sample mean

\*% Disagree or strongly disagree

\*\*% saying "do not trust much" or "do not trust at all"

+% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement "Immigration has helped Britain's economy grow faster than in would have done"

++ % disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement "There is no difference in intelligence between the average black Briton and the average white Briton"

Sample size of all voters = 29169. All figures are weighted percentages.

**Table 4**  
**Models of UKIP support**

|   | <i>Model 1: Social background</i> | <i>Model 2: Euroscepticism</i> | <i>Model 3: All attitudes</i> | <i>Model 4: Racism added</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Intercept                                     | <b>-4.68 (0.26)</b>               | <b>-3.67 (0.28)</b>            | <b>-3.94(0.31)</b>            | <b>-3.94 (0.31)</b>          |
| Male  | <b>0.50 (0.07)</b>                | 0.27 (0.18)                    | <b>0.41(0.05)</b>             | <b>0.42 (0.05)</b>           |
| Age   | <b>0.05 (0.01)</b>                | <b>0.02 (0.01)</b>             | 0.02(0.01)                    | 0.01 (0.01)                  |
| Age squared/1000                              | <b>-0.21 (0.10)</b>               | -0.07 (0.10)                   | 0.005 (0.11)                  | 0.001 (0.11)                 |
| <b><i>Region (ref: North of England)</i></b>  |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Midlands                                      | <b>0.19 (0.06)</b>                | <b>0.20 (0.07)</b>             | <b>0.20(0.07)</b>             | <b>0.20 (0.07)</b>           |
| South of England                              | <b>0.19 (0.05)</b>                | <b>0.18 (0.06)</b>             | <b>0.20(0.06)</b>             | <b>0.19 (0.06)</b>           |
| London  | <b>-0.15 (0.07)</b>               | -0.11 (0.08)                   | -0.10(0.08)                   | -0.09 (0.08)                 |
| Wales   | <b>-0.28 (0.11)</b>               | -0.22 (0.12)                   | -0.20(0.12)                   | -0.22 (0.12)                 |
| Scotland                                      | <b>-1.12 (0.10)</b>               | <b>-1.02 (0.11)</b>            | <b>-0.99(0.11)</b>            | <b>-0.99 (0.11)</b>          |
| <b><i>Social Class (ref: Prof/Man)</i></b>    |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Routine Non-Manual                            | 0.06 (0.05)                       | -0.06 (0.06)                   | -0.03(0.06)                   | -0.03 (0.06)                 |
| Skilled Manual                                | <b>0.30 (0.07)</b>                | -0.02 (0.07)                   | -0.06(0.07)                   | -0.06 (0.07)                 |
| Semi/Unskilled/Never worked                   | 0.10 (0.07)                       | <b>-0.17 (0.08)</b>            | <b>-0.19(0.09)</b>            | <b>-0.18 (0.09)</b>          |
| Other   | 0.10 (0.07)                       | -0.08 (0.07)                   | -0.07(0.08)                   | -0.07 (0.07)                 |
| <b><i>Political Background</i></b>            |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Parental Socialisation (Conservative)         | <b>0.17 (0.05)</b>                | 0.07 (0.06)                    | 0.01(0.06)                    | 0.02 (0.06)                  |
| Parental Socialisation (Labour)               | -0.005 (0.05)                     | -0.04 (0.06)                   | -0.05(0.06)                   | -0.06 (0.06)                 |
| Read Anti-Immigrant Papers                    | <b>0.55 (0.04)</b>                | <b>0.16 (0.05)</b>             | 0.09(0.05)                    | 0.09 (0.05)                  |
| <b><i>Economic Expectations</i></b>           |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Fear losing job in next 12 months             | 0.08 (0.04)                       | 0.06 (0.05)                    | 0.01(0.05)                    | 0.01 (0.05)                  |
| Can't live comfortably                        | <b>0.17 (0.04)</b>                | <b>-0.11 (0.05)</b>            | <b>-0.17(0.05)</b>            | <b>-0.17 (0.05)</b>          |
| Finances worsen in next 12 mths               | <b>0.37 (0.04)</b>                | <b>0.20 (0.05)</b>             | <b>0.15(0.05)</b>             | <b>0.15 (0.05)</b>           |
| <b><i>Attitude scales</i></b>                 |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Euroscepticism                                |                                   | <b>1.23 (0.03)</b>             | <b>1.10(0.04)</b>             | <b>1.09 (0.03)</b>           |
| Xenophobia                                    |                                   |                                | <b>0.10 (0.04)</b>            | <b>0.16 (0.04)</b>           |
| Populism                                      |                                   |                                | <b>0.13(0.03)</b>             | <b>0.12 (0.03)</b>           |
| Racism  |                                   |                                |                               | <b>-0.10 (0.03)</b>          |
| <b><i>Disaffection about main parties</i></b> |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Cons never cared                              |                                   |                                | -0.003(0.06)                  | -0.007 (0.06)                |
| Cons no longer care                           |                                   |                                | <b>0.48(0.07)</b>             | <b>0.49 (0.07)</b>           |
| Lab never cared                               |                                   |                                | <b>0.58(0.08)</b>             | <b>0.58 (0.08)</b>           |
| Lab no longer care                            |                                   |                                | <b>0.67(0.08)</b>             | <b>0.66 (0.08)</b>           |
| <b><i>Additional attitudes</i></b>            |                                   |                                |                               |                              |
| Islam a threat                                |                                   |                                | -0.02(0.02)                   | -0.03 (0.02)                 |
| Oppose civil partnerships                     |                                   |                                | 0.02(0.02)                    | 0.03 (0.02)                  |
| Jewish/Communist conspiracy                   |                                   |                                | <b>-0.25(0.06)</b>            | <b>-0.22 (0.06)</b>          |

