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## Who Is a Right-Wing Supporter? On the Biographical Experiences of Young Right-Wing Voters in Poland and Germany<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract** This article explores the selected cases of the biographies of right-wing supporters from a larger sample of narrative interviews with young (18-35 years old) people in Poland and Germany. In the existing literature, we can find the socio-economic explanations of the sources of the right-wing turn (related to economic deprivation, precarisation, social exclusion, labor market competition with immigrants and others), as well as cultural explanations connected with new identity politics, symbolic exclusion and divide between society and political elites, the disembedding from previously solid communities, and the fear of new risks related to the inflow of cultural Others. Despite notable exceptions, it is rather uncommon to discuss in this context the actual biographical experiences of right-wing and far-right supporters. In the article, we take a closer look at four biographical cases of people declaring their political support for far right parties. The analysis of the cases leads to the distinction of socio-economic and socio-political pathways to right-wing populist support.

**Keywords** Right-Wing Populism; Biographical Research; Precarious Work; Poland; Germany

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The results of opinion polls and exit polls following the 2015 parliamentary elections in Poland and the 2017 federal elections in Germany demonstrate a significant share of young people supporting right-wing populist parties. Recognizing the varieties of right-wing populisms (cf. Przyłęcki 2012:17), we follow Jan-Werner Müller (2016:4) and define populism in terms of anti-elitist and anti-pluralist type of governance which exhibits three features: “attempts to hijack state apparatus, corruption and mass clientelism (trading material benefits or bureaucratic favors for political support by citizens who become the populist ‘clients’), and efforts

systematically to suppress civil society.” Populist parties in power, such as the Law and Justice in Poland, tend to “uphold their self-image of a political embodiment of the *volonté générale*” (Pytlas 2017), and thus presenting themselves as a radicalization of mainstream (democratic) views (Mudde 2010), while at the same time pursuing policies which aim at supporting a part of civil society which backs them and undermining the mobilization capacities of their opponents. In 2015 parliamentary elections in Poland, the right-wing populist party, Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS) acquired 37.58% of votes and, according to exit polls, 25.8%

among people aged 18-30. Kukiz'15, which represents newcomers to the parliament unified under "anti-systemic," anti-elite, and nationalistic slogans, was supported by 19.9% of those aged 18-30 (as compared 8.81% votes acquired in the final results) and KORWIN, a Eurosceptic party led by Janusz Korwin-Mikke known, among others, for his radical anti-feminism, was backed by 16.8% of youth (4.76% in final results) (IPSOS 2015). In Germany, a historical turning point was the entry of the Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland, AfD), a far-right, anti-immigration, and Eurosceptic populist party to Bundestag in 2017, when it won 12.6% of votes. According to exit polls (Der Bundeswahlleiter 2017), 8% of people aged 18-24 supported the party. According to the studies, the share of young people in Germany expressing rightist attitudes and hatred towards groups such as asylum-seekers, long-term unemployed, or homeless is rising and could be as large as 39% of those aged 16-30 (Zick, Küpper, and Krause 2016:57).

The most of existing analyses of the support to the new right-wing populism are based on large quantitative survey research and, often qualitative, discourse analysis of media presence of populists parties. This article acknowledges the relevance of discourses understood as "the social activity of making meanings with language and other symbolic systems in some particular kind of situation or setting" (Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2008:6). However, it also addresses an appeal for more internalist perspective in qualitative research on the phenomenon of right-wing populism focusing on the subjective (and reflexive) perspective of participants and supporters of right-wing parties and movements (Goodwin

2006; Blee 2007; Kajta 2017). Therefore, it follows the tradition of biographical research on right-wing radicalization (Inowlocki 2000) in order to understand the role of socio-structural conditions, as well as culturally mediated subjective interpretive practices for the growing support for right-wing parties in Poland and Germany. It is assumed that biographies are not merely reflections of structures provided by the society, but they are also the expressions of narrators' individual agency and reflexivity (Mrozowicki, Turk, and Domecka 2013:30-31). As such, they can help to understand the emergence of right-wing views in the context of biographical experiences and identities.

In the article, we discuss four selected cases of biographies of right-wing supporters from a larger sample of young (18-35 years old) precarious workers in Poland and Germany collected in 2016-2017 within the DFG-NCN supported PREWORK project. We understand precarity, following Kalleberg (2009:2), as a relational concept pointing to "employment that is uncertain, unpredictable, and risky from the point of view of the worker." Thus, precarity cuts across class structure (Dörre 2003) rather than constitutes a single, "new social class," the precariat (Standing 2011). The young precarious workers studied represent a variety of social classes as indicated by their economic and educational resources. What they share are employment conditions marked by insecurity in contractual terms (non-standard or informal employment or unemployment) and economic terms (low or irregular source of income). In the body of the article, following a discussion of the existing explanations of the support for the far right in both countries, we analyze four biographical cas-

es selected in more detail. Our goal is to answer the central research question, namely, what is the relationship between narrators' biographical experiences in the sphere of work and beyond it and their support for the agenda of right-wing parties and social movements.

## Explaining Support for Right-Wing Populism in Poland and Germany

There are multiple ways to explain the right-wing sympathies among young people. They include the references to the need of social protection by the losers of globalization and modernization (Dörre 2003; Kalb 2011) in the context of the crisis of social democracy (Nachtwey and Jörke 2017) and the expansion of precarious (unstable, short-term, low paid) employment (Standing 2011), the rise of cultural anti-liberalism and the rejection of cosmopolitan and post-materialistic values (Inglehart and Norris 2016; Fraser 2017; Kajta 2017), latent racism, xenophobia and authoritarianism (Heitmeyer 2018), and "new racism" which replaces "racist categories by cultural ones" (Lentin and Titley 2011). Other approaches point to the disappointment with democracy and its liberal elites which are criticized by both the eroding middle and impoverished popular classes (e.g., Zick et al. 2016; Gdula 2018). Simplifying the existing approaches, they can be divided into (1) socio-economic explanations focusing on the mechanisms related to broadly understood precarisation, (2) socio-political explanations referring to the perceived alienation of political elites, and (3) socio-cultural explanations pointing to cultural changes in late modern societies, in particular the conflict between fundamentalist and postmodern values, which in

turn is clearly visible in the contradiction between populism and cosmopolitan liberalism (Inglehart and Norris 2016:22).

