

Technology, Migrants or Offshoring: How the Perceived Source of Labour-Market Risks Shapes Policy Demands

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Abstract

We study whether, and how, perceived sources of labour-market risks (immigration, technological change, and offshoring) explain demand for different types of government intervention. Drawing on deservingness and in-/outgroup arguments, we expect that individuals favour interventions that not only benefit themselves but limit benefits to groups they hold responsible for economic vulnerability. Perceived sources of economic risk may therefore shape which government intervention people prefer. Using two waves of an online survey fielded in Austria in 2021-2022, we show that perceiving immigration as a more important labour-market risk predicts increased support for protectionism and laissez-faire (i.e. regulation-based policies) and decreased support for social welfare and social investment (i.e. welfare-based policies). The reverse pattern applies to individuals who perceive technological change as greater labour-market risk. For individuals who perceive offshoring as the predominant risk source, we do not observe increased support for either policy type. Linking survey data to CHES data, we show that these risk perceptions also predict support for political parties with corresponding policy programs. We conclude that individuals demand policies tailored to risk concerns. We discuss implications of our findings emphasizing how perceived sources of economic risks help to understand why risk-preference relationships transcend the conventional libertarian-interventionist pattern.

Keywords: labour market, risk perceptions, policy preferences, voting intention

1 Introduction

A large, foundational literature has long linked labour-market risk and insecurity to welfare state preferences. Following the conventional political economy assumption that individuals base their political preferences on self-interest, this literature argues that individuals react to economic risks by demanding more welfare state support (Iversen and Soskice 2001; Moene and Wallerstein 2001; Rehm 2009). This has been shown for different forms of objective labour-market risks such as (labour) migration (Brady and Finnigan 2014), industrial offshoring (Rommel and Walter 2018), or technological transformation (Thewissen and Rueda 2019) and also, more recently, for various forms of perceived labour-market risks (Busemeyer et al. 2023; Busemeyer and Beiser-McGrath 2024; Mutz 2021).

Traditionally these types of studies presume a unidimensional political conflict between those at risk and those not, suggesting that the classic economic left-right dimension should dominate welfare preferences and politics. However, we argue that this approach fails to capture the multidimensionality of both labour market risks and the policy menu available to respond to such risks.

Major economic transformations, including technological change, global economic integration, and migration, can expose workers to qualitatively different kinds of insecurity such as job substitution risks, wage pressure through international competition, or sectoral disruptions (see, e.g., Dhondt, Zierahn-Weilage, and Odriozola 2025). These risks highlight different societal conflicts such as cultural divisions between immigrants and natives (or domestic and foreign labour) or economic divisions between machines and human labour (or capital and worker interests) with distinct consequences for individuals' policy preferences (see Bornschier et al. 2024).

While standard political economy theories primarily emphasize the insurance function of redistribution, governments have a wide range of options to address labour-market risks that often transcend traditional socio-economic boundaries between the interventionist left and the liberal right (Pierson 1996; Rathgeb 2024). Besides social transfers, welfare states can offer social investment and activation policies (Bonoli 2010), a variety of policies to protect domestic labour-markets such as industry subsidies and tariffs (Rodrik 2018), or they can adopt a *laissez-faire* approach promising economic growth through deregulation (Duman and Kemmerling 2020). Given this menu of options, individuals' policy preferences concern not only the question of *how much* governments should intervene, but, importantly, also *how* they should intervene.

Acknowledging this multidimensionality of risks and policies, scholars started to explicitly compare different sources of labour-market competition and widened the policy space under consideration. Recently, this line of research provided initial evidence that the nature of the threat matters for whether citizens prioritise preventive measures or redistribution (Di Tella and Rodrik 2020; Kuo, Manzano, and Gallego 2024; Chaudoin and Mangini 2025; Bicchi, Kuo, and Gallego 2025) and that different types of risk relate differently to preferences for increased welfare support (Busemeyer, Stutzmann, and Tober 2025; Nicoli et al. 2025). This newer wave of multidimensionally oriented research, however, still lacks systematic theoretical explanations for why different types of risk may map to preferences for specific types of policies.

Against this background, we provide a systematic theoretical framework arguing that the perceived *relative importance of different sources of labour-market risks* is a central determinant of what type of policies individuals prefer. Specifically, we suggest that risk

perceptions not only reflect individuals' perceived vulnerability in the labour-market but also indicate whom they hold responsible for that vulnerability. Drawing on social identity theory and deservingness arguments, we argue that these risk sources provide individuals with simplified cues to determine which groups in society are deserving of support. Consequently, individuals favour policy interventions that maximize benefits for those deemed deserving and minimize benefits for groups perceived as responsible for economic insecurity.

Applying this argument to immigration, offshoring, and technological change as major and distinct sources of risk, we suggest that (i) perceiving immigration as the relatively more important risk is linked to *cultural* conceptions of in-group and out-group distinctions (e.g., natives vs. immigrants). We expect that such cultural conceptions lead individuals to favour regulation-based policies aimed at protecting domestic labour-markets and to greater opposition to welfare-based policies that benefit groups often associated with immigrants such as the unemployed and other groups receiving social benefits (Shayo 2009).

Mirroring the argument above, we further suggest that (ii) perceiving technological change as the relatively more important risk is linked to *class-based* conceptions of in- and out-groups (i.e., employees vs. employers). We expect that these class-based conceptions prompt individuals to support welfare-based policies aimed at strengthening employees' position in the labour-market and reduce support for regulatory-based policies that predominantly target employers instead of employees. Because offshoring risks could be linked to both class and cultural in-/outgroup distinctions, we expect that perceiving offshoring as relatively more important risk may lead individuals to either prefer regulation-based and/or welfare-based policies.

To test these expectations, we use survey data from Austria, a small open economy where all of these labour-market transformations have had a substantial impact on the domestic labour-market in recent years. Our survey implements an integrated, comprehensive questionnaire covering welfare-based policies and regulatory-based policies, alongside multiple economic risk sources. Relying on estimates from compositional data analysis, we empirically show that perceiving immigration as more important labour-market risk does, indeed, predict increased support for regulation-based policies (i.e., protectionism and laissez-faire) and decreased support for welfare-based policies (i.e., universal welfare and social investment), while we find partial evidence for the opposite pattern if individuals perceive technological change as greater labour-market risks. For individuals who perceive offshoring as a relatively higher risk, we do not observe increased support for either type of policy but additional moderation analyses suggest that increased fears of offshoring increases opposition to laissez faire from left-leaning individuals. This result suggests that the relationship between relative risk perceptions and policy preferences may depend on political orientation in the case of offshoring risks, which may be interpreted through the lens of class or cultural conflict.

Using data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES), we further show that these relationships largely persist when analysing the policy positions of political parties favoured by individuals with specific risk profiles. We conclude that individuals demand policies tailored to the sources of labour-market risks they are most concerned about. Accordingly, electoral responses to labour-market transformation are unlikely to be one-dimensional (i.e., simply reflecting more demand for governmental intervention), but instead differentiated according to individuals' perceived exposure to different sources of labour-market risk.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: In section 2, we review existing literature and develop our theoretical argument on the relevance of the structure of risk perceptions for policy preferences. In section 3, we describe the data and method used to test our theoretical argument. Section 4 presents our analysis studying how different risk perceptions link to policy preferences using survey data from Austria. Section 5 concludes.

2 Literature and theory: How labour-market risks relate to policy demands

2.1 Review of existing literature

Globalization and technological change have profoundly affected the labour-market, thereby shaping individuals' economic opportunities and risks (Autor et al. 2006; Dauth, Findeisen, and Suedekum 2017; Emmenegger 2009; Schwander and Häusermann 2013). Political economy theories predict that these labour-market transformations should also affect individuals' demand for welfare state intervention, as they alter their labour-market risks. Research has focused mainly on three broad sources of risks: (i) technological change (Dermont and Weisstanner 2020; Gallego et al. 2022; Im 2021; Thewissen and Rueda 2019), (ii) offshoring or trade (Autor et al. 2020; Colantone and Stanig 2018b; Dauth, Findeisen, and Suedekum 2017; Dippel, Gold, and Heblich 2015), and (iii) immigration (Brady and Finnigan 2014; Garand, Xu, and Davis 2015; Magni 2022).¹ Taken together, this literature suggests that individuals react to structural transformations that alter any of these three sources of risks.

¹ Individuals further face other forms of labour-market risks such as temporary employment (e.g., Marx 2014). This literature is largely in agreement that welfare state policies function as a 'buffer' mitigating economic risks. This study focuses on perceived labour-market risks resulting from changes within the economy (globalization or technological change) and therefore does not discuss the literature on other sources of labour-market insecurity, including climate change (see Busemayer et al. 2024).

However, studies also have found a substantial degree of effect heterogeneity across various groups, and the explanatory power of objective labour-market risks remains limited. One explanation for these results is that individuals often tend to misperceive the level of risk they are exposed to (Busemeyer et al. 2023; Gallego et al. 2022). Accordingly, individuals' policy preferences may respond more strongly to subjectively perceived risks than to objectively measured risks. Consistent with this argument, several studies suggest that subjective risk perceptions better explain political support than do measures of individuals' objective economic risks (Kurer 2020; Liu, Robinson, and Vedlitz 2020; Nolan and Weisstanner 2022).

The crucial role of perceptions in shaping policy preferences becomes particularly important when considering different sources of risks. Research indicates that individuals not only misperceive the *level* of risk they are exposed to but also misattribute the *sources* of these economic risks (Mutz 2021). For instance, individuals tend to attribute general economic adversity caused by labour-market transformations to immigrants and workers abroad, rather than to technological change (Wu 2022) and find it easier to attribute their own economic risks to new technologies, such as robots, than to other human workers (Granulo, Fuchs, and Puntoni 2019). We argue that these findings suggest that risk perceptions combine cognitive evaluations of labour-market opportunities with social and political beliefs about whom individuals can consider responsible for personal or societal economic vulnerabilities. Risk perceptions are thus not merely more or less informed factual evaluations of labour-market opportunities but incorporate cognitive biases, political values, and social norms.