N

32268

31595

30482

30482

Models present results from logistic regression analyses, with multiple imputation of missing data

Dependent variable: vote intention, with UKIP voters coded 1 and all other voters coded 0.

Figures in bold are statistically significant (p<0.05), standard errors in parentheses.



**Table 5**  
**Models of Core vs Strategic UKIP support**

|   | <i>Model 1: Social background</i> | <i>Model 2: Euroscepticism</i> | <i>Model 3: All attitudes</i> |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Intercept                                     | 0.26(0.47)                        | 0.39(0.48)                     | 0.71(0.57)                    |
| Male  | -0.28(0.31)                       | -0.28(0.32)                    | <b>-0.35(0.09)</b>            |
| Age   | -0.03(0.02)                       | <b>-0.04(0.02)</b>             | <b>-0.05(0.02)</b>            |
| Age squared/1000                              | 0.24(0.18)                        | 0.30(0.18)                     | <b>0.47(0.20)</b>             |
| <b><i>Region (ref: North of England)</i></b>  |                                   |                                |                               |
| Midlands                                      | 0.09(0.11)                        | -0.08(0.12)                    | -0.05(0.12)                   |
| South of England                              | 0.002(0.09)                       | -0.01(0.09)                    | 0.11(0.10)                    |
| London  | <b>-0.44(0.14)</b>                | <b>-0.44(0.14)</b>             | -0.28(0.15)                   |
| Wales   | <b>0.50(0.20)</b>                 | <b>0.50(0.20)</b>              | <b>0.53(0.20)</b>             |
| Scotland                                      | -0.39(0.21)                       | -0.39(0.21)                    | -0.41(0.22)                   |
| <b><i>Social Class (ref: Prof/Man)</i></b>    |                                   |                                |                               |
| Routine Non-Manual                            | <b>0.21(0.10)</b>                 | <b>0.21(0.10)</b>              | 0.08(0.10)                    |
| Skilled Manual                                | <b>0.55(0.11)</b>                 | <b>0.54(0.11)</b>              | <b>0.35(0.12)</b>             |
| Semi/Unskilled/Never worked                   | <b>0.62(0.13)</b>                 | <b>0.61(0.13)</b>              | <b>0.31(0.14)</b>             |
| Other   | <b>0.37(0.12)</b>                 | <b>0.37(0.12)</b>              | <b>0.31(0.13)</b>             |
| <b><i>Political Background</i></b>            |                                   |                                |                               |
| Parental Socialisation (Conservative)         | 0.09(0.09)                        | 0.08(0.10)                     | 0.18(0.10)                    |
| Parental Socialisation (Labour)               | <b>0.47(0.09)</b>                 | <b>0.47(0.09)</b>              | <b>0.32(0.10)</b>             |
| Read Anti-Immigrant Papers                    | <b>-0.19(0.07)</b>                | <b>-0.19(0.07)</b>             | -0.12(0.08)                   |
| <b><i>Economic Expectations</i></b>           |                                   |                                |                               |
| Fear losing job in next 12 months             | 0.01(0.08)                        | 0.01(0.08)                     | -0.05(0.08)                   |
| Can't live comfortably                        | <b>0.38(0.08)</b>                 | <b>0.38(0.08)</b>              | <b>0.23(0.09)</b>             |
| Finances worsen in next 12 mths               | -0.01(0.08)                       | -0.03(0.08)                    | -0.11(0.09)                   |
| <b><i>Attitude scales</i></b>                 |                                   |                                |                               |
| Euroscepticism                                |                                   | <b>0.11(0.05)</b>              | 0.03(0.03)                    |
| Xenophobia                                    |                                   |                                | <b>0.17(0.07)</b>             |
| Populism                                      |                                   |                                | <b>0.48(0.05)</b>             |
| <b><i>Disaffection about main parties</i></b> |                                   |                                |                               |
| Cons never cared                              |                                   |                                | <b>0.61(0.09)</b>             |
| Cons no longer care                           |                                   |                                | <b>0.62(0.11)</b>             |
| Lab never cared                               |                                   |                                | <b>-0.46(0.15)</b>            |
| Lab no longer care                            |                                   |                                | -0.10(0.14)                   |
| <b><i>Additional attitudes</i></b>            |                                   |                                |                               |
| Islam a threat                                |                                   |                                | -0.04(0.04)                   |
| Oppose civil partnerships                     |                                   |                                | -0.02(0.03)                   |
| Jewish/Communist conspiracy                   |                                   |                                | 0.15(0.10)                    |
| <hr/>   |                                   |                                |                               |
| <i>Model fit (f-statistic)</i>                | <b>8.1</b>                        | <b>8.2</b>                     | <b>13.3</b>                   |
| <i>N</i>                                      | 4601                              | 4577                           | 4467                          |