The existing research makes use of the aforementioned explanations to discuss the successes of right-wing populist parties in Poland and Germany. In the case of Germany, in the early days, the political program of AfD was mainly EU-skeptic. However, in the last parliamentary elections, it focused its claim on anti-refugee policy. More than 60% of AfD voters claimed that their decision was based on disappointment with other parties and only 32% claimed that they supported the political program of AfD (Infratest Dimap 2017). AfD was able to mobilize a large number of non-voters or first-time voters. AfD voters show a number of characteristics. They perceive themselves as socio-economically deprived (Tutic and von Hermann 2018), show a low trust in democracy and the current government (Ripple and Seipel 2018), and/or have illiberal, right-wing ideas (Lengfeld 2018). They are above-the-average male, living in the new federal states, and often older people living in the countryside (Franz, Fratzscher, and Kritikos 2018). The most recent debate mainly focuses on socio-economic explanations for the right-wing support of which level is claimed to be different among the members of various social classes (Nachtwey and Jörke 2017; Lengfeld 2018). Especially blue collar workers in West Germany would long for the re-establishment of the social market economy of the 1970s and those in East Germany would regret the loss of the community of workers in the former DDR (Sauer 2018). Politically, the rise of the far right is seen as a new emergent divide between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism

which goes beyond that of the (traditional) left and right (Merkel 2017). Socio-cultural explanations focus on the loss of the “pride” and recognition of the “little man on the street” who mourns the loss of traditional cultural norms, especially gender ones (Sauer 2018), as well as a continuity of authoritarian character in German society (Heitmeyer 2018) and, in particular, a fear of immigration (Lengfeld 2018). The socio-political explanations are less prominent at the moment in the German debate (Ripple and Seipel 2018).

In Poland, the electoral success of right-wing populist parties is explained by their neo-authoritarian appeal offering various sections of the Polish society and opportunity to join a national community in opposition to cultural Others, liberal and EU elites, feel national pride and symbolic cultural significance (Gdula 2018), the political organization of anger of those excluded in the course of transformation (Ost 2005; Kalb 2011; Pierzchalski and Rydliński 2017), the weakness of left-wing alternatives, limited legitimacy of liberal elites, and the relevance of social program of PiS appealing to the disadvantaged sections of the society (Śpiewak 2010). One of the popular explanations of the sustained support for Law and Justice, in particular among its liberal critics, is related to political clientelism in which the party, in power since 2015, offered the underprivileged strata and classes in Poland tangible economic advantages which helped to secure their backing despite anti-liberal reforms pursued in the country (e.g., income support for families with two and more children “500 Plus” or policies aimed at limitation of civil law contracts [cf. Kajta and Mrozowicki 2018]). Yet, regardless of workers’ friendly policies,

the results of existing studies are rather ambiguous as far as the social profile of the PiS supporter is concerned. According to the analysis by Gdula (2018) and his research team, the PiS discourse, based on the strong criticism of the liberal elites and anti-establishment attitudes, in combination with its socio-economic reforms, has found favorable context across various segments of the Polish society.

The support for right-wing populist ideas in the youngest cohorts of voters varies in Poland and Germany. While the electoral support among those aged 18-30 was high in Poland, the majority of the AfD voters in Germany were above 35 years old. However, as we have shown in an earlier study (Lorenzen et al. 2018), even though the perception of one’s own precarity as a transitional phase of youth might have made the youngest people less supportive of right-wing parties, once they realize that precarity is an internal aspect of their working lives and their hopes for upward mobility cannot be met, their turn to the right becomes more probable.

Both in Poland and in Germany, there are various approaches to explain the spread of rightist opinions among young people. First, it is suggested that young people are generally less interested in politics than other age cohorts and in case they turn into the public sphere, they tend to search for parties and social movements with a more radical outlook (Messyasz 2015). As many of them have still no established political viewpoints, they are particularly susceptible to populist publicity campaigns offering simple, dichotomized vision of the world (e.g., the “people” vs. the “establishment”). Presenting themselves as “apolitical” (Szafraniec et al. 2018:285)



often means being against the mainstream politics dominated by centrist and liberal parties in the not-so-distant past. Secondly, the spread of far-right opinions among young people is interpreted as a strategy for dealing with “fears and crises of orientation,” typical of their age (Hanesch 1994:39; Szafraniec 2012; Jurczyszyn 2014) and searching for stronger points of reference and identity. For Heitmeyer (2018), the increase in extreme rightist views among young people can be explained by, among other things, the disturbed transitions to adulthood in which achieving economic independence is increasingly difficult. For Szafraniec and colleagues (2017:285), the popularity of right-wing movements and parties among young people in European countries needs to be explained both by their political disorientation and the loss of trust in political elites.

Regardless of the types of explanations, they share some flaws, including, most importantly, the difficulty to explain why it is only in some cases that the conditions of economic uncertainty or, more broadly speaking, existential insecurity among young adults contribute to the emergence of right-wing rather than left-wing views. In this context, it is clear that accounting for the support of right-wing populist parties among young people requires adapting “theoretical sensitivity” (Glaser 1978) which combines various approaches. Certainly, the turn to right-wing ideologies depends on their availability in local contexts as a part of the “repertoires of contention” which draw on “the identities, social ties, and organizational forms that constitute everyday social life” (Tilly and Tarrow 2015:20). Since liberalism and left-wing views are often identified by right-wing parties as dominant ideologies in Eu-

rope, the right-wing starts to be seen as the main alternative to what is seen as the existing, hegemonic order. This effect is magnified if socialist discourses are considered as a part of corrupted *ancien régime*, as in the case of many Eastern European countries (Ost 2005). However, as argued by Dörre (2006) and Sommer (2010), as well as the advocates of internalist perspective in the analysis of far-right activism (Goodwin 2006; Blee 2007), in order to understand the increase in right-wing attitudes it is not enough to describe the macro-social and cultural opportunity structure. It is necessary to take into account the subjective perception of their situation by young people themselves. This is where our analysis of young workers’ biographical experiences in Poland and Germany has its roots. Their life stories, the way of telling and justifying life decisions let us better understand the narrators’ worldviews and reasons for supporting right-wing politics.

## Methodological Background

The empirical research used for the purpose of this paper is based on the data acquired in the Polish-German study on young people aged 18-35 in non-standard employment, unemployed or precarious forms of traineeship and vocational education trainings. In total, we collected 123 biographical narrative interviews with young people in Poland (63) and Germany (60). The data were collected in the locations differentiated by their economic dynamic and situation: four middle-size cities in the “new” and “old” German Federal States, as well as three large cities, two mid-sized cities, two small towns, and one village in Lower Silesia, Mazovia, and Lodz regions in Poland. Interviews were designed in line

with Fritz Schütze's (1983) method and comprised of three parts: the first part following the request to tell us the entire life history of interviewees, the second part including additional biographical questions about the issues not covered in the first part, and the third part including topics such as transition from school to work, the meanings of work and activities in the life beyond work, social activism, political views, and the images of social order.