Understanding whom individuals blame for economic misfortune is likely essential to explaining what *types* of policies individuals prefer. New political actors, such as populist radical right movements, often promise risk mitigation using nationalist interventions rather

than bolstering welfare support (Rathgeb 2024). This dynamic is exemplified by U.S. tariff policies under the Trump administration. Such policy programmes provide individuals with political options that weaken the traditional libertarian-interventionist dichotomy which focuses on the choice between more or less government intervention. Differentiating between policy responses that target different segments of the labour market and reflect distinct economic ideologies should improve our understanding of how individuals respond to economic risks in the present multidimensional policy space (Busemeyer and Beiser-McGrath 2024).

In line with this argument existing empirical research shows that policy preferences vary depending on the type of labour-market shock individuals face, such as technological change, demand shifts, poor management, or offshoring (Di Tella and Rodrik 2020; Kuo, Manzano, and Gallego 2024). More recently, Chaudoin and Mangini (2025), study the effects of globalisation and technology shocks and suggest that trade related risks increase demand for regulatory policies more strongly than for redistributive policies. Nicoli et al. (2025) extend the multi-risk perspective by adding migration concerns and find that fears of technological substitution and market openness favour preferences for redistributive and protective policies in contrast to fears of immigration.

Building on this literature, we outline theoretical reasons why individuals may prefer different policies in response to different economic risks and then empirically examine how the relative importance of different sources of labour-market risks help to explain what types of government intervention individuals prefer.

2.2 *The importance of relative perceptions of labour-market risks*

We focus on four *policy paradigms* that are extensively discussed in the literature related to labour-markets and industrial policy (see e.g., Di Tella and Rodrik 2020): (i) protectionism, which restricts international trade or subsidizes the domestic economy, (ii) laissez-faire, which focuses on deregulating markets or limiting government intervention, (iii) universal welfare, which aims to redistribute economic resources or to decommodify labour, and (iv) social investment, which aims to increase individuals' human capital by funding general education programs or specific skill trainings. Protectionism and laissez-faire are *regulation-based*, encompassing policies of a (de-)regulating character designed to alter the costs of economic transactions, goods, or labour. Universal welfare and social investment are *welfare-based* encompassing policies of a compensating or investing character that tend to provide direct benefits to workers.²

We expect that the *relative* importance of different sources of risks matters for explaining what kind of government response individuals are more likely to support. This is because individuals' perceptions of different sources of risks indicate who they hold responsible for their economic threats. Absolute insecurity may raise baseline demand for government action and protection, but relative insecurity across risks reflects how individuals weigh and prioritise competing concerns related to their own interests and those of salient groups within the population.

² In a Marxist tradition, this differentiation can also be linked to contrasting governmental interventions that target capitalists' freedom (e.g., deregulation or domestic labour-market protection) and economic potentials (subsidies) on the one side, to workers' economic potential (social investment) or their need to commodify their labour (basic income, job guarantee etc.) on the other. However, the individual policies paradigms still show substantial differences which is the reason why we analyse them separately here (for welfare-based policies, see Busemeyer and Sahn 2021; Eick, Burgoon and Busemeyer 2023; Busemeyer and Beiser-McGrath 2024).

Using this basic framework, we hypothesize a discriminatory impulse whereby individuals prefer policies that are less likely to benefit groups considered undeserving. This idea draws on insights from two important strands of the literature: First, social identity literature shows that individuals tend to be biased towards their in-group and that cultural conceptions of the in-/outgroup can lead individuals to defer from following a strategy benefiting their own material self-interest (Balliet, Wu, and De Dreu 2014; Bornstein and Ben-Yossef 1994; Shayo 2009; Tajfel 1970). Second, deservingness literature suggests that individuals prefer excluding groups they consider less deserving from the group of (potential) policy beneficiaries (van Oorschot 2010). Building on these insights, we expect that individuals favour policies that benefit a salient in-group while excluding salient out-groups.

Different sources of risk are associated with distinct ways in which individuals delineate relevant in-groups and out-groups. First, we argue that perceiving *immigration* as a relatively more important labour-market risk relates to cultural in-group conceptions in which individuals differentiate between natives and immigrants. In this view, immigrants tend to be perceived as a threat to individual economic opportunities or wages due to increased competition for resources. Thus, we suspect that individuals who perceive immigration as relatively more important risk favour policies that either allow them to discriminate against migrants or that have a low perceived chance to benefit this out-group directly. This logic reflects two distinct strategies for managing the perceived risks of immigration and is consistent with theories of social fractionalization (Alesina et al. 2020): individuals may simultaneously favour stronger boundary-drawing mechanisms, such as protectionism, and weaker redistributive institutions, such as laissez-faire (Lindner et al. 2024; Lindner 2025). Both strategies have the effect of reducing either benefits for foreign workers or foreign economic influence.

Regulation-based policies such as protectionism or laissez-faire are designed to strengthen the bargaining position of domestic labour-market participants (the cultural in-group): for instance, by restricting access to the labour-market or by subsidizing domestic firms. In contrast, welfare-based policies mostly benefit employees and low-income individuals, groups that are more likely to be associated with cultural out-groups such as immigrants, particularly if such policies have a universal character (see also Shayo 2009). We thus expect individuals who perceive immigration as a relatively more important labour-market risk to favour regulation-based policies and to oppose welfare-based policies (H1a).

Second, perceiving *technological change* as relatively more important labour-market risk relates to class-based in-group conceptions in which individuals differentiate between employees and employers. A higher perceived risk of technological change is often associated with the belief that jobs are disappearing and with a sense that skills are becoming obsolete. In this context, individuals may feel that their labour has become too expensive and that employers aim to replace it. This perception ties in with class-based in-group thinking leading individuals to favour policies that benefit employees and not employers. Consequently, we expect that individuals who perceive higher relative technological change risks will prefer welfare-based policies, such as universal welfare and social investment but will oppose regulation-based policies (H2a).

Third, *offshoring* risks could be interpreted as a consequence of class-based conflict between capital and workers, or as a consequence of cultural conflict between domestic and foreign workers, thereby highlighting different in-/outgroup distinctions. The perception that jobs are disappearing due to companies relocating production abroad may lead individuals to feel that their skills are becoming obsolete because employers are seeking to replace them by using

cheaper labour. As a result, perceiving higher risks due to offshoring could make beliefs about class-based in-groups salient leading individuals to favour policies that primarily benefit employees rather than employers. However, offshoring could also be interpreted through a cultural lens. Since domestic workers are effectively replaced by foreign workers, offshoring may evoke nationalist sentiments that favour regulation-based reforms aimed at strengthening domestic markets rather than those that expand social welfare. Following these arguments, we formulate competing hypotheses that perceiving offshoring as higher risk either increases or decreases support for welfare-based regulation-based policies (H3a.1 & H3a.2). Table 1 gives an overview of the stated hypotheses.

Relative individual labour-market risk perceptions may not only explain individuals' policy preferences but may also be relevant to understanding individuals' voting decisions. There is a large literature on the influence of economic risk on policy preferences and voting behaviour (e.g., Colantone and Stanig 2018a; for an overview see Margalit 2019), but only few studies explore whether individuals' stated support for certain policies directly aligns with their voting choices based on party positions on those same policies. We expect that relative risk concerns are likely well suited to explain not only individuals policy preferences but should also be relevant to understanding voting preferences. Voting constitutes a selection process in which individuals need to decide about their most-preferred party and thus entails a ranking process. Relative risks follow a similar logic as they capture estimates about the relative importance of certain types of threats.

Following this argument, we expect that individuals who consider technological change the relatively more important source of labour market risks, prefer political parties whose positions favour welfare-based policies and oppose political parties that favour regulation-

based policies (H2b). The opposite should hold true for individuals who are relatively more concerned about labour-market risks due to immigration: Those individuals should prefer political parties whose positions favour regulation-based policies (H1b). We, again, suggest that perceiving offshoring risks can either activate a cultural and/or a class ingroup thinking and thus formulate competing hypotheses that offshoring either increases support for welfare-based policies and decreases support for regulation-based policies or vice versa (H3b.1/2).

Policy/party support for ...			
		... welfare-based	... regulation-based
H	labour-market risk	policies	policies
H1a+b	immigration	-	+
H2a+b	technology	+	-
H3a.1/2+H3b.1/2	offshoring	+/-	-/+

Table 1. Theoretical expectations. “+” denotes an expected positive effect, “-” denotes an expected negative effect, and “+/-” reflects that we formulated competing hypotheses.

Source: Own illustration.

3 Data and Method

In this section, we briefly introduce the empirical case of Austria, explain how we operationalize our outcome variables (policy preferences and party support), our main variables of interest (perceived relative labour-market risks), and the controls. We then outline our identification strategy and the estimation approach.

3.1 The country context: Austria

We test our hypotheses using survey data from Austria. Austria is a well-suited case to study the effect of labour-market risk perceptions on policy preferences because all labour-market

transformations under study – immigration, technology, and offshoring – have had strong effects on its domestic labour-market in recent years. Austria has one of the highest rates of employment of non-nationals in the European Union (16.4%) and the rate has been steadily increasing over the last two decades. Further, studies also show a steady decline of employment in the industrial sector which is, in part, driven by increased offshoring to other countries. This is also reflected in recent industrial surveys according to which 18% of the surveyed companies stated offshoring plans in the next five years (Kuegler et al. 2020). Finally, as a highly developed country, Austria is also affected by technological change driven by computerization and automation and by recent developments in AI technology and robotics. According to estimates, roughly 10% of the labor force could be at high risk of replacement by recent technological advancements (Nagl, Titelbach, and Valkova 2017). In sum, all types of labour-market risks considered in this study have objective correlates in Austria.

3.2 Data

We fielded a question module on perceived labour-market risks and policy preferences as part of a long-term academic panel survey project in Austria started during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel is based on a non-probability web-survey of Austrian residents aged 14 and above (for the methodology and data, see Kittel et al. 2020) and quota-sampled based on age, gender, age*gender, region, municipality size, and educational level. Our question battery was included in two survey waves fielded in October 2021 and October 2022. Our target population is the population eligible to vote. We therefore restrict our sample to respondents born in Austria of age 16 or older who were eligible to vote in the last

parliamentarian election.³ After listwise deletion, our analytical sample includes 1,112 respondents providing us with 1,627 observations across the two survey waves. The data can be accessed upon registration at the Austrian Social Science Data Archive: doi.org/10.11587/28KQNS. The replication package can be downloaded at https://osf.io/zdnps/?view_only=3e8c96807a7a4e71b4d086f5172da3a3.