Models present results from logistic regression analyses, with multiple imputation of missing data  
 Dependent variable: “core” UKIP support (support for UKIP in both Westminster and European Parliament elections) is coded as 1, “strategic” UKIP support (support for UKIP in European Parliament elections only) is coded as 0  
 Figures in bold are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), standard errors in parentheses

**Table 6**  
**Core and strategic UKIP supporters compared with Conservative and BNP supporters**

|  | UKIP<br>core | BNP         | UKIP<br>strat | Cons        | <i>Full<br/>sample</i> |
|--|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                          |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Male                                   | 51           | <b>61</b>   | <b>57</b>     | <b>45</b>   | 48                     |
| <b>Age</b>                             |              |             |               |             |                        |
| 18-29                                  | <b>11</b>    | <b>17</b>   | <b>9</b>      | 22          | 21                     |
| 60 plus                                | <b>35</b>    | 22          | <b>37</b>     | 24          | 23                     |
| <b>Region*</b>                         |              |             |               |             |                        |
| North of England                       | 26           | <b>32</b>   | 23            | <b>19</b>   | 24                     |
| South of England                       | <b>39</b>    | <b>27</b>   | <b>39</b>     | <b>38</b>   | 33                     |
| <b>Social Class</b>                    |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Professional/Managerial                | <b>28</b>    | <b>23</b>   | <b>39</b>     | <b>42</b>   | 37                     |
| Skilled/Unskilled manual/never worked  | <b>34</b>    | <b>43</b>   | 25            | <b>19</b>   | 23                     |
| <b>Political Background</b>            |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Parental Socialisation (Conservative)  | <b>28</b>    | 25          | <b>34</b>     | <b>47</b>   | 27                     |
| Parental Socialisation (Labour)        | <b>48</b>    | <b>47</b>   | 38            | <b>25</b>   | 41                     |
| Read Anti-Immigrant Papers             | <b>47</b>    | <b>49</b>   | <b>51</b>     | <b>51</b>   | 36                     |
| <b>Economic Expectations</b>           |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Not enough money to live comfortably   | <b>65</b>    | <b>74</b>   | <b>54</b>     | 50          | 52                     |
| <b>Attitude scales**</b>               |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Euroscepticism                         | <b>0.95</b>  | <b>0.77</b> | <b>0.90</b>   | <b>0.25</b> | 0                      |
| Xenophobia                             | <b>0.75</b>  | <b>1.13</b> | <b>0.58</b>   | <b>0.32</b> | 0                      |
| Populism                               | <b>0.72</b>  | <b>0.88</b> | 0.20          | -0.21       | 0                      |
| Racism                                 | <b>0.50</b>  | <b>1.22</b> | <b>0.35</b>   | 0.19        | 0                      |
| <b>Disaffection about main parties</b> |              |             |               |             |                        |
| Conservatives never cared              | <b>39</b>    | <b>43</b>   | 22            | 2           | 36                     |
| Labour never cared                     | <b>28</b>    | <b>31</b>   | <b>38</b>     | <b>42</b>   | 23                     |
| <hr/>                                  |              |             |               |             |                        |
| <i>N (unweighted)</i>                  | 2023         | 985         | 2578          | 6176        | 32,268                 |