Out of the larger sample of interviews with young workers, for the purpose of this paper, we decided to focus on those who express support for right-wing populist parties and social movements. For this purpose, we operationalized the support of right-wing populist parties and social movements by adhering to at least two out of three criteria: (1) voting or declared intention to vote for right-wing populist parties (AfD in Germany, KORWIN, Kukiz'15, or PiS in Poland); (2) expressing racist, homophobic, or anti-refugee views; (3) participating in demonstrations and marches organized by right-wing populist milieu (in particular, the National Rebirth of Poland and the National Movement in Poland, AfD or PEGIDA in Germany). The criteria (1) and (3) are straightforward since they directly point to the political participation (voting behaviors/intentions or mobilization); the criterion (2), in turn, refers to the agenda of the (far) right-wing parties and, thus, can point to the potential support of them. Adherence and support could be formulated in different parts of the interview to be considered by us. Two parts of the interview were in the traditional sense biographical, containing a narration and clarifying still stimulation elements of a narration. In the third part of the inter-

view, we added semi-structured questions around society, social structure, and political views.

During the fieldwork, we tried to access these categories of young people in various ways: through personal contacts (the acquaintances of acquaintances), attempts to contact nationalist organizations via emails and social media, and, in Germany, visiting AfD stands during electoral campaigns and contacts made with football supporters. However, there was rather limited success in reaching the supporters of populist far right. In Poland, we collected three cases of activists who declared participation in demonstrations and marches organized by far right groups and met one of the additional criteria. In addition, there were 13 cases in which at least one of the aforementioned conditions was met. In Germany, three cases of AfD supporters were collected. The German sample also includes four more cases which do not meet at least two criteria of right-wing populism as operationalized in this article, but they show signs that suggest at least a latent racist attitude or strong authoritarian ideas.

For the purpose of this article, we have chosen four cases of right-wing supporters which were diversified in terms of their social background and their current economic situation (relatively stable in the case of Marian and Sven vs. relatively unstable in the case of Johanna and Marianna). Even though we focused in our research on precarity, the analysis of full biographical interviews made it possible what economic reasonings implied by the socio-economic explanation for right-wing populism precisely leads to the support of right-wing parties and social movements. The analysis of interviews combined

some elements of narrative analysis as developed by Schütze (2008) and the grounded theory methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978), including open coding, selective coding, and memo writing. For each interview, we reconstructed biographical portraits and developed extensive analytical memos which are summarized in the next part.

## The Analysis of Four Cases of Right-Wing Supporters

The analysis carried out for the purpose of the entire project revealed that regardless of political orientations, narrators' statements about "politics" did not appear in the center of their extempore narrations (the 1<sup>st</sup> part of the interview) except for a limited number of cases in which they were directly involved in social movements or trade union activism (Mrozowicki forthcoming). It was not surprising in so far as we knew from the existing research (e.g., Szafraniec et al. 2017) that in all advanced countries "[v]oter turnout among young people tends to be low, relatively few belong to political parties and, in surveys, they tend to express a low level of interest in national politics" (Furlong 2013:214). Therefore, analyzing extempore narratives and accounts in the third part of interviews, we paid attention to indirect ways in which the political issues *implicitly* emerged in the modes of constructing their accounts by our young narrators. In doing so, we assumed that declared anti-political stance and biographical irrelevance of politics might in some cases lead to critique of specific aspects of the political system (Messyasz 2015:75).

Similarly to our larger sample, extempore narratives of right-wing supporters did not include direct ref-

erence to conventional politics. However, once directly asked about their political views, it appeared that those who reveal right-wing attitudes share some common traits in their biographies, including the feeling of injustice combined with resentment towards cultural Others. Exploring the cases of Johanna, Marianna, Marian, and Sven, we were wondering if and which experiences in individual lives lead to such political dispositions.

### The Case of Johanna

At the time of the interview Johanna was 23 years old. She was born in a mid-sized city in southwest Germany (W-city) into a low, middle-class family. Her early childhood was spent in a small village. After her parents got divorced when she was 5 years old, Johanna first lived together with her mum in a nearby city and later they followed her mum's new partner to a bigger city. Johanna reconstructs her parents' divorce during her early youth as a changing point after which living conditions for the whole family deteriorated. The beginning of the interview documents a potential of biographical trajectory of suffering "in which persons are not capable of actively shaping their own life anymore, since they can only react to overwhelming outer events" (Schütze 2008:14). An idealized picture of an intact middle-class family living in a quiet village is contrasted with privation, relational conflict, and the urge for mobility. Johanna finds it painful to recall these events, which is indicated by the hesitant style of her narrative:

**Johanna:** Ok. Well, I was born here in W.-city and (.) then I lived in G.-town, that's a small town close



to here, for about half a year with my mom and my dad, because my mom grew up there and the house of my grandma is there and my dad bought a house there in S. in G.-village, which is a very small village with about 500 inhabitants. So we moved there and- (2) Yes, so the first four, five years I can't say much. I know that I, em-, (.) was on the road a lot with my dad, he bikes a lot. (.) Em- ((drawn out)) (.) We were also travelling around a lot with the motor home on the weekends. And I know that I, already as a small child, had a very strong relationship with my dad. (.) Otherwise I think I screamed a lot as a child, I was no planned child, I think my mom had some issues with me in the beginning.

At the age of 13 the relation with her mother worsens and Johanna wants to move out from home, but eventually she stays with her mum. At 15 she gets a job in promotion by chance, handing out flyers during the weekend and earning up to 10 Euros per hour, thus having good pocket money. Shortly before her *Abitur* she suffers from appendicitis which causes recurring health issues and further operations. When her appendix ruptured, her mother misjudged and ignored her pain, interpreting the daughter's complaints as an attempt to skip school which further magnified distrust between them. Being bound to bed, Johanna manages to pass all exams, but does not quite achieve results as good as she wished for.

