Original Article

Farewell to the rightist self-employed? 'New self-employment' and political alignments

Giedo Jansen

Faculty of Behavioural, Management & Social Sciences, Institute for Innovation and Governance Studies, University of Twente, P.O. Box 217, 7500 AE Enschede, The Netherlands.
E-mail: giedo.jansen@utwente.nl

Abstract   This study aims to provide theoretical and empirical clarity on whether people in "new" and precarious self-employment support the same political parties as those in traditional forms. Theoretical clarity is needed as the voting literature predominantly perceives self-employment in terms of class-based theories or insider/outsider theories, i.e., as a privileged grouping with shared interests as (potential) employers. Alternative perspectives, looking into the heterogeneity and precarization of self-employment have received less attention. Empirically, quantitative data are needed: Previous voting studies have not been able to differentiate the self-employed, either due to the lack of relevant indicators or because of low-N problems. Focusing on the Netherlands, this study addresses these shortcomings by analyzing data among over 800 self-employed without employees, using the *Solo Self-Employment Panel*. This study finds that the simple association between self-employment and rightist orientations is largely an oversimplification, and for growing segments of self-employment even a misrepresentation.
Acta Politica (2016). doi:10.1057/s41269-016-0030-0

Introduction

When studying the political orientations of small-business owners, scholars often hold that this is a group with rather right-wing political preferences. In its archetypal form, self-employment is associated with free market beliefs, and values such as individualism, autonomy, and self-reliance (Scase and Goffee, 1981; Aldrich *et al*, 1986; Goss, 1991). Their support for *laissez-faire* capitalism and a limited role of government would reflect in voting for parties on the right of the

political spectrum, mainly conservative and economic-liberal parties. In the literature, this association between self-employment and right-wing politics has been explained not only through studies dealing with old political cleavages such as social class (Evans and De Graaf, 2013), but also by studies on newer lines of political division, such as the insider/outsider cleavage (Rueda, 2007).

In theories of social classes, people in self-employment (i.e., small proprietors, craftsmen, and farmers) are commonly thought to belong to the "petty bourgeois" or small employer classes. Employer classes would be distinct from employee classes as both have fundamentally different, and often contradictory political interests. Employers would generally oppose labor market interventions, such as wage regulations and job creation programs beneficial to employee classes, and also reject redistribution policies imposing higher taxes. Especially, taxes on inheritance would be harmful to the petty bourgeois, and farmers in particular, as members of these classes traditionally donate their property to their children (Nieuwbeerta and de Graaf, 1999). From this perspective, numerous class voting studies have consistently reaffirmed the image of the self-employed as an economic conservative, and political right-wing class (Evans, 1999; Jansen, 2011; Evans and De Graaf, 2013).

A similar line of reasoning is found in the insider/outsider literature (Rueda, 2007, Emmenegger et al, 2012, Guillaud and Marx, 2014). In this branch of studies dealing with differences between those with secure employment (insiders) and those without (outsiders), people in self-employment are often included in a third category of so-called "upscale" groups. The upscales can be thought of as a composite group, containing all those with a privileged position on the labor market, i.e., "self-employed professionals, (lawyers, architects, etc.), owners of shops, business proprietors, farmers, fishermen and general and middle management" (Rueda, 2007, p. 39). Upscale groups are distinct from insiders (who benefit from employment protection) in that they would support flexible hiring and firing regulations, but they are also differ from outsiders (who benefit from active and passive labor market policies) in that they would oppose policies involving higher taxes and government intervention in the economy. Hence, like theories of class politics, theories on insider/outsider politics assume that the self-employed belong to the core constituency of right-wing parties.

What both theoretical perspectives have in common, is that they suffer from the same limitation: They tend to overlook the heterogeneity in self-employment. Especially in the class-based approach, the perception of the self-employed seems to rely on the notion of a relatively homogeneous social class with shared interests and traditional petty bourgeois attitudes (cf. Scase and Goffee, 1981). In recent decades, however, such "old" forms of self-employment have eroded. A pattern of decline in the formerly prevailing types of self-employment (farmers and petty bourgeois of small proprietors and shop owners) since the 1980s is more or less consistent across advanced economies (Arum and Müller, 2004). Parallel to this

decline, there has been a reemergence of self-employment, mainly caused by the growth of self-employment in "new" occupational types. Because this rise took place among both high-skilled occupations as well as low-skilled occupations, self-employment has become more diverse. Arum and Müller (2004) have argued that because "self-employment is no longer simply dominated by petty bourgeois self-employment, this social grouping can no longer be understood as a politically conservative force" (2004, p. 453).