All figures are weighted percentages, except attitude scales which are weighted means. Bold figures are significantly different from the overall sample mean ( $p < 0.05$ ).

\*North of England: North East, North West and Yorkshire and Humberside; Midlands: West Midlands and East Midlands;

South of England: Eastern, South East, South West

\*\*Normalised scales – mean is set to 0, standard deviation to 1

**Figure 1**  
**Estimated impact of different predictors on UKIP support**

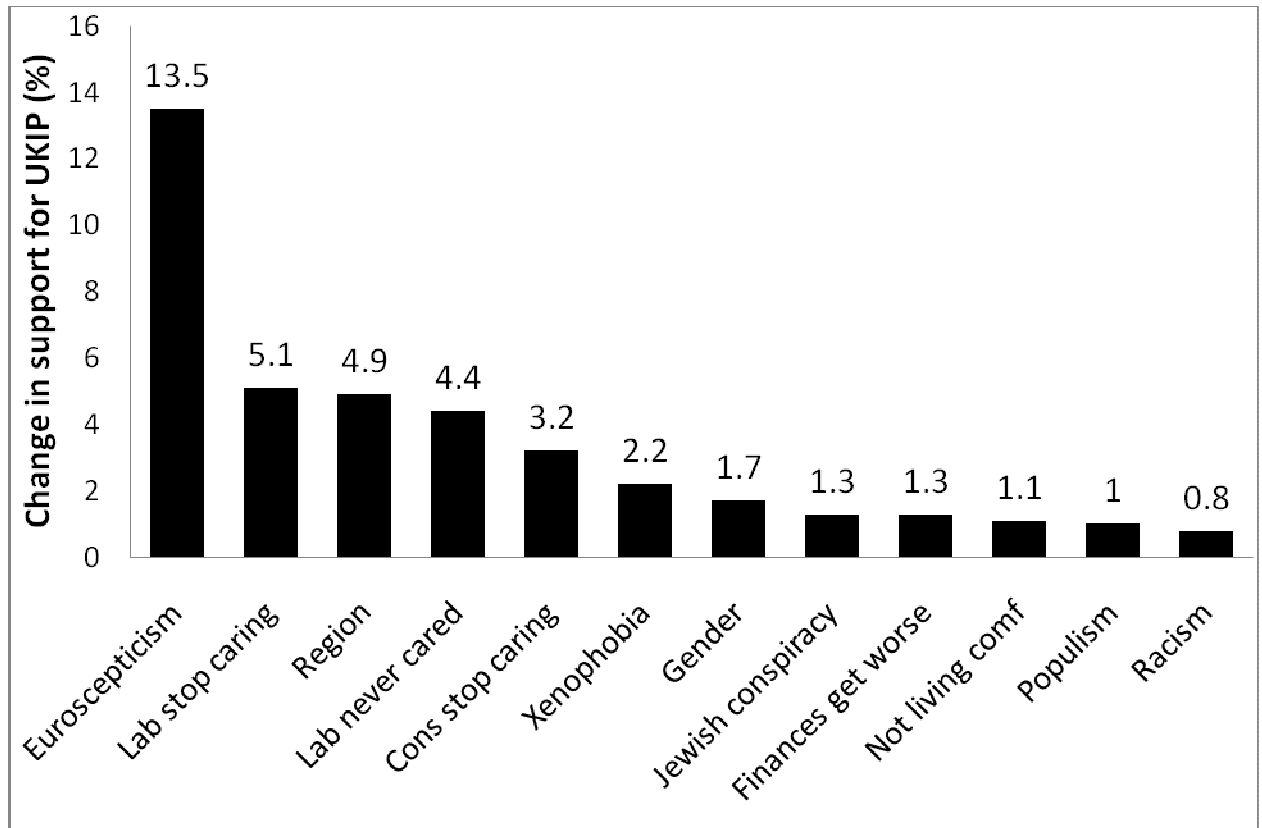


Figure 1 shows impact of a change from 1 standard deviation below the mean score on each of the four attitudinal factors (Euroscepticism, Xenophobia, Protest, Racism) to one standard deviation about the mean, and of changes from a zero to a 1 score on the dummy variables. The region effect shows the difference between the lowest support region (Scotland) and the highest support region (the Midlands). Other predictors are held at their means.

# Appendix

Table A 1

## Question wordings for attitude factor questions

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### *Xenophobia*

All further immigration to the UK should be halted  
Local councils normally allow immigrant families to jump the queue in allocating council homes  
Immigration in recent years has helped Britain's economy grow faster than it would have done  
Most crimes in Britain are committed by immigrants  
The Government should encourage immigrants and their families to leave Britain (including family members who were born in the UK)

### *Populism*

Most British politicians are personally corrupt  
How much do you trust each of the following to tell the truth? Your local MP\*  
There is no real difference these days between Britain's three main parties

### *Racism*

When employers recruit new workers, they should favour white applicants over non-white applicants  
There is no difference in intelligence between the average black Briton and the average white Briton  
Non-white British citizens who were born in this country are just as 'British' as white citizens born in this country

### *Euro scepticism*

The existence of the EU promotes prosperity throughout Europe  
The UK should withdraw completely from the European Union

**Table A 2****Factor loadings for attitude factors, confirmatory factor analysis**

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|   | <i>Loading on factor</i> |
|---|--------------------------|
| <b><i>Xenophobia</i></b>                            |                          |
| Factor eigenvalue: 3.30 (66% of variance explained) |                          |