After graduating she immediately moves out and back to W.-city and starts working in a large department store for a while until she starts a voluntary year at a hospital. At the same time she meets her first boyfriend. Having finished her voluntary year,

Johanna starts one year of dual vocational training in wholesale and foreign trade with the option to another year to graduate as a commercial specialist (*Handelsfachwirt*). During her training Johanna surprisingly becomes pregnant. As her partner disagrees with keeping the baby, he leaves her shortly after the baby is born and Johanna invests all her energy in finishing her training and starting the second year as a commercial specialist. At the present day, when she is 23 and a single mother, she receives Hartz IV (financial assistance for unemployment combined with his/her commitment to labor market activation) which sums up to 1100€ and has exams for her training as *Handelsfachwirt* coming up. To make some extra money on the side she sells her old clothes online on e-bay. Despite her wish to improve her financial situation and even with her son at the nursery, finding a "proper" part-time job has proven difficult, and the search for a bigger flat for herself and the child, unsuccessful. Being betrayed and left by her partner and first long-term boyfriend has not fully biographically worked either and reappears in the coda of the interview: "Now (.) well now with his dad everything is going through child services. (.) Em-, (4) and-, ((drawn out)) (.) yeah he is just very, very manipulative. (...) that is \*quite (.) difficult\* ((hesitant)) because you can't stop contact completely."

Johanna finds herself in a situation in which she can neither hold up the old image of herself as strong and independent nor is she able to build a new identity in line with her ideal of a middle-class family. Being dependent on social benefits and unable to find employment is in her view clearly linked to the single parenthood. Asked in how far her current liv-

ing conditions are limiting or empowering for the life she would like to have, she answers:

**Johanna:** Well, occupationally, and I'd say for my living standard too it limits me a lot because you're really not respected as a single parent, but as I said, I've already sent so many applications. I didn't even get one answer. Earlier I always sent the same one and always got the job. Uh, and then I, I really looked during the pregnancy for a flat. I looked for one after I had him [the child], and you're not accepted, now I find that really bad. Above all when you go to the city [local council] and they say well, municipal flats are out, because they're all reserved for refugees. Uh, well, and then you do get a bit, well, hateful too, that nothing's happening.

Johanna is a good example of how feelings of helplessness, abandonment, and betrayal lead to bitterness towards the welfare state and prepare a fertile terrain for populist notions. Aside from her material worries, Johanna also suffers from a deterioration of her social world, as she feels that her friends are turning away. The absence of her usual personal and occupational interactions causes an increasing feeling of isolation. Besides expressing frustration about labor market discrimination of single mothers, she also feels politically mobilized to criticize and express her disappointment with the welfare state, which seems to be giving priority to a competing group. In another part of the interview she points to refugees as a "big topic" and one of the central lines of conflict in the country which indirectly indicates the role of media in representing immigrants as the source of problems ("the refugee issue is of course still, for about one or two years it's

been a big topic"). However, she does not reveal her political views until directly asked for whom is she going to vote:

**Interviewer:** Hm, (3) mh ((drawn out)) do you go vote?

**Johanna:** I've never gone to vote before, but now I will go. (.) ((laughter))

**Interviewer:** Why will you go vote now? (.)

**Johanna:** Em-, (2) yes, (.) because fucks me off a bit. Well, I have, (.) in the last \*two years\* ((laughing)) (.) gotten to be a bit more right, I would say. Em-, (.) and I really just partially find it really unfair, (.) like that I-, I am of course not speaking for everyone, (.) but (.) I, for example, have my vocational training next to an asylum seekers hostel. And (2) eh-, I think that there is really-, a lot of money being put into that. And (.) partially they get so many chances and all of that gets ruined. And gets broken again and they get so much support, really, where I partly get less and they get an apartment and everything and that (.) yeah, that's just too much for me. (5)

**Interviewer:** And for or against what would you vote?

**Johanna:** I would vote AFD.

The organization of Johanna's justification of her plan to vote indicates an attempt to mitigate and temper her prejudices. She uses an agency-denying strategy ("things" happen to her and she is unsuccessful in counteracting them) and presents herself as a realist observer of society. Her case shows how rightwing populist attitudes develop not only out of fear of being culturally dominated, but as an answer to the issue of distributional justice and out of social envy. Instead of facing the structural causes of her dependency Johanna focuses in a moralizing way mainly on the competition for welfare state benefits

on which she currently needs to rely. She brings refugees into causal connection with her own situation and holds them responsible: her denigration of refugees serves to legitimate her own claim to more benefits and assistance. The critique of the injustice of her own situation results from direct observation of her immediate environment, and from there is abstracted into realms beyond her personal experience. She decides to vote for the rightwing populist party because it promised to undertake something against this competing group for public benefits and assistance, by reducing the number of refugees in the country, or by restricting their access to social security system benefits. Yet, her statements are full of doubts and hesitation.

### The Case of Marianna

Marianna was at the time of the interview 25 years old. She was born in a rather small town (B.-town) in a former mining district in Lower Silesia, close to a larger town WZ. She has an older brother (33 years old). She comes from a working class family: her mum was a shop attendant and her father a welder. She describes her family as a “loving family,” relatively “well-off” due to the fact of having a small grocery shop by parents. Marianna attends primary school and so-called “musical” lower secondary school. Similarly to the case of Johanna, her story starts with the depiction of growing a “cumulative mess” (Schütze 2008:2) resulting from the separation of her parents, drug addiction of her brother, economic and family problems. A macro-social context is the collapse of the family-run shop and her father’s migration abroad; a frequent fate of small businesses established in the 1990s (Domecka 2010):

**Marianna:** So, it started a veery long time ago (.) As a little girl, I was a very happy little girl, in a loving family, loving mother, loving father, great supportive nine year- older-brother (.), who, according to stories, changed my diapers because he loved me so much. Until... (3) my parents had a shop, everything was going great, they were well-off financially (2)... Until the shop started slowly failing, mother got ill, dad decided that he would go abroad to work, ‘cause it was supposed to be even better. They were planning to build a house, new cars... A fairytale (\*smacking\*). And finally dad came back home for Christmas, I was eleven at the time, twelve... I was finishing primary school, I was to start the junior secondary school (2). And he said he was leaving. Because he found a new love abroad. Mum knew about it earlier, but she was hiding it because she did not know how it would really end and finally he left. And then everything started. My brother went into drugs (...) I was in a quite demanding school, a musical junior secondary school. This cost as well, you had to pay for the instrument, there were problems with my brother, who was on detox later... but was still aggressive. We had to escape the house with my mother, go to my aunt, live there for some time until my brother calmed down (2). This is how it all went down and down (5).

The idyllic picture of family life marked by the family plans of social advancement through entrepreneurship gets broken due to a range of uncontrollable events. As the result of some kind of “failed project” of her parents (investing in her education and cultural capital, running own business) and family problems (separation, brother’s drug addiction, mother’s illness) Marianna is left without the support and, as documented in subsequent parts of

the interview, attempts several times to develop life projects on her own, quite often painfully learning by mistakes, but also acting against social expectations (“I just do things to spite everybody”).