A related limitation is that both approaches put forward employership as the main driver of rightist attitudes. What these theories fail to account for, however, is that employership is rarely the standard: In almost all European countries and in the United States, there are more self-employed without employees than with employees (Van Stel *et al*, 2014; OECD, 2015), and most "solo" self-employed workers will also never become employers (Millán *et al*, 2014). On the contrary, there is an increasing body of literature that has linked particular forms of self-employment to labor market flexibility and so-called "atypical" work (Stanwoth and Stanworth, 1995; De Grip *et al*, 1997; Pernicka, 2006; Muehlberger, 2007; Buschoff and Schmidt, 2009; Barbieri and Scherer, 2009; Kalleberg, 2011). In this alternative perspective, much apparent self-employment arises from outsourcing and subcontracting practices as a way for employers to evade labor legislation and taxes. The growth of this type of work, Wright (1997, p. 140) argues "does not reflect a sociologically meaningful expansion of the 'petty bourgeoisie'." In contrast, because (quasi-)self-employed workers combine low levels of social protection (including low access to insurances and pensions) with relatively high labor market risks, they are sometimes perceived as "outsiders" on the labor market (Buschoff and Schmidt, 2009; Dekker, 2010a; Muffels, 2013).

The main problem addressed in this article, to use the words of Goss (1991, p. 12), is that the "simple association between small business proprietorship with a conservative political orientation (…) is at best an oversimplification and, at worst, something of a misrepresentation." To date, however, virtually no empirical research has considered the heterogeneity of self-employment in studying political orientations[1]. Little attention is paid to the increase in "new" and sometimes "precarious" types of self-employment. Previous voting studies have not been able to differentiate the self-employed on the basis of such criteria, either due to the lack of relevant indicators or because of the low number of cases in surveys. The present study focuses on the political orientations associated with "solo self-employment" (i.e., people holding a self-employed job without employing others, sometimes labeled "own account workers" (OECD, 2015). Focusing on the Netherlands, this study addresses previous shortcomings by collecting and analyzing unique survey data among over 800 self-employed persons, using the *Solo Self-Employment Panel* (or "ZZP Panel" in Dutch) of 2014, wave 2. This tailor-made survey is specifically designed to map the political preferences of self-employed workers. The Netherlands are a representative case: Like in other European countries the
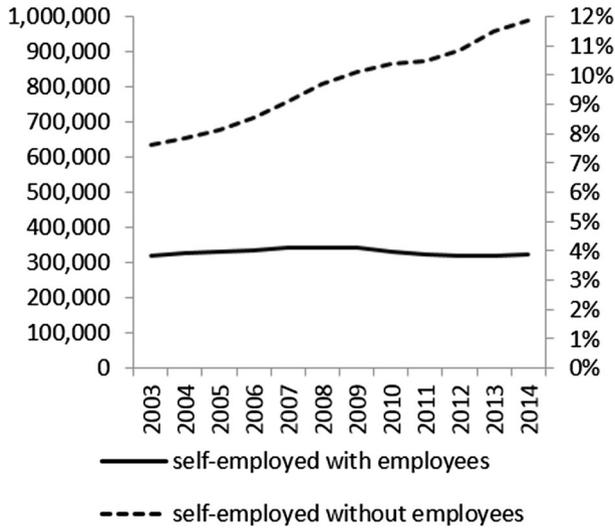
Figure 1: Self-employed in the dutch labor force.
Source: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek [CBS] (2015).

majority of the Dutch self-employed do not employ others, and the share of these "self-employed without employees" rapidly increased over the last decade, see Figure 1.

Theory and Hypotheses

Petty bourgeois conservatism

As mentioned, the social class literature is preoccupied with the assumption that the "petty bourgeois" prefer a limited role of governments *vis-a-vis* markets, and would have right-wing political attitudes. By using the term "petty bourgeois" class theorists refer to the group in-between "capitalists", who own the means of production and hirer workers, and "workers", who do not own the means of production and sell their labor power to capitalists (De Witte and Klandermans, 2000, p. 17). The petty bourgeois are self-employed persons who own small-scale capital and who produce and trade goods often without employing others, except sometimes unpaid family labor (Scase 1982). According to Arum and Müller (2004, p. 430) traditional petty bourgeois self-employment comprised "craftsmen, small shop-owners, proprietors and others working on their own in skilled occupations." Typically, the self-employed would be associated with intergenerational inheritance

and a high degree of stability over the life course (Blau and Duncan, 1967, p. 41), giving them a clear interest in conservative politics aimed at preserving the status quo of capitalist markets.