| Immigration should be halted                        | 0.88                     |
| Immigrants jump queue for council housing           | 0.74                     |
| Immigration is good for the economy (R)             | 0.80                     |
| Immigrants commit most crime                        | 0.80                     |
| Govt should encourage immigrants to leave Britain   | 0.83                     |
| <b><i>Populism</i></b>                              |                          |
| Factor eigenvalue: 1.60 (53% of variance explained) |                          |
| Most Politicians are personally corrupt             | 0.80                     |
| Don't trust local MP to tell the truth              | 0.75                     |
| No difference between the main parties              | 0.63                     |
| <b><i>Racism</i></b>                                |                          |
| Factor eigenvalue: 1.90 (63% of variance explained) |                          |
| Employers should favour white applicants            | 0.80                     |
| Black people less intelligent                       | 0.77                     |
| Non-white citizens not as British                   | 0.82                     |
| <b><i>Euro scepticism</i></b>                       |                          |
| Factor eigenvalue: 1.73 (86% of variance explained) |                          |
| EU promotes prosperity in Europe                    | 0.93                     |
| Britain should leave the EU                         | 0.93                     |
| Pw correlation between two Euro scepticism items    | 0.73                     |

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*Note: (R) indicates reverse coding*

**Table A 3**  
**Pairwise correlations between the factors**

|                       | <b>Xenophobia</b> | <b>Racism</b> | <b>Populism</b> | <b>Euroscepticism</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Xenophobia</b>     | *                 |               |                 |                       |
| <b>Racism</b>         | 0.65              | *             |                 |                       |
| <b>Populism</b>       | 0.39              | 0.20          | *               |                       |
| <b>Euroscepticism</b> | 0.54              | 0.42          | 0.33            | *                     |

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the post-election British Election Study (BES) in 2005 included just 45 UKIP supporters (Borisjuk et al., 2007: 670), while a study of the earlier and also Eurosceptic Referendum Party (RP) was based on a sample of 34 respondents (Heath et al. 1998).