3.3 Measurement

Dependent Variables

Preferences for different policy paradigms. Following newer research showing that individuals' understanding of government redistribution can differ substantially (Margalit and Raviv 2024) and that preferences are more accurately measured at the level of specific policies rather than at the level of generalized support for social spending or redistribution (Häusermann et al. 2021; Kalleitner, Schlogl, and Bobzien 2024), we asked respondents to report their support for six specific policies that are often discussed as potential responses to labour-market transformations. The question wording reads: "In your opinion, what should the Austrian federal government do to combat potential job losses in the next 10 years? The government should..." (see Table 2 for the item specific question wording). To avoid order effects, we randomized the order of items. Respondents could answer on a 5-point scale ranging from (-2) very much against, to (2) very much in favour.

Guided by theoretical considerations, we construct four additive indices which group the six items into distinct policy paradigms: (i) protectionism which aims to restrict international

³ Because the dataset does not contain an indicator of a respondent's nationality, we exclude all individuals who specified that they were not eligible to vote in a question that asked about respondents' voting choice in the last federal parliamentary election in 2019.

trade or subsidize the domestic economy, (ii) laissez-faire which focuses on deregulating markets or limiting government intervention in the economy, (iii) universal welfare which aims to increase social well-being or to decommodify labor, and (iv) social investment which focuses on policies that aim to increase individuals' human capital by funding general education programs or specific skill trainings. We further categorize these into: 'welfare-based policies' that mainly benefit workers directly and often have a redistributive character (universal welfare and social investment) and regulation-based policies that aim to change the costs of economic transactions and mostly target the employer side (protectionism and laissez-faire). We calculate our models explaining each of the four policies separately and investigate whether the relationships with the different sources of risks follow our expectations specified in the hypotheses.

regulation-based	
DV1: protectionism	"introduce restrictive laws to protect domestic labour markets" "provide subsidies to domestic companies"
DV2: laissez-faire	"not intervene in the economy"
welfare-based	
DV3: universal welfare	"provide basic income to everyone independently of whether they work" "offer a job paying a living wage to the unemployed"
DV4: social investment	"focus more strongly on vocational education and training programmes"

Table 2: Overview Question wordings and categorizations of dependent variables.

Party position. We further analyse how relative risks relate to 'revealed' policy preferences by linking individuals' voting preference to the party's support for similar policy programs using data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) (Jolly et al., 2022). The CHES estimates party positioning on ideology and policy issues for national parties in selected countries and is based on expert judgments. We thus study whether perceiving specific risks makes individuals more likely to vote for parties that align with a particular policy paradigm.

For the CHES variable corresponding to our protectionism paradigm, we use parties' positions on trade liberalization versus protectionism (0 = strongly favours trade liberalization, 10 = strongly favours protection of domestic producers). For the laissez-faire paradigm, we use parties' positions on market deregulation (0 = strongly opposes deregulation of markets, 10 = strongly supports deregulation of markets). We proxy support for universal welfare using the CHES variable 'redistribution', which measures parties' positions on redistribution of wealth (0 = strongly opposes redistribution, 10 = strongly opposes redistribution), and the CHES variable 'spendvtax', which measures the position on improving public services versus reducing taxes (0 = strongly favours reducing taxes, 10 = strongly favours improving public services), to proxy support for social investment. We recode the variables to range from -2 (strongly oppose) to +2 (strongly favour) to mirror the scale of individuals' policy preferences.

We use data from 2019 as this is the closest to the time our data was collected. We merge the respective values to the party support respondents articulate when asked the hypothetical question which party they would vote for if there were elections on the upcoming Sunday. As CHES only provides data for the major parties represented in the parliament, we limit this analysis to potential voters of the conservatives (OEVP), social democrats (SPOE), right-wing populists (FPOE), liberals (NEOS), and Greens.

Independent variables

Perceived labour-market risks. To operationalize perceived labour-market risks, we ask respondents to state how likely they consider the following scenarios of the following type: '[Many people working in [COUNTRY] / You or a member of your family] are/is likely to lose their job in the next 10 years ...'. Offshoring is operationalized by '... due to companies moving operations to low-wage countries.' Technology is operationalized by '... due to the

use of robots, computers or Artificial Intelligence.’ And immigration is operationalized by ‘... due to people from other countries who come to work here.’ Respondents could answer on a 5-point scale ranging from (-2) very unlikely to (2) very likely. Item ordering of risk types was randomized. We thus ask respondents to differentiate between the scope of risk and the source of risk. Risk perceptions of personal risk levels (‘You or a member of your family’) and of societal risk levels (‘Many people working in [COUNTRY]’) differ in their level but not in their relative ranking and show similar relationships to the dependent variables in this study (see Figure G3 in the Appendix). As our results hold across both risk operationalizations and this differentiation is not in the focus of this study (see Figure F2 in the Appendix), we use the average risk across perceived individual risk and perceived societal risk by type to operationalize individuals perceived labour-market risks.

We then calculate the relative risk ratio for each source of labour-market risk. The relative perceived labour-market risk due to immigration for a person i , is given by equation (1). Relative risks for technological change and offshoring are calculated accordingly. The indicator spans from 0 (fully unlikely that the particular risk source is responsible for subjectively perceived unemployment risks) to 1 (only the particular risk source is responsible for subjectively perceived unemployment risks). This relative risk measure equals 1/3 if a respondent perceives all risks as equally high. Relative risks of 1/2 and higher indicate that one risk is relatively dominant.

$$relative\ risk_i^{immigration} = \frac{risk_i^{immigration}}{risk_i^{immigration} + risk_i^{technology} + risk_i^{offshoring}} \quad (1)$$

We focus on *relative* risks because our core argument is that explaining policy preferences requires understanding which risk source individuals perceive as more salient, rather than the absolute level of any single risk. This approach captures distinct understandings of threat, and thus socio-economic conflict, rather than general levels of worry.

Controls

We consider several socio-demographic variables that may influence the relationship studied here. We include a net income measure for individuals' household income measured in 10 categories that roughly represent the income deciles in Austria at the time, an indicator for respondents' age in years, a gender dummy, dummy variables indicating individuals' employment status ((self-)employed, unemployed, not in employment, in education, retired), and dummies for individuals' highest level of education (primary, basic vocational training, secondary, tertiary). As our data collection period was during the Covid-19 pandemic, we further include a variable measuring individuals' general perceptions of the economic danger of Covid-19 for the Austrian population to control for covid-specific risk assessments. This is measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from very low to very high.

Estimation strategy

Our main independent variables of interest, relative labour market risks, are correlated by design because of the constant sum constraint: it is impossible to alter one proportion without altering at least one of the others. This characteristic of our data structure means that traditional statistical methods are not suitable due to the inherent interdependencies between components (Greenacre 2018). We therefore employ compositional data analysis (CoDA) to accurately estimate the effects of interest (Katz and King, 1999; Pawlowsky-Glahn, Egozcue and Tolosana-Delgado, 2015). Compositional data analyses transform the compositional data

before estimating standard linear regressions. We follow the recommendations of Filzmoser, Hron, and Templ (2018) and use isometric logratio (ilr) transformations here, imputing a value of two thirds of the lowest detectable absolute levels of labour-market risks for those that answered that they perceive no risk from a specific risk at all to avoid the problem that the logarithm of 0 is not defined (this applies to 4.2% of all components in the analytical sample) (Martin-Fernandez, Palarea-Albaladejo, and Olea 2011). All models are calculated utilizing the R package robCompositions (Filzmoser, Hron, and Templ 2018).

Because we find only very limited variation over time both among individual labour-market risk perceptions and among policy preferences, we calculate regression estimates between perceived labour-market risks and policy preferences using the pooled data. We use the same approach to study support for specific party positions as outcome. All models include wave fixed effects to control for general time trends.

4 Results

First, we give a descriptive overview of the variables of interest, namely perceived labour-market risks and preferences for regulation and welfare-based policies. We then provide evidence that risk sources relate to sociopolitical beliefs as expected by our theoretical framework. Finally, we use regression models that use a compositional data analysis framework to assess the ways in which levels and structure of risk perceptions relate to preferences for policy responses (Hypotheses-Set a) and party support (Hypotheses-Set b) and provide several robustness checks.

4.1 Descriptive results

To give an intuitive overview of the distribution of risks, Figure 1(a) shows the ratios of the three different perceived sources of economic risks as positions within an equilateral triangle. Thus, each point within the triangle represents an individual's relative perceptions of the three types of labour market risk. The Figure reveals three important points: first, relative risks are clustered around the point of equality and a non-trivial share of 17% of the respondents perceive all risks to be of equal importance. Second, extreme relative risks perceptions in which individuals think that only one type of risk is relevant while the others are fully irrelevant are very rare. Third, even though offshore risks are the most feared on average, all three different forms of risks are perceived as relatively most important by relevant shares of the respondents (indicated in Figure 1 by the different colours). Hence, all constellations of relative risk perceptions are represented in our data.

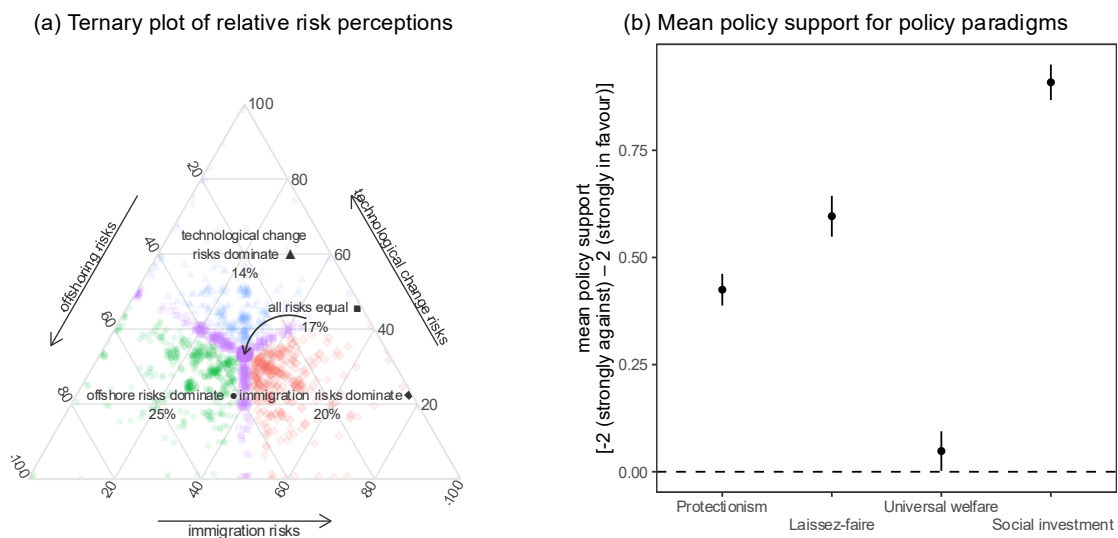


Figure 1: (a) Ternary plot of respondents' relative risk perceptions. (b) Mean policy support for the specific policy paradigms. Source: ACCP.