As the teenager Marianna starts taking light drugs and “legal highs” (*dopalacze*), explaining it by family situation; she also drinks quite a lot of alcohol, steals some jewelry from her mother which ultimately leads to her leaving her mum’s flat and moving to her father’s (and grandmother’s) flat. At the age of 18, she leaves upper secondary school (lyceum) without finishing it due to growing problems with her education and various kinds of addictions. One year later she meets her boyfriend, Kryspin, who is eight years older and married. Marianna decides to live with him, which means for her another phase of going “her own way.” At that time she gets her first work experiences in electronic industry factories near to Wrocław and distributing leaflets of mini-loan company in WB. Meanwhile, however, her relationship gets disturbed as her boyfriend is alcoholic and behaves aggressively, eventually he disappears without any notice. Soon after, Marianna starts to live with Zenon, her co-worker, but their relationship does not last long because of his alcohol problems which makes her feel like she is reaching a “real bottom.” After moving out, she meets her current partner, Kostek. It is another turning point in her life and starts a biographical metamorphosis of Marianna who gets new energy to cope with biographical problems.

The birth of their daughter in 2015 improves relations with both of her parents and makes Marianna completely stop with alcohol and change her prior-

ities (“But, since I am with Kostek, we have Aleksandra, I became mature somehow, strong and everything is for them, for my family, so everything is ok”). As her daughter experiences some serious health problems (with symptoms of epilepsy and explained by Marianna as a side effect of vaccination) she becomes also a supporter of the anti-vaccination movement and gets increasingly fascinated by legal issues connected with the health care system. She is even asked to be a local leader of the anti-vaccination movement, but she refuses (“But, I did not agree because it is a bit too big, too big an obligation for me”). Similarly to Johanna, Marianna’s concentration on her child’s good is a permanent line in her narrative. Both Marianna and Kostek do not have a permanent job. They live for six months in the United Kingdom, but Marianna does not like their new surroundings, mostly because of her neighborhood being populated by Muslims.

Upon their return to Poland, Marianna decides to finish secondary school and starts to work in the post office. She is very pleased with her work despite that she experiences quite a lot of internal competition, mostly due to the fact that having a little child, she could only work one shift (“I will be a lady from the post office. Post lady. Elegant clothes. I have to be nice at the counter, clean smelling, eloquent, computer, office work”). After some time, she was offered a part-time probation period contract; however, despite the contract being part-time, she could not choose the shifts she worked on which made it impossible to combine taking care of her daughter with her work. It is also the time when Kostek works abroad (Germany, Sweden) from time to time. At the time of the interview, both of them are searching for

new job opportunities attending the driving license courses. Marianna's biggest dream is to have a happy family and find a "clean" job in administration. She finishes her interview with a coda in which she emphasizes the symbolic "break with the painful past": "For so many years, it was going so bad for me. I wrote diaries which when we came back from Great Britain I burnt all in the heating unit. I said I did not want this past and it gave me a lot, because since I burnt them, I do not go back in my thoughts to the past. I live with what is today."

In the interview with Marianna, the dominant biographical process structure is the biographical trajectory of suffering marked by the feeling overwhelmed by powerful outer forces (Schütze 2008), which is only partially overcome by (rather fragile) maternity. A strong emphasis is placed on the desire of being a "normal girl" and having "a normal life," as well as on rather intriguing figures of "cleanness" (connected with her dream job in administration). She seems to have achieved some kind of fragile stability, but there are several potential biographical traps she might fall into, including potential alcohol problems of her fiancé, as well as lack of stable jobs.

Similarly to the interview with Johanna, there are not many references to explicitly political issues in the interview with Marianna. Implicitly, however, political statements are present in her views on the social world she lives in: she is afraid of the medical system which is accused of imposing harmful vaccination on her daughter, she is distrustful of her colleagues at work, as well as friends and family members (at whom she discerns a risk of drinking alcohol in the presence of her daughter), and she is

physically afraid of Muslims and refugees mentioning "ban on refugees" as the first thing she would do if she had power to change things in Poland. In the part in which she is asked about her political views, she says:

**Marianna:** Mhh... I am not interested in politics (4). More... I mean (\*louder until\*), maybe I am interested a bit, more about the refugees (\*). This stay in Great Britain, when we were for half a year in Great Britain. I got to hate Islam very much. Very much! We lived for three months in C. where there were thirty mosques and no white person in the street, and I had too much of them. They were rude, unpleasant, almost run over us on the pavement. They almost killed our daughter in the pram, because they run the car right into the pram, and they wanted to fight us afterwards. This was all in Great Britain. So I really took a dislike to them. So in terms of politics, this is the only thing that interests me, so they do not accept them among us.

The main fears expressed by Marianna are connected with her daughter's safety. She frames a short story from the UK in a similar manner like a story about health problems which she links with the vaccination of her daughter: there is Marianna and her family opposed to the threatening external world from which she needs to protect them. She thinks about politics as a way of defending her and her family against religious strangers she encountered in the UK and recalls as dangerous for children and aggressive, rude, and unpleasant. It fits into the central oppositions organizing the life story of Marianna which is based on the logic of "getting by," in a threatening external world. In such a context, Muslims seem to perform the same role as doctors



demanding children's vaccination: they are a part of externally imposed rules, legitimated by the dominant culture and state, and contested as they are seen as threatening fragile stability of a life world achieved by Marianna and her family.

### The Case of Marian

The third case analyzed is 22-year-old Marian, born into a working-class / low, middle-class family in a Z.-city (in Opolskie Voivodeship in south-west Poland), with his father being an electrician and mum educated as an accountant (but working as a cleaner). He has a younger brother with whom he gets along well (having at the moment a shared business, selling online games). His interview begins with a biographical process structure of institutional expectation pattern in which he presents his life as institutionally shaped and normatively defined (Schütze 2008:11) by the model of working-class educational career as an electrician, similarly to his father:

**Marian:** Eee... I finished electrical vocational secondary school. I started the school in Z.-city, in Opolskie Voivodeship. Yyy, due to some private matters, I finished it in D.-city [in Mazowieckie Voivodeship], my father is also an electrician, maybe that is where it came from, since I was young I used to go to construction sites, or other places, it helped a bit, didn't it?