<sup>3</sup> The slogan ‘sod the lot’ (of mainstream politicians) featured prominently on UKIP election billboards during the European Parliament elections campaign.

<sup>4</sup> M. Kite (2009) ‘UKIP hopes to climb out of the wilderness’, *Daily Telegraph* 30 May 2009. Available online: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/5412129/Ukip-hopes-to-climb-out-of-the-wilderness.html> (accessed December 2 2009); ‘Farage: UKIP not just angry men’, BBC News May 10 2009. Available online: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/8042747.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/8042747.stm) (accessed December 2 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Comparisons of YouGov’s opt-in internet panels with traditional stratified random sample interview and random digit dial techniques have concluded that the biases introduced by this methodology are small, and are offset by the much larger sample sizes the internet methodology permits (Sanders et al. 2006).

<sup>6</sup> YouGov draws a sub-sample of the panel that is representative of the UK electorate by age, gender, social class and type of newspaper. Only this sub-sample has access to the questionnaire. Respondents can only answer this questionnaire once.

<sup>7</sup> To obtain voting intention all respondents were asked: ‘if you do vote, which party do you intend to vote for in the election to the European Parliament?’ 4168 (14.8%) respondents stated they would vote UKIP in the weighted sample – 16.7% of the total. This is close to the vote share of 16.5% that UKIP achieved in the election. Weighted vote shares of other parties in the sample were also close to the achieved shares in the outcome – 23.5% of YouGov respondents intended to vote for the Conservatives, who achieved 27.7%, 15.1% of respondents supported Labour (15.7% election result); while 15.1% said they would vote Liberal Democrat (13.7% election result). Weighted vote intentions for the Greens and the BNP were also within 2% of the subsequent election results.

<sup>8</sup> Full details of this factor analysis and the wording of questions included in each factor are provided in the appendix.

<sup>9</sup> We also tested models with and without xenophobia, to test for collinearity effects here. There was little evidence of any significant impact on the other coefficients.

<sup>10</sup> The imputation process was carried out using the “mi” suite of commands in Stata 11. Model fit statistics are not reported as standard measures of model fit in logistic regression models do not have a clear interpretation within the multiple imputation framework.

<sup>11</sup> The effects discussed in our analysis are, however, all also significant in listwise deletion models.

<sup>12</sup> More standard measures of model fit such as pseudo-R square cannot be straightforwardly computed for multiply imputed models, but in standard logistic models run by the authors using listwise deletion of missing data, the model fit improved dramatically when the Euroscepticism factor was included.

<sup>13</sup> The simulations estimate effects for a man from London with all other variables set at their means or at zero.

<sup>14</sup> The Westminster preferences of the remaining 40% of the strategic voter sample broke down as follows: 12% don’t know, 9% Lib Dem, 7 % Labour; 6% some other party and 4% said they would not vote

<sup>15</sup> There is also a smaller group of 295 voters who did not vote UKIP in the European Parliament elections but intended to support the party in the Westminster elections. This pattern of behaviour is more consistent with “core” UKIP support as it involves backing the party in elections it has no chance of winning. These individuals are therefore included in the “core” UKIP support base. Excluding them from the model does not significantly affect the findings

<sup>16</sup> 51 per cent of strategic UKIP supporters and 47 per cent of core UKIP supporters read such papers, compared to 36 per cent of the overall sample. The difference between the two groups of UKIP supporters is accounted for by the greater tendency of core UKIP supporters not to read any newspaper.

<sup>17</sup> At the 2010 general election the BNP polled 1.9 per cent of the total vote and, compared to the previous election in 2005, more than doubled its number of votes to 564,000. However, the party failed to achieve a significant electoral breakthrough in its two target seats of Barking (in outer-east London) and Stoke-on-Trent (in the Midlands) and several anticipated second place finishes. It also suffered a serious setback in local elections, losing 27 councillors, two thirds of their standing incumbents.