Class voting studies have put forward that the self-employed are also at the heart of extreme-right ideologies (Lipset, 1959; Norris, 2005). The radical tendencies among the petty bourgeois is sometimes attributed to their "contradictory" class position (Wright, 1997, p. 122): being distinct from both capitalists and wage-laborers they would be "trapped between the threat of big business and manufacturing industry, on the one hand, and the collective strength of organized labor, on the other" (Norris, 2005, p. 131). Discussing the social basis of fascist and other reactionary movements in Europe, Manza and Brooks (1999, p. 69) note that "many interpretations of right-wing movements have suggested that these movements draw disproportionate support from a 'frustrated' petty-bourgeoisie whose members are often among the first to suffer from economic downturns." The self-employed are also prominent in more recent studies on anti-statist movements, such as the Tea Party in the United States. Skocpol and Williamson (2012) argue that among Tea Partiers, business is often idealized and that many Tea Party members are small business people.

"New" self-employment

With its recent decline, the "petty bourgeois" no longer accurately represent self-employment in modern democracies. To interpret the changing nature of self-employment, scholars have increasingly used the label "new self-employment". Although the label has been used in different ways, as a common denominator it usually refers to self-employed workers which are believed not to correspond to the traditional profile of business-owners. A group, according to Buschoff and Schmidt (2009), that works "on their own account and without employees, often in professions with only low capital requirements. A growing share of these workers can be found on the one hand in 'modern' service-sector branches (such as education, health, financial and enterprise services) and on the other hand in the construction industry (via outsourcing and subcontracting)" (2009, p. 147).

In social stratification research, the term "new" self-employment has been used to denote the growth of self-employment in new occupational areas. This is most systematically done by Arum and Müller (2004) who distinguish two new types from traditional self-employment[2], i.e., *unskilled self-employment* and *self-employed professionals and managers*. Instead selling goods, self-employed workers in these new types would increasingly provide services and sell their labor power as freelancers or independent contractors (Kösters *et al*, 2013). Since the mid-1990s, the majority of people in self-employment work in either one of the two categories (Arum and Müller, 2004). Self-employment has therefore become

more diverse and polarized in terms of economic well-being and social status. Compared to other categories, unskilled self-employment is associated with the highest labor market risks, as it is generally more instable and more poorly paid (McManus, 2000; Arum and Müller, 2004; Lofstrom, 2013), and – because many immigrants in self-employment hold lower-skilled jobs (Kanas *et al*, 2009) – also most ethnically diverse. Like manual workers in wage-employment, most self-employed workers do not own property and sell their labor power at a wage-like rate. Therefore, this form of self-employment is sometimes considered to be part of, or at least closer to, the working class instead of the petty bourgeois (Form, 1982). By contrast, those in professional and managerial occupations (typically including liberal professions) are generally assumed to be highly educated and profitable (Barbieri, 2003).

To account for the heterogeneity of self-employment, this study further differentiates the Arum-Müller classification. In doing so, inspiration is drawn from "new class theories". As a single sub-category, professional-managerial self-employment misrepresents fundamental occupational differences between "technocratic" jobs (i.e., the "old middle class") and a new class of "social-cultural specialists" (Güveli, 2006; Oesch, 2008). Unlike the former, people in the latter category hold occupations that involve providing social services and/or using knowledge on social-cultural issues and conducting tasks that are relatively difficult to monitor. Social-cultural specialists, compared to rightist-oriented technocrats, have developed a strong preferences for leftist, and in particular new-left and green politics (Güveli *et al*, 2007; Oesch, 2008; Jansen *et al*, 2011). In self-employment, *social-cultural specialists* may be found in occupations that are characterized by a combination of relative autonomy, specialized social-cultural knowledge, and tasks that are not directly instrumental to profit-maximization (e.g., authors, journalists and other writers, or creative and cultural workers, and self-employed health professionals). Although working on their own account, they often provide services to the (semi-)public or non-profit field or other domains that receive state support. With these characteristics, the new group of social-cultural specialists hold self-employment jobs that strongly deviate from traditional "petty bourgeois" self-employment. These differences can be expected to be greater than for *self-employed technocrats* (e.g., independent accountants and other financial and legal specialists, civil engineers and self-employed ICT professionals), who, like the petty bourgeois, drive businesses that are more directly related to profit-maximization and whose tasks do not involve providing social services or social-cultural knowledge.