Moving our focus to individuals' policy preferences (Figure 1(b)), we find that respondents show support for all policy paradigms albeit with substantial differences in their absolute

levels. On average, respondents support social investment the most, followed by laissez-faire, protectionism, and universal welfare. This result is consistent with other findings in the literature suggesting that individuals more strongly support social investment policies compared to protectionist or compensatory policies (Busemeyer et al. 2023).

4.2 *Relative risks and welfare attitudes*

Before testing the risk-preference relationship, we empirically examine the theoretical assumption that different types of risk are systematically linked to perceptions of welfare deservingness across social groups. We do this by examining the explanatory power of relative risk perceptions for a range of socio-political beliefs available in the data. Results reported in Table 3 indicate that higher perceived immigration risks are positively associated with favouring employers rather than employees as targets of governmental support, as well as with stronger preferences for government retrenchment. Conversely, perceived risks related to technological change and offshoring are negatively associated with these variables, although the coefficients are not consistently statistically significant. We obtain similar results for standard welfare chauvinism items (Models 3 and 4 in Table 3), which show positive associations with immigration risks and negative associations with technological change and offshoring risks. These patterns persist even when controlling for individuals' political orientation, a potential confounder but also a likely mediator of the relationship of interest (see Table A3 in the Appendix).

These results provide evidence that perceived immigration risks are positively associated with employer favouritism and opposition to welfare benefits, whereas higher perceived technological change and offshoring risks are linked to solidaristic attitudes toward welfare recipients. Additional evidence on these patterns is presented in Figure A1 in the Appendix,

which maps perceived relative risks onto the two-dimensional policy space (economic and GAL–TAN). These analyses indicate that immigration risks are more strongly associated with TAN orientations, whereas technological risks are more strongly associated with socialist orientations. Taken together, these findings suggest that risk perceptions cut across a simple left–right understanding of political conflict. Instead, the relative importance individuals assign to different sources of labour-market risk reflects distinct interpretations of economic vulnerability and its causes, which in turn may shape preferences for different types of policy responses.

	Help employers instead of employees (1)	Lower taxes and less social welfare (2)	Benefits recipients do not search for jobs (3)	People who are not eligible receive benefits (4)
Technological change risks	-0.037 (0.069)	-0.327* (0.155)	-0.275*** (0.075)	-0.277*** (0.072)
Offshoring risks	-0.150* (0.071)	-0.199 (0.160)	-0.243** (0.077)	-0.212** (0.074)
Immigration risks	0.188*** (0.055)	0.527*** (0.124)	0.518*** (0.059)	0.489*** (0.057)
Num.Obs.	1500	1357	1517	1506
R2	0.017	0.043	0.098	0.095

Table 3. Associations between perceived relative labour-market risks and respondents’ political positions on various socio-political conflicts. Coefficients from linear regression models. Question wordings: (1) “The government should now primarily strengthen companies instead of directly supporting workers”; (3) “Most unemployed people are not really looking for a job”; (4) “Many people manage to receive social benefits, even though they are not entitled to”. Items could be answered on a 5-point scale ranging from “0=strongly agree” to “5=strongly disagree”. (2) “Where would you place yourself on a scale of 0 to 10 if 0 means that you are in favor of low taxes and few benefits, and 10 means that you are in favor of high taxes and many benefits?”. Answers partially imputed from other survey waves within individuals. Models are estimated using lmCoDaX. All models include controls for survey wave, gender, education, employment status, household income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure (coefficients not shown). Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACPP.

4.3 Relative risks and policy preferences

Figure 2 shows the average marginal effects (AME) of perceiving a higher relative importance of a specific source of labour-market risk (offshoring, technological change, immigration) on support for our four policy paradigms in the form of policy preferences (point symbol) and corresponding party position preferences (triangle symbol). The latter denote preferences for voting for a party with a program aligned with the respective policy paradigm.

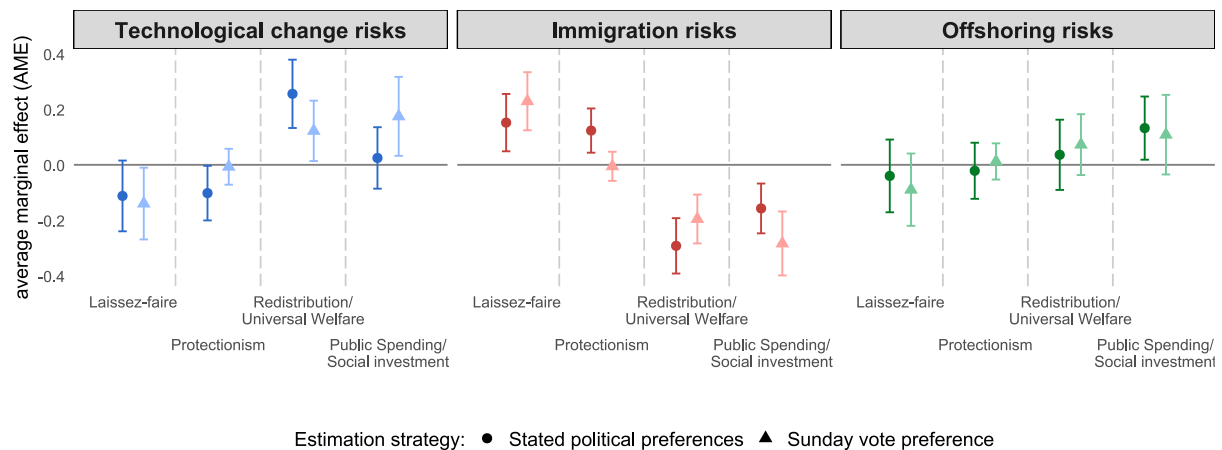


Figure 2: Average marginal effect of relative perceived risks on (a) policy preferences and (b) party position preferences by risk source. (a) $N(\text{individuals})=1112$, $N(\text{Observations})=1627$, (b): $N(\text{individuals})=863$, $N(\text{Observations})=1209$. N for models using party positions deviate as respondents who did not state their party preference or preferred a small party where data on party positions are unavailable are excluded for this analysis. Models estimated using `lmCoDaX`. Controls for wave, gender, age, education, employment status, income, and crisis perception not shown. Full results are reported in Table B1 and Table B2 in the Appendix. Source: ACPP.

Due to the relative nature of our measurement of risk perceptions, the effect size interpretation of a specific risk perception on a policy preference is relative to the other risk perceptions. A specific average marginal effect stands for the effect of doubling the dominance of one component with respect to the other components, while keeping everything else fixed (Filzmoser, Hron, and Templ 2018). For instance, doubling the relative risk share of

technological change (e.g. from 15 to 30%), we would expect individuals' preferences for universal welfare to increase by 0.26 scale points (SE = 0.063, $p < .001$). Conversely, perceiving immigration as relatively higher risk is linked to higher support for regulation-based policies, i.e. protectionism (AME = 0.12, 0.041, $p = .002$) and laissez-faire (AME = 0.15, 0.053, $p = .004$). As the dependent variables have a standard deviation of roughly 1 and a change of 15% also approximates the standard deviation of the relative risks, the coefficients can also be read as approximations of standard effect size estimates.

Focussing on policy preferences (indicated by point shaped estimates in Figure 2), we find that perceiving technological change as relatively higher risks is associated with lower support for regulation-based policies (i.e., laissez-faire and protectionist policies), though the effect on laissez-faire is not statistically significant. At the same time, higher perceived risks stemming from technological change correspond to greater support for universal welfare but not for social investment. Hence, we find partial evidence for hypothesis 2a that people prefer welfare-based policies and oppose regulation-based policies when perceiving technological change as a more important risk source.

Perceiving immigration as relatively higher risks shows the reverse pattern compared to technological change: controlling for confounders, individuals with a higher perceived relative risk of immigration have lower preferences for both welfare-based policies and higher preferences for both regulatory-based policies. Hence, as predicted in hypothesis 1a, we find the, from a unidimensional perspective, paradoxical situation that people simultaneously favour stronger boundary-drawing mechanisms (such as protectionism) and weaker redistributive institutions (indicated by higher preferences for laissez-faire and lower

preferences for welfare-based policies) when they perceive labour market risks to be driven by immigration rather than by offshoring or technological change.

Finally, higher perceived risks of offshoring are associated with a preference for more social investment but have no statistically significant effects on other policy preferences which leads us to reject H3a2 and partially reject H3a1, with the exception of the offshoring-social-investment relationship. These inconsistent patterns suggest that offshoring might send mixed signals regarding whether individuals rely on cultural or class-based frames of interpretation. One reason for these mixed findings could be that individuals use existing political beliefs to determine what type of conflict shapes offshoring risks. To test this idea, we estimate interactions between political orientation and all our three relative risk indicators (results are reported in Table E1 in the Appendix). In line with the ambiguous role of offshoring risks, we find statistically significant interaction effects between political orientation and offshoring but not for other risk-preference relationships. Specifically, results indicate that perceiving higher relative offshoring risks reduces preferences for *laissez-faire*, but only among left-leaning individuals. This suggests that the interpretation of risks may in part be motivated by political ideology if the risk source allows for multiple interpretations of central in-/outgroup conflicts.

To understand whether policy preferences translate into party support, we focus next on individuals' preferences for specific party positions based on their voting preferences (represented as triangles in Figure 2). This enables us to see whether individuals choose to vote for parties that represent policies that match their respective individual risk profiles.