When he is in technical secondary school, aged 18, his parents get divorced, after which he and his brother move with his mum to a mid-sized city in central Poland. As their financial situation at home is rather poor, he goes abroad to earn some mon-

ey and got some job in a construction site, working with much older workers. He works as an electrician, without contract, making installations. In a specific way, he frames the moment of getting employed, connecting it with the day of Warsaw uprising against the German occupation in 1944:

**Marian:** Later, when the German called me, only "Ja, Ja" [interviewee imitates German talking on the phone]. It was a bit funny, funny situation like this. Because he called when it was 1st, 1st August [Warsaw Uprising anniversary], at W hour [hour the Warsaw Uprising started] when all the sirens were on, and the German called [laughter]. And I am talking to him, I say, he hit it on the spot [laughter]. You know, I went there by bus, and what. There was no contract.

The figure of a "German employer" calling on the anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising to offer Marian a job can be interpreted in terms of ironic reference to historical experiences of conflicts, now translated into domain of work in precarious conditions, without a contract. Nevertheless, migratory experience is interpreted by Marian as a biographical turning point, in which his own decision-making power and independence were proved, as well as technical skills acquired strictly to the direction of his vocational training. From this moment on, Marian's story is focused almost exclusively on professional transformation resulting—in his own interpretation—from his courage, self-determination, and resourcefulness. Biographical problems are generally pushed into the background and not discussed: he explicitly refuses to talk about some of them which he sees as painful (e.g., divorce of parents). Upon returning to Poland from Germany, after 2,5 months,

Marian finishes his secondary vocational education and receives technical qualifications as an electrician. As his plan to become a firefighter fails during the admission process, he searches for another job in a large city (a WW.-city). Firstly, he works in a construction site, then he gets a job on an island in the Mediterranean Sea. Once he returns to Poland, he works shortly as a waiter, registers as unemployed, and finally finds a job as an electrician in a factory. The occupational accident in a plant (a machine hit into his face) is seen by him as another turning point in his life:

**Marian:** They wanted me to stay at work. I had sick leave and so on, but for me it was a definite end, “Man, you have to change something.” I went for the [IT] course. It was two months long. It was in Katowice. Yyy. With the course, let us say, I incurred some debt. I knew that if the programming would not work, would not work, this vision would not come true, then I would have had to go back abroad [laughter] and work it back. Yyy, but it worked, I finished the course, for two months I looked for work. I found work, in fact one in D. [city in the Mazowieckie Voivodeship], but yy, I was thinking about the WW.-city because here you have better perspectives in terms of this sector and yy, I got a job in the WW.-city.

Working in the IT sector is a true metamorphosis for Marian. Encouraged by the vision of good work, he takes some loans to finance the course in programming and finds a job in the WW.-city, in which he claims to earn around 5000 PLN for the last couple of months (1200 EUR), working with specific task contract (*umowa o dzieło*) first and then with contract of mandate (*umowa zlecenie*). Taking loans to do IT

training, he is motivated by media discourse on excellent working conditions and wages in the sector (“I read a lot of articles in which they wrote that programmers earn so much”). He does not see his situation as precarious and unstable even though he does not get any extra benefits. He expects to earn at least 10 thousand zlotys in a couple of years and concludes his extempore narration by saying: “The work is really good. The salary is ok, the atmosphere at work is very good, the company is great. My project is a bit poor, but this changes, it will change into something better, so, so, in professional terms, this is my best. In general [5.0].”

Despite follow up questions, Marian does not talk too much about his life beyond work: he has good relations with his mother and his brother, but no contacts with his father. He can afford living in a monitored neighborhood, renting a shared flat in a new block of flats. In his leisure time, he does street workouts, sometimes also giving some shows for children. As for the future, besides professional plans (which “will change many times”), he dreams of having a full family; indicating, likewise in earlier stories, a dream of “normality”: “to have a son, plant a tree, and build a house [laughter].” Considering himself as a socially advancing self-made man, he successfully capitalizes various occupational experiences and turns them into assets to be used for the sake of economic upgrading of his situation. Marian also considers himself a practical man who “likes to do their job well,” not even being passionate about it, but striving for good earning and respect at work. This resembles some features of traditional workers’ habitus (Bourdieu 1984) which stayed as important refer-

ence point for Marian due to his origins, despite the experience of economic advancement.

The combination of working-class dispositions to work hard and do one's job well with the idea that "nobody ever gave me anything for free" defines not only Marian's life strategy, but also his political views. He mentions them directly only after an explicit question, but goes on to talk about them for more than fifteen minutes in a tone marked by passion. He speaks about his support for right-wing parties (he voted for Kukiz'15 in previous election and expresses his support for extreme right, marginal politician, Marian Kowalski). Encouraged by his friend, he also joined Independence Marches organized in Warsaw by the National Movement and other far right groups on 11 November each year ("The atmosphere is incredible, because when you walk in a crowd of tens of thousands with Polish flags, singing the anthem together, this is an incredible experience"). While he strongly emphasizes his disinterest in politics (seen as a domain of incompetence and manipulation), he also describes the Independence March as an event "in which there is relatively little politics."

Yet, despite his explicit refusal of politics, the interview with Marian includes a relatively consistent set of far-right set of statements. He combines anti-refugee views with the critique of political establishment, the promotion of LGTB marriages and child adoption (as going against "nature"), and women's rights to abortion (seen as concerning the minority of society). He expresses his opposition both to the Civic Platform and Law and Justice. The opposition to PiS stems both from the criticism of autocracy in

the party ("they vote as they are told by their master") and its welfare program, so-called 500 Plus, offering unconditional benefits of 500 zlotys to families with two and more children. He is against accepting refugees to Poland seeing them, in principle, as becoming the new "majority" ("I suddenly become a minority") and welfare claimants. The anti-welfarist attitude, a part of existing political tradition represented in Poland, among others, by the KORWIN party, is linked to his idea of a "self-made man," as well as his feeling of distributional injustice in which privileges are offered to people who do not work, including both some Poles and refugees acquiring welfare support, and hard-working majority, such as entrepreneurs who are pushed to the margins:

**Marian:** In terms of refugees, this is also much pumped up balloon. My opinion on this topic is that in general our current government behaves in such a way that here they do not want them yyy, but this is due to what terms they would come here on...They have to work...They have a different culture, but I do not know, because of that they can come maybe not in such a big group as they would like to, we know that in Germany this is at the moment a big disaster what is happening. Because now it is difficult to find a true German there. There are many Poles, many Turks, many... And because of that, that even these people later come, become a minor... became a majority in the country and yyy. I will be the host of the country, living as a true citizen, yyy, later I have no rights, because I suddenly become a minority. So I am this way. But, I have nothing against refugees as such, a family may come, but work here, not get everything for free, because we the nationals in Poland get nothing for

free. In any case, I do not respect Poles, yy who live somewhere on benefits, you know...And it is good taking benefits. I hate, hate parasites.