Inside the domain of industrial relations studies, "new" self-employment has largely been examined through the lens of precarious work, linked to the flexibilization of labor markets (e.g., Stanwoth and Stanworth, 1995; Buschoff and Schmidt, 2009; Kalleberg, 2011). Compared to standard employees (i.e., with secure employment contracts), freelancers, sub-contractors and others in quasi-

independent employment relationships are exposed to greater risks because they – sometimes involuntary – bear responsibility for market changes, enjoy lower levels of social protection, and have less capacity for savings, insurance and pensions (Buschoff and Schmidt, 2009; Dekker 2010a; Kautonen *et al*, 2010; Pedersini and Coletto, 2010). What is even more explicit in this stream of literature, is that risks and uncertainties cut across occupational lines. Also highly educated professionals may work in semi-autonomous, low-paid, or precarious self-employment jobs, without legal protection (King, 2014).

Building on the insider–outsider literature, insecure forms of self-employment may be thought of as "outsiders" on the labor market. To study insecurities associated with self-employment, indicators may be borrowed from the insider/outsider-model by Rueda (2007, p. 15), who focusses on the *precarious* nature and *involuntary* nature of the work relationship, i.e., Like precarious wage-employment, self-employed precariousness should be characterized by insecure and unstable work. In the case of self-employment that is most likely to be reflected through irregular orders and income, or little financial buffers. Second, most precarious workers are assumed to aspire more secure jobs. For people in self-employment that might be the case when someone prefers to have a job in wage-employment. A third aspect, however, may be added: the *dependent* nature of the (self-)employment relationship. Some workers, although formally in self-employment, work in hierarchical subordination to a single firm, on which they are economically dependent (Muehlberger, 2007). These arrangements can be associated with high labor market risks, in particular when self-employed workers are allocated tasks over which they have little control (Standing, 2011, p. 16). In such cases, they bear the entrepreneurial risk without entrepreneurial independence.

Diverging political alignments

Given the increased heterogeneity and presumed precarization of self-employment, the political alignments of the self-employed can be expected to have become more diffuse, and less strongly attached to liberal-conservative politics. Below, two sets of hypotheses are formulated on how disparate types of self-employment may translate differently into political orientations. The first category of expectations departs from the assumption that political preferences are for an important part shaped by self-interest (Reeskens and Van Oorschot, 2011), and that economic insecurities would be associated with left-wing political support. The second scenario builds on the assumption that people with marginal positions on the labor market move away mainstream politics. From this perspective, labor market vulnerabilities might not be associated with left-wing political support, but rather with radical-righ support or political alienation.

Policy and party preferences may be formed by a mixture of normative, social and rational motives (Van Oorschot, 2000; Mau, 2003). With respect to labor market vulnerabilities rational self-interest provides a straightforward potential explanation for left-wing attitudes. This understanding of self-interest involves that welfare *consumers* (or, at least potential consumers) would be more likely to support welfare policies (Kangas, 1997; Reeskens and Van Oorschot, 2011): People who generally run higher risks of being unemployed or otherwise not being able to provide for themselves are assumed to support welfare and governmental redistribution because they may need protection themselves in the future (Corbetta and Colloca, 2013; Marx, 2014; Marx and Picot, 2013). Along these lines, recent studies comparing temporary and permanent workers have suggested that temporary workers are more likely to support (new) left-wing parties (Corbetta and Colloca, 2013; Marx, 2014; Marx and Picot, 2013; Emmenegger *et al*, 2015). Following this line of thought, the political preferences of people in new self-employment might be similar to others in "non-standard" work relationships. Rather than stability, which is the driver of petty bourgeois conservatism, "new" self-employment would be characterized by instability and insecurity. It may therefore be expected that self-employed persons with insecure conditions demand more inclusive welfare systems, for example, in the domains of pensions or health care[3] (Dekker, 2010b) and generally hold more left-wing attitudes. To examine which segments of the self-employed are the most left-wing, hypothesis 1 assumes that precarious self-employment is (a) *insecure* rather than secure, (b) *involuntary* rather than voluntary, and (c) *dependent* rather than autonomous.