The pattern we find between relative risk perceptions and policy preferences can largely be replicated when studying party support. This holds for offshoring risks, which show no statistically significant relationship with any of the policy positions studied here (rejecting both H3b1 and H3b2), and for immigration risks, except for protectionist preferences, which now become insignificant (partially supporting H1b). However, the latter null finding could also be driven by supply issues in Austria as the observed parties are least conflicted on their position on protectionism of all the policy positions studied here (in contrast to the preferences of individuals where social investment is least polarizing as can be seen in the high average preferences reported in Figure 1b). Finally, results suggest that higher relative importance of technological change risks predict higher support for both welfare-based policies and lower support for laissez-faire. We, again, find no statistically significant effect on support for protectionism (partially supporting H2b).

4.4 Robustness checks

We perform several robustness checks. First, a concern could be that party identification is driving the relationship between risk perceptions and policy preferences. We decided against controlling for individuals' political orientation in our main models as political orientations can reasonably be considered a consequence of economic risk perceptions as our results on individuals' preferred party positions indicate. However, even using political orientation as a control in our regression analyses on the relationship between relative risk perceptions and policy preferences yields approximately the same results (see Table B1 in the Appendix).

Second, we use alternative estimation methods. Instead of using `lmCoDaX` to estimate our models, we i) calculate average marginal predictions and visualize the variation scenario using a ternary plot (Dargel and Thomas-Agnan 2024) and ii) calculate standard log-ratios

for the different risk perceptions and include two risk-log-ratios in each regression to avoid multicollinearity. These models provide nearly identical estimates compared to those reported in the main manuscript (see Figure C1 and Tables C1 and C2 in the Appendix). Importantly, while the effects of relative risks are more difficult to interpret when using log-ratios, this estimation strategy allows us to include individuals' average risk level in the models. These results show that average risks correlate positively with every policy option except for social investment, but controlling for average risks does not alter the importance of relative risks. This suggests that average risks follow the basic unidimensional political economy expectation that higher risk is associated with higher demand for governmental intervention, once one accounts for the importance of blaming different sources as captured by relative risks.

Third, to test for the possibility that biases due to panel attrition affect our results, we test our models restricting our sample to only those who participated in the first survey wave that included the question module on risk perceptions. Results reported in Table F1 show that coefficient sizes remain very consistent compared to the full sample suggesting negligible biases due to survey attrition.

Fourth, we test whether partisanship might drive the relationships between perceived labour-market risks and party support. Individuals who favour a political party may be influenced by party cues, leading them to blame specific societal groups for labour-market insecurities and to prefer the set of policies endorsed by their party. To test whether this form of reverse causality drives our results, we use individuals' propensity to vote (PTV) for specific parties instead of the standard single choice voting preference question to estimate their preferred party positions across the four political paradigms, explicitly excluding an individual's PTV

of their preferred party. Results reported in Table D1 in the Appendix suggest that findings generally hold for immigration and offshoring risks but relative technology change risks no longer show statistically significant effects although coefficients point in the expected direction. This suggests that the pro-welfare and anti-laissez-faire effects associated with increases in respondents' relative technological risks are at least partly confined to their most preferred party, and do not extend to other parties when considering their propensity to vote, indicating a stronger role for party cues in the case of technological change risks.

5 Conclusion

This paper analysed whether and how individuals tailor their policy demands to perceived labour-market risks. We argued that individuals would prefer policies that exclude groups they held responsible for economic vulnerability. Based on this, we predicted that perceiving technology as a more important source of labour-market risk would be positively associated with preferences for welfare-based policies and negatively associated with regulation-based policies, while the opposite would hold for perceiving immigration as a more important source of labour-market risk.

Using survey data from Austria, we find, first, that individuals demand protectionist and laissez-faire policies in response to perceiving immigration as relatively more important risk, and universal welfare in response to perceiving technological change as relatively higher risk. For perceived offshoring risks, we find no consistent evidence for either relationship. However, further moderation analyses suggest that left-leaning individuals are more opposed to laissez-faire when they perceive offshoring as a more important risk source. We largely corroborate the pattern found with regard to policy preferences when studying political party

support and thus show that relative risks consistently explain the policy positions of individuals' favoured party.

Our study makes several contributions: First, empirically, we demonstrate that individuals demand risk-tailored policies that align with their relative labour-market risk perceptions, controlling for a wide range of plausible confounders. This suggests that individuals consider the type of risk when forming policy preferences, demanding policies that address the specific form of risk they perceive as most urgent. This aligns well with recent empirical studies suggesting that the relationship between labour-market risk and policy preferences depends on the type of risk and the specific policy that is investigated (Di Tella and Rodrik 2020; Kuo, Manzano, and Gallego 2024; Chaudoin and Mangini 2025; Nicoli et al. 2025).

Second, our study also corroborates the importance of studying nuanced policy preferences (Häusermann et al. 2021) rather than general attitudes towards the welfare state or redistribution. By differentiating between regulation-based policies and welfare-based policies, we show that people are not always insurance focused, as assumed by standard political economy approaches. Instead, they favour regulation-based responses (protectionism and laissez-faire) to job market risks if they consider immigration to be of relatively greater concern for the labour-market.

Third, by studying risk perceptions not only as determinants of policy preferences but also of party support, we contribute to the scarce literature on the relationship between policy preferences and party support (Rueda and Stegmueller 2018). We find that relative risk perceptions predict both policy preferences and party support, which is consistent with the

notion that voting decisions involve a cognitive process in which individuals prioritize subjectively more urgent risks.

Our results are subject to several limitations. Our research was conducted in the specific setting of Austria. There is evidence that the effects of economic and labour-market risks vary across institutional contexts, such as the generosity and structure of the welfare state (Busemeyer and Tober 2023). An interesting avenue for future research is thus to study heterogeneity in the relevance of relative economic risks for preferred policy responses across countries with different welfare systems. A further limitation is that our items measuring welfare-based policies focus on universal policies such as basic income rather than policies that target labour-market insiders, such as unemployment insurance, which could exhibit a distinct risk–preference pattern. Moreover, our finding that individuals do not increase their preferences for social investment programmes when perceiving higher technological change risk may be due to our broad measure of social investment preferences. As stated recently (Garritzmann et al. 2025) social investment comes in various variants and people might prefer more targeted variants.

Finally, methodologically, we rely on a two-wave online panel. Due to limited temporal variation and attrition, however, we are unable to study dynamics over time. This limits our ability to determine whether the relationships we find are causal. Using longitudinal observational data and/or (quasi-)experimental designs to test the mechanisms linking perceived risk sources and policy preferences would be a valuable contribution of future research.

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Supplementary online appendix

Technology, Migrants or Offshoring: How the Perceived Source of Labour-Market Risks Shapes Policy Demands

A Additional Analyses of the Relationship Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Economic and Cultural Political Orientations

We empirically test the argument that risks are systematically embedded in cultural and class-related understandings of political divisions by mapping the predictive power of different perceived labour-market risks on the first (economic) and second (socio-cultural / GAL-TAN) dimension of politics (Figure 1). We operationalize the economic and socio-cultural dimension by item batteries following past research (e.g. Garritzmann, Häusermann and Pinggera 2024 and Enggist et al. 2025). The economic dimension is operationalized using items such as the agreement to inequality reduction or to the idea that the welfare state makes individuals lazy. The cultural dimension is measured by items on gender equality, policy competency, immigration and environment (see A.1 table 1 for full item list). For perceived labour-market risks, we group respondents by their highest / dominant risk.

Figure 1 shows that perceived risks from immigration peak among TAN-oriented respondents and are lowest among those who endorse socialist ideas that aim at protecting workers. By contrast, risks associated with technological change are most pronounced among socialist-oriented individuals and least pronounced among individuals who favour traditional values. This implies that individuals who perceive technological change as high risks are less inclined to focus on cultural divisions when deciding on which policies should be implemented. A complementary regression (see A.1 table 2)—predicting Socialist versus GAL/TAN orientations from relative-risk assessments while controlling for standard socio-demographic covariates—corroborates the descriptive pattern. Taken together, this indicates that the risks people perceive map systematically onto their location within the two-dimensional policy space with individuals perceiving immigration as dominant risk being more TAN-oriented relative to individuals who perceive all risks equal and individuals perceiving technology as dominant risk being more socialist-oriented relative to individuals who perceive all risks equal.

Index	Item
Liberal/Socialist	Politics must fight social inequality
Liberal/Socialist	The welfare state makes people lazy [rev.]
Liberal/Socialist	Unemployment has to be reduced, even at the cost of higher public debt
Liberal/Socialist	Politics should not interfere with the economy [rev.]
GAL/TAN	At the same level of qualification, women should be prioritized in hiring and promotion procedures [rev.]
GAL/TAN	The authority and competences of the police should be expanded to ensure law and order
GAL/TAN	Immigration to Austria should only be allowed in exceptional circumstances
GAL/TAN	The environment must be protected, even if that implies higher costs for individual citizens [rev.]

Table A1. Overview of index for first and second dimension of political preferences. Source: ACPP. Scales are normalized: 0 = liberal – 1 = socialist and 0 = GAL (green, alternative, liberal) – 1 = TAN (traditional, authoritarian, nationalist). Items could be answered on a 5-point scale ranging from “0=strongly agree” to “5=strongly disagree”. The shortcut [rev.] indicates variables that enter the index in reversed order.

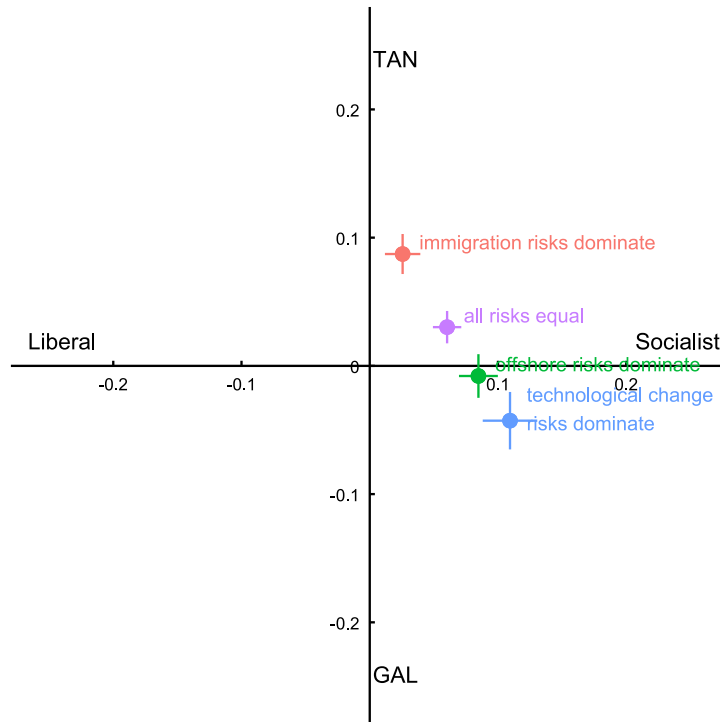


Figure A1. Mean Positions of Risk Perception Groups in the two-dimensional political space (Liberal–Socialist (x-axis) and GAL–TAN (y-axis)). Horizontal and vertical lines represent 95%-ci. Liberal–Socialist (x-axis): N(Observations)=1607, and GAL–TAN (y-axis): N(Observations):1612. Controls for wave, gender, age, education, employment status, income, and crisis perception not shown. Source: ACCP.