In the arguments of Marian, we can find a lot of statements which are pretty typical of far-right discourse. By defining himself as “not a strong racist,” he represents a pattern of “the denial of racism” (van Dijk 1992; Kajta 2017). He gives an example of his good relations with a dentist, who is Arab (who “speaks Polish” and “does his job very well”). More generally speaking, he does not see himself as a radical right supporter. He says that he did not go to the last Independence March as he got embarrassed by its Facebook profile (“Comparing it with crusades, refugees. I caught my head and said, no, leave it, you don’t talk with idiots”). Here again, similarly to Marianna and Johanna, we can see that right-wing views represent a mixture of some first-hand and media-based knowledge (in this case, Facebook or Youtube, mentioned in other parts of the interview) and involve rhetorical mitigation of their own prejudices. Differently from Johanna and Marianna, who were generally supportive of welfare system as long as it supports the “right people” (i.e., local people like them who are in need), Marian opposes the very idea of redistribution of wealth. His anti-welfarist views seem to be based on a radically individualistic anti-solidaristic vision of society divided into “brave,” self-determined men (with “a bit of luck”) and the rest of its members, including “parasites” (regardless of their nationality), taking advantage of others’ hard work. As he is an example of a person who did it on his own, he does not take into consideration other scenarios, excluding the story of his mum, who works, but still needs his financial support.

## The Case of Sven

The last case analyzed, Sven, is a 32-year-old man from an affluent middle-class family in B.-city (a large city in Germany): “a good German family” as he calls it. He is single, has no children, but would like to have a family. He describes his relation to his parents as good, particularly as they supported and invested in his education; however, the way he speaks about them sounds he felt and still feels lonely. His educational life is characterized by various changes due to matching problems. The feeling of misfitting into the system is recalled at the very beginning of the interview:

**Sven:** So... well, in grade school, I’d say, I was, uh, the outsider. Had friends in the circle of friends, but I still rubbed people the wrong way every- everywhere. I had a pretty tough time with the teachers. Uh, most of all with adults, I had some difficulties. Um, yeah, I spent a lot of time out in nature and stuff like that. Or also privately, because the school always, if I can, let’s say, I didn’t always feel like I was in good hands there. So that made me feel out of place.

Recalling school time, Sven feels his needs and interests were not addressed. After being diagnosed highly skilled “in artistic sense,” he changes to a special school—later re-changing to the old one, as the situation did not improve. Eventually, he drags himself through school, he never has good grades, and feels continuously socially isolated. Compensation for this situation is brought by his father’s garage, where he finds room to play, tinker, and try out constructions of weapons—not with straightforward lethal interest, but for engineering, technical

reasons. He (“just barely”) manages to receive a lower secondary school degree, but feels disoriented after school. His parents then pay for vocational training as a gunsmith. Having completed education, he first starts working as a salesman for interiors and some other, mostly unregistered jobs. His motivation to start working points to his critical attitude towards the idea of being welfare-dependent (similarly to Marian). After some time in several jobs, he manages to get a job as a gunsmith, but loses it due to problems with police (indicated through friends who pulled him into their trouble). Being banned to work as a gunsmith until his record is cleaned, he starts a job via temporary agency in the electronics industry, which he very much criticizes. He perceives it not only as a form of “modern slavery,” but also a government strategy to get “nice numbers,” to “push our problems away” in order to pretend progress. However, disliked temporary work functions as a stepping stone to hired employment. He is able to negotiate a real work contract and in addition to his job in the semi-conductors’ plant, he starts working as a consultant for airsoft guns in a friend’s company. He finishes his extempore narration by emphasizing his professional advancement and available opportunities.

Similarly to Marian, but differently from Marianna and Johanna, Sven’s story is predominantly work-centered. Asked about his life beyond work, Sven mentions good contact with his parents, but almost no relations with his brother who stole some money from his father. He does not have too many good contacts with friends either. For a hobby, beyond airsoft, he also did combat sports, football, lifting, and engages as a scout enjoying the work

with the children. His dream is to “start a family sometime,” which he wants to be able to provide for and have “basically a little bit of square life,” again pointing to common for all four cases aspiration to “normality.” Sven does not mention any relationships, but says of himself that he is rather shy towards women and has difficulties to express his feelings.

Sven frames his story in terms of the contradiction between his own biographical projects and the constraints imposed by the institutional world. The tension is firstly mentioned at the beginning of the interview and continues throughout the entire story. The extempore narration is centered on the history of becoming a gunsmith and being temporarily excluded from performing the learnt occupation due to conflict with law. This, in turn, forces Sven to work via temporary work agencies for some time—which he truly “hates.” He recognizes phases of precarity in his life, mainly through terminated contracts of work, that make life precarious because of the inability to plan ahead, get decent housing, and deal with banking issues (“If you want to plan, you need an open-ended employment contract in the end in this world”). In order to overcome precarity and to improve the current situation, Sven has a range of resources together with a strong sense of self-efficacy and a belief in his competences that provide him with the right level of agency to put things into action.

The sense of agency in the sphere of work and personal life is in contrast with his feeling of lack of adequate control over the public sphere defined through the dominance of those with economic power. He



criticizes politics as done mostly by companies and lobbies, something that “stinks from beginning to end.” He is also skeptical about democracy as the system in which neither those in power are people with merits nor voters have real competences to take part in the political life. He favors a more elitist system in which “if people vote, then one should take people who have something in their heads. Those, I would say, are at the very top of the social, economic, or scientific rankings, and they should decide how things are going.” Even though he is very critical of the political system, there are no traces of clear biographical experiences which brought him to vote for far-right AfD in the past elections in 2013 and “Die Partei” (a satirical and anti-systemic Party for Labor, Rule of Law, Animal Protection, Promotion of Elites and Grassroots Democratic Initiative) in 2017. The only exception might be his unfair (in his own view) treatment by the police during the case against him—illegally dealing with guns. However, his own explanation focuses on “zero trust to the political system,” including in fact AfD itself which he considers “dumb as a party”:

**Sven:** I would have voted for the AfD now, as I said, but I was afraid that they would become too strong. Because as an opposition, I like them. I think they’re dumb as a party. Well, they’re partially just airheads. Now here, what’s the name of the one who left? Ms. Petry [the previous chair of AfD]? ((I: Yes exactly)) She seemed to have something going on in her head. She was a bit of a hardliner, though. But, now, what’s that? It is really just such a Nazi thing. Although, I mean, okay, why not. Why not bring a little bit of stink to the Bundestag? Like everything always runs in one direction. But, I, as I said, I wouldn’t have voted for

them now because I simply predicted the trend that they would probably (.) I was afraid they would be too strong.