Hypothesis 2 formulates a similar expectation related to occupational categories. This hypothesis differentiates between the "new" self-employment types (i.e., unskilled self-employment and social-cultural specialists), on the one hand, and the "old" petty bourgeois and technocratic professionals, on the other hand. Again, the political preferences of people in *unskilled self-employment* might be motivated by self-interest, as this category is generally associated with the highest labor market risks. With lower incomes, less capacity for savings, and little insurance against economic hardship the support for welfare arrangements and left-wing politics may be stronger among unskilled self-employed workers, whereas their support for rightist politics may be weaker. For *social-cultural professionals,* however, left-wing political attitudes may only partially be explained by self-interest. On the one hand, like technocratic professionals, social-cultural specialists may not be the potential users of welfare state services because they tend to work in higher educated jobs and may be economically well-off. Self-interest would therefore not necessarily dictate pro-welfare attitudes. Yet, it should be noted that many in this category work in competitive sectors with low entry barriers (e.g., the media industry or other creative sectors), where pressure on tariffs and hourly earnings reduce the capacity to save and build financial buffers. So, also for this group vulnerabilities may be associated with the support of left-wing parties and policies.

Yet, next to rationalist motives, also ideological and normative motives may play a role here. In particular, this category of social and cultural professionals may be drawn to new-left parties, as their tasks involve specialized social-cultural knowledge stimulating non-economic, post-materialist values (Güveli *et al*, 2007; Oesch, 2008). As a result of their occupational tasks this group may have developed a distinct understanding of the 'functional and moral necessity' (Van Oorschot 2000, p. 20) of contributing to common welfare, leading to a left, and in particular new-left political orientation (Jansen *et al*, 2011). Acknowledging the relevance of task structures for the normative aspects of political preference formation, does not rule out the potential impact of self-interest: Because the services provided by social-cultural specialists are often in the (semi-)public or non-profit domain (such as education and healthcare), their interest to support left-wing politics may still, partially, be based on their role as *producers* (or co-producers) of social and cultural services. Yet, such different lines of reasoning result in similar expectations about the link between self-employment in social-cultural professions and left-wing preferences.

H1 People in self-employment jobs that are more (a) insecure, (b) involuntary and (c) dependent are less strongly oriented towards liberal-conservative politics, and more strongly oriented towards left-wing politics.

H2 People in (a) unskilled self-employment or (b) self-employed social-cultural professionals are less strongly oriented towards liberal-conservative politics, and more strongly oriented towards left-wing politics, compared to those in traditional self-employment and self-employed technocrats.

Alternatively, for precarious self-employment neither a conservative nor a left-wing orientation may be straightforward. On the basis of the insider–outsider model, right-wing conservative parties often oppose labor market policies that are beneficial to "outsiders" [i.e., policies that advance the creation of jobs or compensate potential job loss (Rueda, 2007)], because these policies imply an intrusive role of government and higher taxes. Yet, this is not to say that "self-employed outsiders" would turn leftward. Insider–outsider theories postulate that left-wing parties – and social democrats in particular – defend the interest of insiders rather than the interest of outsiders (Rueda, 2007; Lindvall and Rueda, 2014). People in self-employment do not benefit from strong protection of wage-employment. On the contrary, as long as they depend on, for example, short-term freelance contracts, strict hiring regulations might even prevent their access to work. For precarious self-employed workers this implies that their interest are represented by neither left-wing, nor right-wing parties. This line of reasoning is consistent with the general thesis that economically marginalized groups (e.g., the 'losers' of globalization, Kriesi *et al*, 2008) may become politically alienated, and might abstain from participation in general or turn away from mainstream parties in particular. A movement to the radical right may be expected to be driven by

political dissatisfaction (De Witte and Klandermans, 2000). Emmenegger *et al* (2015), for example, find that labor market disadvantages may lead to support for radical political forces as they influence individual's perception of the extent to which the political system is responsive to their personal needs. Especially radical-right wing politics are assumed to appeal strongly to those who are most insecure and alienated from mainstream parties. The ideological blend of radical-right parties [i.e., combining a centrist economic program with welfare chauvinism and protectionism (Mudde, 2000)] may be especially attractive to those in vulnerable forms of self-employment. Self-employed individuals in economically and socially precarious conditions, may exhibit a "politics of resentment" by seeking to punish mainstream politics for their relative misfortunes (Wells and Watson, 2005; Standing, 2011). Hence, hypotheses 3 assumes that people in precarious self-employment are outsiders in the political system.

H3 People in self-employment jobs that are more (a) insecure, (b) involuntary and (c) dependent are less strongly oriented towards liberal-conservative politics, and more strongly oriented towards radical-right politics and abstention.