	Socialist (vs. Liberal)	TAN (vs. GAL)
Technological change risks	0.053*** (0.010)	-0.069*** (0.011)
Offshoring risks	0.014 (0.010)	-0.027* (0.011)
Immigration risks	-0.066*** (0.008)	0.096*** (0.009)
Num.Obs.	1607	1612
R2	0.106	0.138

Table A2. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Positions in the Two-Dimensional Political Space. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models estimating the relationship between relative perceived labour-market risks and respondents' positions on the economic and socio-cultural (GAL–TAN) dimensions of political conflict. Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. All models include controls for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, household

income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure (coefficients not shown). Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACCP.

	Help employers instead of employees (1)	Less taxes and of less welfare (2)	Benefits recipients do not search for jobs (3)	People who are not eligible to receive benefits (4)
Political orient. (1-left, 5-right)	0.128*** (0.034)	0.561*** (0.076)	0.255*** (0.036)	0.292*** (0.035)
Technological change risks	-0.025 (0.069)	-0.256+ (0.155)	-0.232** (0.075)	-0.228** (0.071)
Offshoring risks	-0.126+ (0.071)	-0.083 (0.159)	-0.217** (0.076)	-0.167* (0.073)
Immigration risks	0.152** (0.057)	0.340** (0.126)	0.448*** (0.061)	0.395*** (0.058)
Num.Obs.	1449	1321	1469	1458
R2	0.030	0.085	0.131	0.145

Table A3. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Respondents' Political Positions on various Socio-Political Conflicts. Coefficients from linear regression models. Question wordings: (1) "The government should now primarily strengthen companies instead of directly supporting workers"; (3) "Most unemployed people are not really looking for a job"; (4) "Many people manage to receive social benefits, even though they are not entitled to". Items could be answered on a 5-point scale ranging from "0=strongly agree" to "5=strongly disagree". (2) "Where would you place yourself on a scale of 0 to 10 if 0 means that you are in favor of low taxes and few benefits, and 10 means that you are in favor of high taxes and many benefits?". Answers partially imputed from other survey waves within individuals. Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. All models include controls for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, household income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure (coefficients not shown). Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACCP.

B Full results of the main regression models

	Laissez-faire		Protectionism		Universal welfare		Social investment	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Tech. change risks	-0.112+	-0.092	-0.102*	-0.099+	0.256***	0.222***	0.025	0.001
	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.050)	(0.051)	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.057)	(0.058)
Offshoring risks	-0.040	-0.005	-0.021	-0.005	0.036	0.001	0.132*	0.121*
	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.065)	(0.065)	(0.058)	(0.059)
Immigration risk	0.152**	0.096+	0.123**	0.104*	-0.292***	-0.224***	-0.157***	-0.122*
	(0.053)	(0.055)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.051)	(0.053)	(0.046)	(0.048)
Political orient. (1-left, 5-right)		0.176***		0.088***		-0.200***		-0.077**
		(0.032)		(0.025)		(0.031)		(0.028)
Male (ref. Female)	-0.037	-0.061	-0.204***	-0.212***	0.040	0.059	-0.006	0.014
	(0.053)	(0.054)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.051)	(0.052)	(0.046)	(0.047)
Household income (current, cons.)	-0.007	-0.013	-0.017	-0.019	-0.114***	-0.105***	0.022	0.024
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Voc. training (ref. primary)	0.045	0.060	-0.001	0.000	-0.084	-0.100	0.101	0.112+
	(0.071)	(0.072)	(0.055)	(0.056)	(0.069)	(0.069)	(0.062)	(0.063)
Secondary edu. (ref. primary)	-0.192*	-0.179*	-0.192**	-0.186**	-0.135+	-0.167*	0.124+	0.122+
	(0.082)	(0.083)	(0.064)	(0.064)	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.072)	(0.073)
Tertiary edu. (ref. primary)	-0.280**	-0.228*	-0.300***	-0.277***	-0.055	-0.121	0.438***	0.425***
	(0.094)	(0.095)	(0.073)	(0.074)	(0.091)	(0.092)	(0.082)	(0.083)
Unemployed (ref. employed)	-0.195	-0.276+	-0.072	-0.096	0.716***	0.649***	0.180	0.077
	(0.139)	(0.145)	(0.107)	(0.112)	(0.134)	(0.140)	(0.121)	(0.127)
Retired (ref. employed)	-0.087	-0.089	0.034	0.032	0.017	0.000	0.230**	0.229**
	(0.083)	(0.084)	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.080)	(0.081)	(0.072)	(0.074)
In education (ref. employed)	-0.317*	-0.267*	-0.087	-0.037	-0.080	-0.153	0.041	0.023
	(0.126)	(0.130)	(0.097)	(0.101)	(0.122)	(0.125)	(0.109)	(0.113)
Not employed (ref. employed)	0.071	0.039	0.007	0.001	0.029	0.051	-0.352**	-0.402***
	(0.129)	(0.131)	(0.100)	(0.102)	(0.125)	(0.127)	(0.112)	(0.115)
Age	0.008***	0.008***	0.002	0.002	-0.008***	-0.007**	0.009***	0.009***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Public covid risk perception	0.150***	0.139***	0.109***	0.104***	0.057*	0.064*	0.036	0.030
	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.026)	(0.026)	(0.023)	(0.024)
Wave dummy	-0.017*	-0.017*	-0.020***	-0.021***	-0.014*	-0.014*	-0.013*	-0.013*
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Num.Obs.	1627	1570	1627	1570	1627	1570	1627	1570
R2	0.081	0.101	0.090	0.097	0.095	0.114	0.091	0.098

Table B1. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Stated Policy Preferences. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. Models 2, 4, 6, and 8 additionally control for political orientation. Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACPD.

	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Redistribution	Public Spending
Technological change risks	-0.140*	-0.007	0.122*	0.175*
	(0.066)	(0.033)	(0.055)	(0.073)
Offshoring risks	-0.090	0.012	0.073	0.109
	(0.066)	(0.033)	(0.056)	(0.073)
Immigration risk	0.229***	-0.005	-0.195***	-0.284***
	(0.053)	(0.027)	(0.045)	(0.059)
Male (ref. Female)	-0.002	-0.011	0.006	0.025
	(0.054)	(0.027)	(0.045)	(0.059)
Household income (current, cons.)	0.004	-0.014	-0.003	-0.005
	(0.018)	(0.009)	(0.015)	(0.020)
Voc. training' (ref. primary)	0.018	0.017	-0.019	-0.039
	(0.072)	(0.036)	(0.060)	(0.079)
Secondary edu. (ref. primary)	0.127	-0.112**	-0.109	-0.154+
	(0.083)	(0.041)	(0.069)	(0.091)
Tertiary edu. (ref. primary)	0.176+	-0.201***	-0.148+	-0.141
	(0.093)	(0.047)	(0.078)	(0.102)
Unemployed (ref. employed)	-0.304*	0.076	0.259*	0.366*
	(0.155)	(0.077)	(0.130)	(0.170)
Retired (ref. employed)	-0.160+	0.027	0.141*	0.165+
	(0.084)	(0.042)	(0.071)	(0.093)
In education (ref. employed)	-0.153	-0.054	0.125	0.197
	(0.127)	(0.064)	(0.107)	(0.140)
Not employed (ref. employed)	-0.011	-0.034	0.013	0.035
	(0.129)	(0.064)	(0.108)	(0.142)
Age	0.003	-0.001	-0.002	-0.004
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Public covid risk perception	-0.004	0.008	0.005	0.015
	(0.027)	(0.014)	(0.023)	(0.030)
Wave dummy	-0.014+	0.010**	0.012+	0.017*
	(0.007)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.008)
Num.Obs.	1209	1209	1209	1209
R2	0.029	0.047	0.030	0.033

Table B2. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Support for Specific Party Positions. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. Party positions are estimated using CHES and respondent's voting preferences. Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACP.

C Robustness checks using log-ratios

	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Universal welfare	Social investment	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Universal welfare	Social investment	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Universal welfare	Social investment
risk												
log(tech.c./immig.)	-0.068+	-0.063*	0.143***	0.013								
	(0.037)	(0.028)	(0.036)	(0.032)								
log(offsh./immig.)	0.004	0.020	0.034	0.078*								
	(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.033)								
log(tech.c./offsh.)					-0.068+	-0.063*	0.143***	0.013				
					(0.037)	(0.028)	(0.036)	(0.032)				
log(immig./offsh.)					0.063*	0.043+	-0.176***	-0.092***				
					(0.030)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.026)				
log(immig./tech.c.)									0.063*	0.043+	-0.176***	-0.092***
									(0.030)	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.026)
log(offsh./tech.c.)									0.004	0.020	0.034	0.078*
									(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.037)	(0.033)
Average absolute risk perception	0.160***	0.190***	0.079*	0.021	0.160***	0.190***	0.079*	0.021	0.160***	0.190***	0.079*	0.021
	(0.033)	(0.025)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.025)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.025)	(0.032)	(0.028)
Num.Obs.	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627	1627
R2	0.095	0.122	0.099	0.091	0.095	0.122	0.099	0.091	0.095	0.122	0.099	0.091

Table C1. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Stated Policy Preferences using Log Ratios of Perceived Labour-Market Risks. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. Log ratios of all specific relative risks for a specific DV must sum up to 0. Standard errors are in parentheses. All models include controls for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, household income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure (coefficients not shown). * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. Source: ACPP.