Having an ironic attitude to AfD and defining himself as “definitely” not “racist” (“because I’ve been dealing with foreigners all my life...So racist is just plain stupid”), even though with a “slight right tendency,” he still thinks that political correctness in Germany is something covering some real problems, including the problems with multiculturalism. Asked about refugees, he answers that the problem was created by the “stupidity” of German elites who let them in, media which are “causing excitement,” and reluctance of international political community to intervene in Syria. From this perspective, the refugee crisis is interpreted in anti-systemic language as another way of “keeping nations divided” to help rule them by policy-makers. Sven is, in principle, not against helping refugees, but rather “in their home country”:

**Sven:** Quite logically, if there are refugees, then you have to help them. Well, we have to answer for that, in my opinion. You shouldn’t let yourself be ripped off by bums from abroad like a complete idiot, as they are doing now, on a grand scale. Well, I’d be, the first thing would be to have families enter, for example... So I’ll say we have to answer for it, we should definitely help where we can and if they really have to flee from the war, you have to help them, no question...In principle, it would have been more appropriate to create retreat areas in their home country, in my opinion.

Based on his own school experiences and reference to one of the German politics, he also points out that

the potential of conflict is an unavoidable part of multicultural society and refers to a concrete situation in his former school:

**Sven:** Helmut Schmidt once said that, uh, integration is really important, but you have to be careful out of, uh, that the cultures don't differ too much, because it offers too much potential for conflict and can destroy a lot. And that's just in many areas, right now I'm saying my former school was closed because the teachers couldn't deal with the students anymore. There was the case, for example, where a teacher had made an announcement to a Turkish pupil, something because he had beaten a girl. Then the Turkish pupil spat on the teacher and then she just rebuked him, gave him a bad mark and the like. That evening the father of the guy came along, he gives the teacher a slap in the face, for her talking to his son the way she did as a woman. And she was hot no, got no support from the school.

Similarly to Marianna, Sven builds his picture of refugees / other cultures on single experiences and makes that image more general. Not seeing himself as racist or xenophobic, he spends quite some time on criticizing religious fundamentalism and sees himself "as not a fan of religion, no matter which one," since religion is seen by him as another (and the oldest) form of mass control. In fact, the main driver of his turn to the right-wing populist party voting seems to be related much less to some authoritarian traits (though, his criticism of democracy can indicate them) as to his individualistic critique of the dominance of any kind of system on individuals framed in a similar fashion like in the case of Marian. For instance, based on his own experiences,

he is very critical of the education system in Germany and would like his future children to get access to education promoting "their own interests," much more individually oriented. The public sphere, in such a view, is itself a part of the system and is not treated as a serious arena of decision-making, since the real decisions are made in the backstage, by corrupt elites and hyper-influential media.

## Conclusions

In this article, we posed a question about the biographical sources of the support for right-wing populist parties granted by some young people in Poland and Germany. From a sample of biographical narrative interviews with young people in both countries who experienced various short-term and temporary forms of employment, we draw four cases of right-wing supporters. Our goal was to explore the relationship between their biographical experiences and their political views. Interestingly enough, despite the objective differences in narrators' economic and cultural resources, their biographical accounts shared some common characteristics. Firstly, the political views did not *explicitly* emerge in the course of extempore narratives, but they were discussed in the third part of interviews: sometimes just briefly (as in the case of Marianna) and sometimes with passion and at length (as in the case of Marian and Sven). It confirms that political identities, even those related to rather extreme views, do not need to be at the center of broader biographical identity of young people pointing to their general distance and distrust of politics (Szafraniec et al. 2017). Secondly, similarly to earlier studies (e.g., van Dijk 1992; Kajta 2017), in the case of interviews with right-wing

supporters we observed various strategies of rhetorical mitigation of own prejudices towards cultural Others, such as Muslims, refugees, or homosexuals. For instance, anti-refugee statements were accompanied by irony or hesitation, which can point both to their relatively weak anchoring in the narrators' personal identities and communicative situation of interviews in which extreme views were seen as better to be avoided, in line with the interpretations suggested by the "denial of racism" hypothesis.

Even though it would be misleading to define any direct, causal relationship between biographical experiences and the emergence of right-wing views, our analysis allows us to reconstruct some case-specific explanations and, perhaps, some more abstract and general observations. All four narrators presented themselves as certain kinds of "outsiders" who throughout their lives were confronted with various structural and institutional constraints. Right-wing ideas, encountered mostly through media and, sometimes, through peers and significant others (such as Marian's friend), offer some ready-made patterns of interpreting biographical predicaments and find a favorable ground in a broader context of various biographical problems, of which only some can be attributed to labor market precarity. In the case of Marianna and Johanna, the turn to the right can be linked to their insecure life situations involving both socio-economic problems and the precarious state of their family relations. In this context, cultural Others are seen as potential competitors for rare resources or an additional threat to a fragile stability of a life world of informants (cf. Dörre 2006; Sommer 2010). In the narratives of Marian and Sven who enjoyed stable employment and a family

support net (as in the case of Sven) or well-paid jobs (the case of Marian), the basis for a right-wing turn seems to be different. It is connected with a greater sense of individual agency and overcoming precarity by "own means," often in spite or against structural and systemic constraints. In this context, the distrust of political establishment (seen as corrupt and granting unjust privileges to elites) and the critique of "undeserved" social support offered to some disadvantaged segments of the society, such as refugees or welfare claimants, seem to be linked with hyper-individualistic orientations opposing an individual and the system. Needless to say that such orientations are at the core of long lasting, publicly available socio-political tradition which combines economic ultra-liberalism and cultural conservatism, probably the most visible in Marian's case. They can also be understood as a consequence of the spread of market-individualistic ideologies stressing the role of individual responsibility, discipline, and competition, which can be attributed to the disciplinary mechanisms of market-centered forms of work (Dörre 2006:28).

Given the early stage of our analysis, our study also left some issues to be addressed in further research. Firstly, it is an open question about a social distribution of the two patterns, their relationship to social background and to the social mobility of informants. Secondly, a comparative analysis of precarious and non-precarious right-wing supporters, as well as between precarious supporters of other political forces would be helpful to understand better why certain individuals experience a turn to the right while the majority still abstains from far right support.

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