	Laissez- faire	Protect- ionism	Redis- tribution	Public Spending	Laissez- faire	Protect- ionism	Redis- tribution	Public Spending	Laissez- faire	Protect- ionism	Redis- tribution	Public Spending
risk												
log(tech.c./immig.)	-0.083*	-0.006	0.103*	0.072*								
	(0.037)	(0.019)	(0.041)	(0.031)								
log(offsh./immig.)	-0.036	0.016	0.044	0.029								
	(0.038)	(0.019)	(0.042)	(0.032)								
log(tech.c./offsh.)					-0.083*	-0.006	0.103*	0.072*				
					(0.037)	(0.019)	(0.041)	(0.031)				
log(immig./offsh.)					0.119***	-0.010	-0.147***	-0.101***				
					(0.031)	(0.015)	(0.034)	(0.026)				
log(immig./tech.c.)									0.119***	-0.010	-0.147***	-0.101***
									(0.031)	(0.015)	(0.034)	(0.026)
log(offsh./tech.c.)									-0.036	0.016	0.044	0.029
									(0.038)	(0.019)	(0.042)	(0.032)
average absolute risk perception	0.076*	0.047**	-0.092*	-0.066*	0.076*	0.047**	-0.092*	-0.066*	0.076*	0.047**	-0.092*	-0.066*
	(0.033)	(0.017)	(0.037)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.017)	(0.037)	(0.028)	(0.033)	(0.017)	(0.037)	(0.028)
Num.Obs.	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209	1209
R2	0.033	0.053	0.038	0.034	0.033	0.053	0.038	0.034	0.033	0.053	0.038	0.034

Table C2. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and and Support for Specific Party Positions using Log Ratios of Perceived Labour-Market Risks. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. Party positions are estimated using CHES and respondent's voting preferences. Log ratios of all specific relative risks for a specific DV must sum up to 0. Standard errors are in parentheses. All models include controls for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, household income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure (coefficients not shown). * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. Source: ACPP.

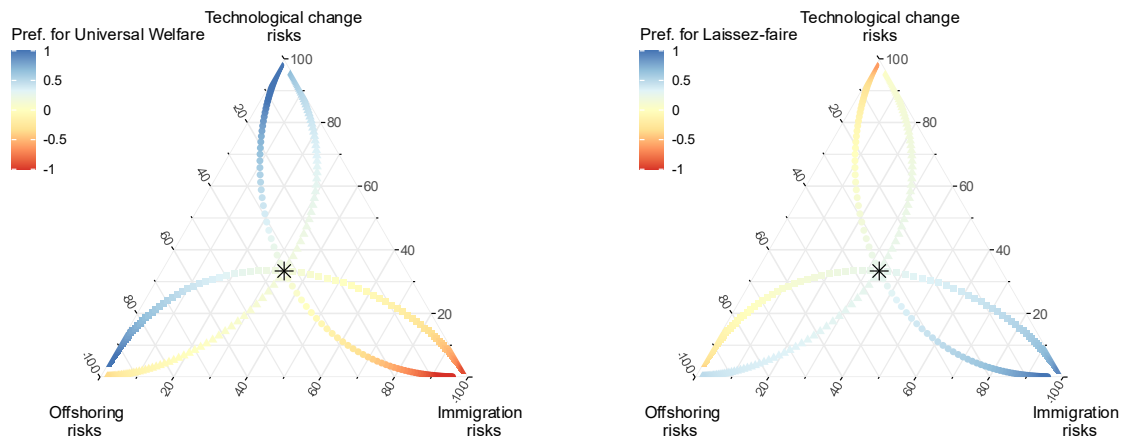


Figure C1: Predicted Universal Welfare and Laissez-Faire Preferences as a Function of Perceived Labour-Market Risks (Compositional Explanatory Variable), Displayed in Ternary Diagrams. Notes: Colors indicate the predicted value of the respective dependent variable for each possible composition of perceived labour-market risks. Predictions are derived using the CoDAImpact package (Dargel and Thomas-Agnan 2024). All models control for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, household income, and perceived COVID crisis exposure. The left panel shows that support for universal welfare decreases as immigration risks account for a larger share of respondents' perceived risk composition. The right panel shows that support for laissez-faire increases with the relative weight of immigration risks. Technological change risks display the opposite pattern, being associated with higher universal welfare support and lower laissez-faire support. Offshoring risks occupy an intermediate position: they are linked to stronger universal welfare preferences when immigration risks are minimal and to stronger laissez-faire preferences when technological change risks are minimal. Source: ACPP.

D Robustness checks using stated voting propensities to calculate preferred party positions

	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Redistribution	Public Spending
Technological change risks	-0.023 (0.029)	-0.005 (0.016)	0.018 (0.024)	0.028 (0.030)
Offshoring risks	-0.061* (0.029)	0.025 (0.016)	0.052* (0.024)	0.065* (0.030)
Immigration risk	0.084*** (0.023)	-0.020 (0.013)	-0.070*** (0.019)	-0.093*** (0.024)
Num.Obs.	1174	1174	1174	1174
R2	0.028	0.023	0.028	0.029

Table D1: Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Support for Specific Party Positions using PTV responses. Linear regression estimates linking relative perceived labour-market risks to the association between respondents' propensities to vote (PTV) and party policy positions. Party positions are derived from CHES data and refer to the five major Austrian parties (SPÖ, ÖVP, FPÖ, Greens, and NEOS). The analysis proceeds in two steps. First, separate individual-level regressions estimate, for each respondent, the relationship between their PTV scores and party positions on four policy proposals. Second, these respondent-specific slopes are regressed on individuals' relative perceived labour-market risks using ImCoDaX. The reported coefficients therefore indicate whether the extent to which respondents align their party preferences with specific party positions varies systematically with their dominant labour-market risk perceptions. To reduce the influence of stable partisan attachments, PTV evaluations for the party supported in the most recent parliamentary election are excluded. Sample sizes for PTV models deviate as respondents who did not answer PTV are excluded for this analysis. All models control for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, perceived COVID-19-related economic risk, and household income (coefficients not shown). Standard errors in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACPP.

E Testing for relationship heterogeneity political orientation

	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Universal welfare	Social investment
Technological change risks	0.040 (0.129)	-0.109 (0.100)	0.217+ (0.125)	0.125 (0.114)
Offshoring risks	-0.264* (0.132)	0.012 (0.102)	0.057 (0.127)	0.077 (0.116)
Immigration risk	0.225* (0.100)	0.097 (0.077)	-0.274** (0.096)	-0.202* (0.088)
Political orient. (1-left, 5-right)	0.054 (0.042)	-0.049 (0.032)	-0.308*** (0.040)	-0.119** (0.037)
Political orient. x Tech. change risks	-0.012 (0.023)	0.017 (0.018)	0.013 (0.022)	-0.020 (0.020)
Political orient. x Offshoring risks	0.072** (0.022)	0.022 (0.017)	0.009 (0.021)	0.015 (0.019)
Political orient. x Immigration risks	-0.018 (0.018)	0.013 (0.014)	0.020 (0.017)	0.021 (0.016)
Num.Obs.	1570	1570	1570	1570
R2	0.116	0.121	0.124	0.102

Table E1. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Stated Policy Preferences Including Linear Interactions Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Political Orientation. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. All models control for survey wave, gender, age, education, employment status, perceived COVID-19-related economic risk, and household income (coefficients not shown). Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACPP.

F Robustness checks using alternative analytical samples and operationalization strategies

Using absolute labour market risks instead of relative risks

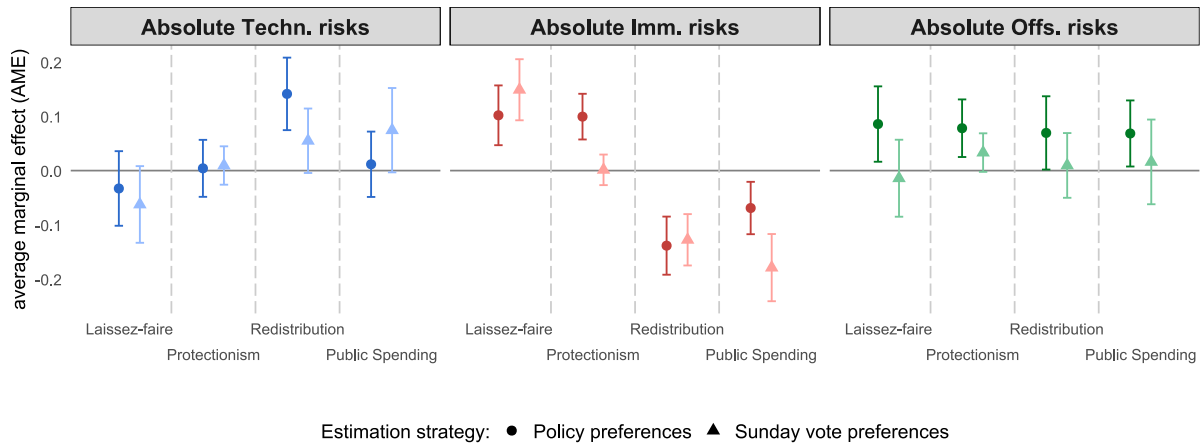


Figure F1: Average marginal effect of *absolute* perceived labour market risks on (a) stated policy preferences and (b) party support by risk source. N for Sunday vote preference models deviate as respondents who did not answer this question are excluded for this analysis: (a) N(individuals)=1112, N(Observations)=1627, (b): N(individuals)=863, N(Observations)= 1209. Models estimated using linear OLS regressions. Controls for wave, gender, age, education, employment status, income, and crisis perception not shown. Source: ACPP.

Using only observations from the initial survey wave

	Laissez-faire	Protectionism	Universal welfare	Social investment
Technological change risks	-0.125 (0.093)	-0.125+ (0.073)	0.232* (0.092)	-0.001 (0.080)
Offshoring risks	0.005 (0.099)	-0.044 (0.077)	0.065 (0.098)	0.163+ (0.085)
Immigration risk	0.120 (0.074)	0.168** (0.058)	-0.297*** (0.073)	-0.162* (0.063)
Num.Obs.	821	821	821	821
R2	0.067	0.077	0.091	0.084

Table F1. Associations Between Perceived Labour-Market Risks and Stated Policy Preferences Using only Observations from the Initial Survey Wave. Notes: Coefficients from linear regression models. Controls for gender, age, education, employment status, income, and crisis perception not shown. Models are estimated using ImCoDaX. Models 2, 4, 6, and 8 additionally control for political orientation. Standard errors are in parentheses. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Source: ACPP.

Estimating models for individual and societal risks separately

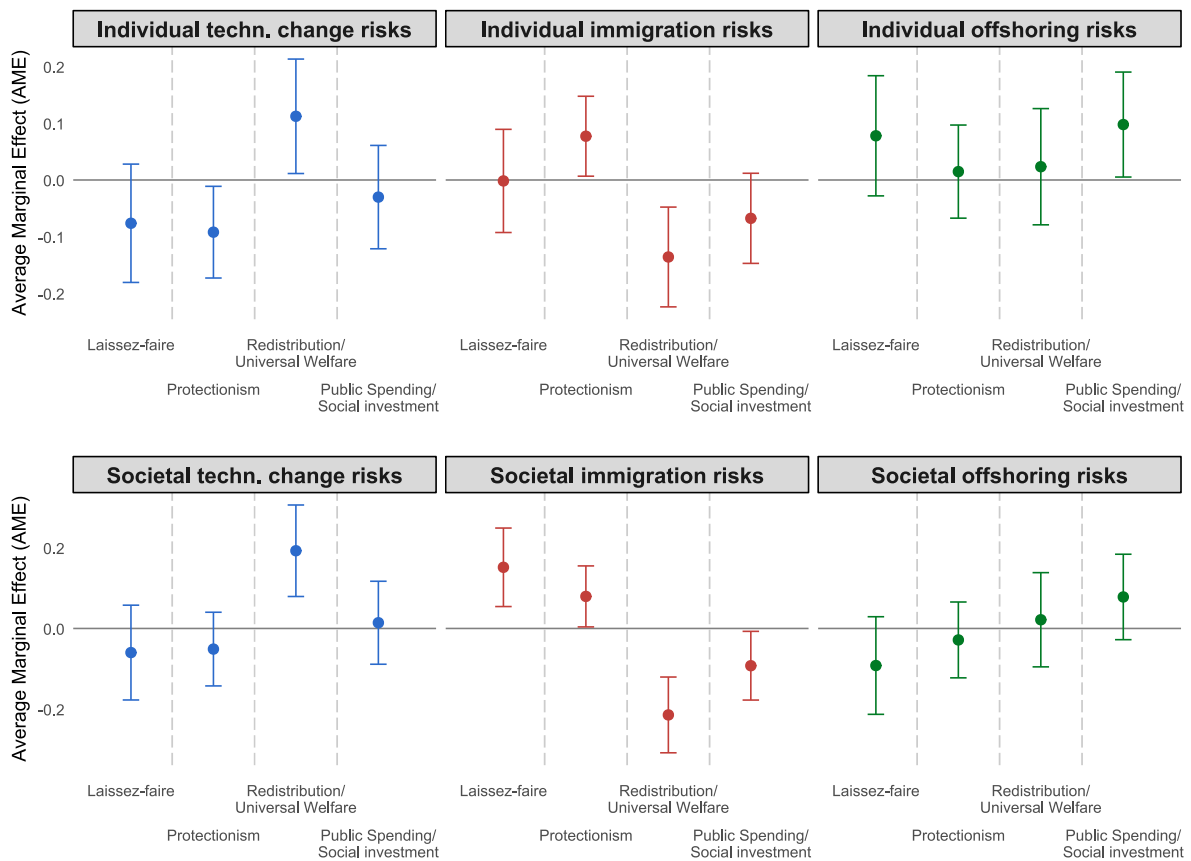


Figure F2: Average marginal effect of individually perceived risks (upper row) and societally perceived risks (lower row) on stated policy preferences by risk source. N(individuals)=1053, N(Observations)=1570. Models estimated using ImCoDaX. Controls for wave, gender, age, education, employment status, income, and crisis perception not shown. Whiskers indicate 95% confidence intervals of the estimates. Source: ACPP.

G Descriptive statistics

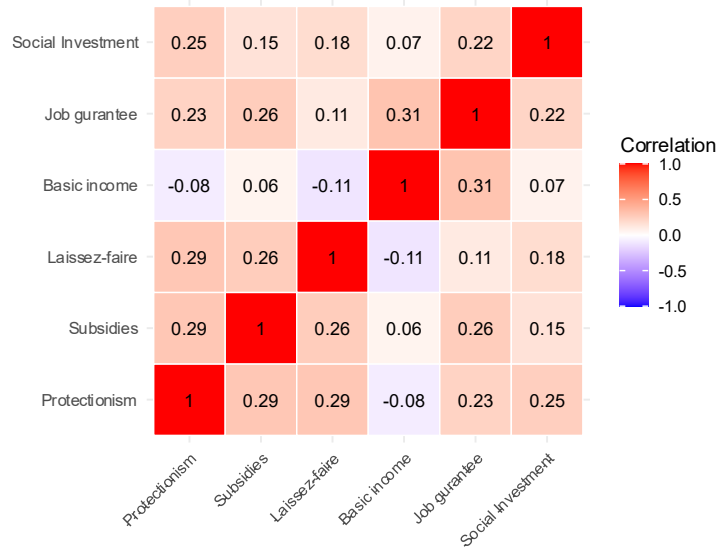


Figure G1. Correlation matrix: single policy preferences. N=1627, Source: ACPP.

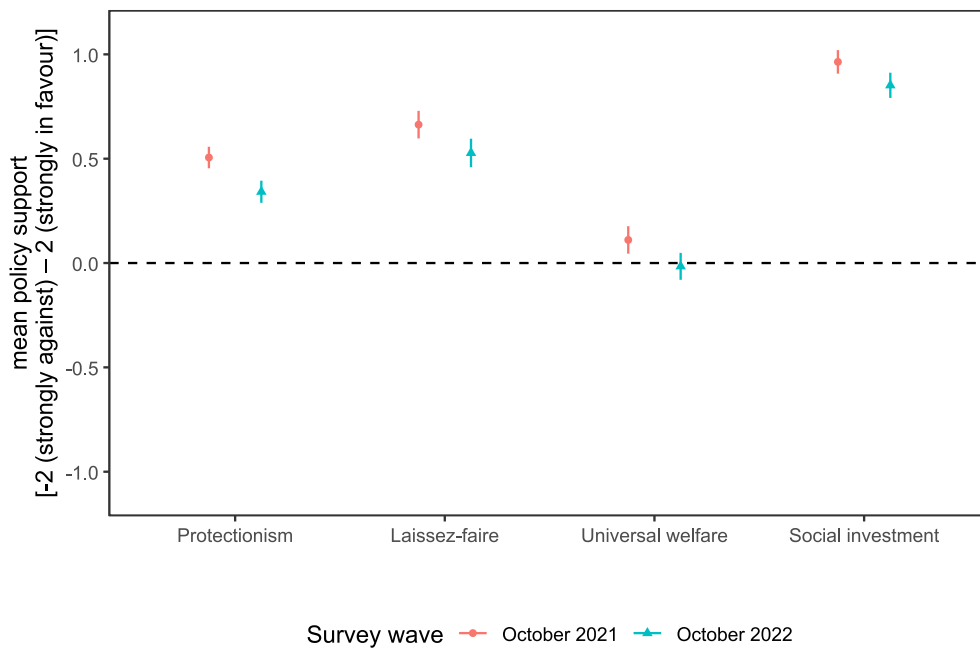


Figure G2: Average policy preferences [-2 (strongly against); 2 (strongly in favour)] for wave 26 (October 2021) & wave 33 (October 2022). N=1627, Source: ACPP.

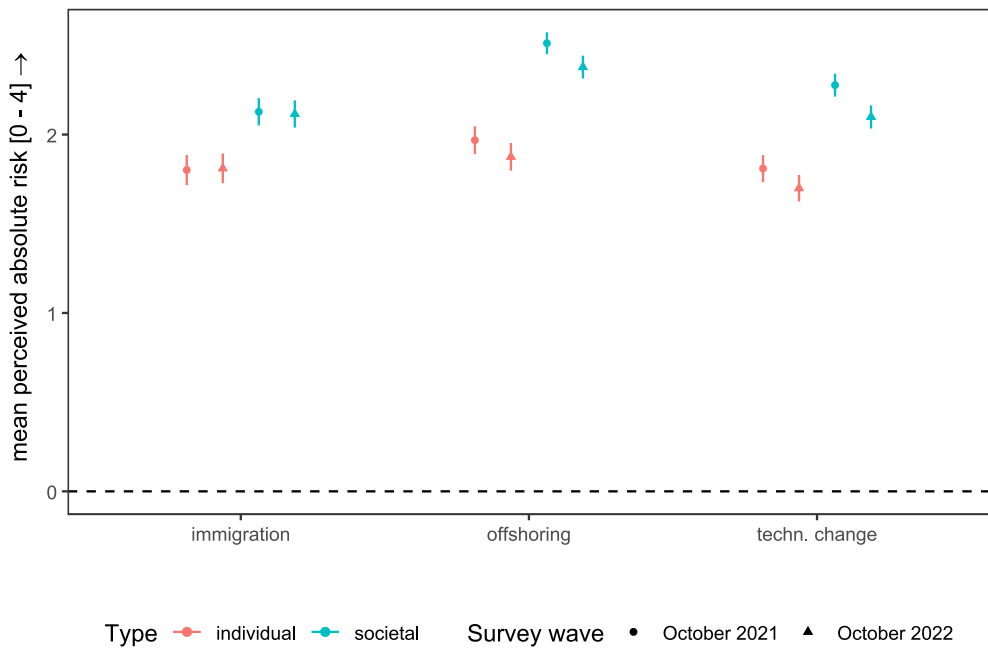


Figure G3: Average perceived absolute risk by type (AI/immigration/offshoring) and scope (individual/societal) of risk across survey waves. N=1627, Source: ACPP.

Literature

Dargel, L., and C. Thomas-Agnan (2024). "Pairwise share-ratio interpretations of compositional regression models." *Computational Statistics & Data Analysis*, Volume 195, pages 107945