Empirical Context

Solo self-employment and political parties in the Netherlands

The hypotheses are tested using data from the Netherlands. The Netherlands are a representative case. With approximately 16 per cent the self-employment rate is around the European average (Kösters and Souren, 2014; OECD, 2015), including a typical downward trend in agricultural self-employment, and in retail and hospitality, and a rise in self-employment in service-oriented industries (Eurostat, 2014). Like in other countries, more than half of the Dutch self-employed do not employ others (Van Stel *et al*, 2014; OECD, 2015), and the share of solo self-employed workers rapidly increased over the last decades. In 1996, approximately 330 thousand people were in solo self-employment, and this number amounted to almost a million in 2014 (CBS, 2014). This growth in solo self-employment is among the strongest is Europe (Kösters and Souren, 2014). Research on the Netherlands confirms that self-employment is a heterogeneous employment type, with substantial diversity not only in occupation, income and education, but also in access to social security and fiscal benefits (Bosch and Van Vuuren, 2010; Blumberg and De Graaf, 2004; CBS, 2014).

Moreover, the Netherland has a typical European multiparty system that allows to investigate political divisions in various ideological directions (Emmenegger *et al*, 2015). The Dutch political system has two mainstream conservative or liberal parties, the CDA (Christian Democrats) and VVD (Liberal Party). The VVD is most strongly associated with self-employment. After its formation in 1948, the VVD quickly got

the name of being an "Entrepreneur's Party", mainly due to strong organizational and programmatic ties with the employer's associations. This reputation largely persisted despite electoral expansion after the 1970s. Lucardi (1987, p. 165) concluded that although "the VVD is not the party *of* entrepreneurs, it probably is a party *for* entrepreneurs. The entrepreneur, as it were, remains her ideological example." Also the CDA has traditional ties to employer's associations, and in particular to agrarian organizations. Historically, the CDA and its predecessors – drew much supported from the so-called "*kleine luyden*", a label used to denote craftsmen, shop owners, farmers and other petty bourgeois (Lucardi, 2007).

Table 1 shows that during the 2012 elections, the VVD was the most popular party among the solo self-employed. The CDA, on the other hand, received only marginal support from this group. Also at the far-end of the right-wing spectrum, support among the solo self-employed is limited. The vote share of the radical-right PVV (Freedom Party) comes nowhere near the scores for the VVD. In this respect, the strongest competitor for votes among the self-employed is D66, a centrist 'social-liberal' party (Lucardi, 2007) with a right-leaning economic agenda and a progressive social-cultural agenda. In the Netherlands, the parties commonly defined as left-wing are the PvdA (Labor Party), SP (Socialist Party) and GroenLinks (GreenLeft). Traditionally, none of these parties has strong links with small business interests. In recent years, all three however, have suggested policy changes to adapt labor laws and social security in order to meet the needs of the "new" self-employed (PvdA 2012, p. 26; GroenLinks 2012, p. 9; SP 2012, p. 18). Taken together in Table 1, parties on the left seem to draw some (approximately 10–20 per cent) but no overt support from the solo self-employed.

Table 1: Political party preferences among solo self-employed in the Netherlands

	Vote in last election (2012)		Vote intention (if elections were now)		Propensity to vote[a]	
	N	per cent	N	per cent	Mean	S.D.
VVD (liberal party)	**244**	**(28.7)**	135	(15.9)	4.7	(3.6)
D66 (Democrats'66)	116	(13.6)	**162**	**(19.0)**	**4.9**	**(3.4)**
PvdA (social democrats)	79	(9.3)	26	(3.1)	3.1	(3.0)
GroenLinks (Greenleft)	50	(5.8)	48	(5.7)	3.2	(3.3)
SP (socialist party)	43	(5.0)	39	(4.6)	2.6	(3.0)
CDA (christian democrats)	33	(3.9)	27	(3.2)	3.3	(3.1)
PVV (freedom party)	31	(3.6)	48	(5.7)	1.6	(2.8)
Other party	40	(4.7)	54	(6.3)	–	–
Did (would) not vote	88	(10.3)	73	(8.6)	–	–
Don't know/no answer	127	(14.9)	**238**	**(27.9)**	–	–
Total	851	(100.0)	851	(100.0)	–	–

Bold values indicate most frequent response categories.

[a]11-point scale based on the question: "*How likely are you ever to vote for [party]?*".

Source: Solo self-employment Panel, 2014–2; sector weights applied.

Data and Methods

The solo self-employment panel (2014–2)

Data for this study were collected through the *Solo Self-employment Panel* ('ZZP Panel' in Dutch). The ZZP Panel is an annually repeated survey since 2009 among 3000 self-employed persons without employees organized by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and research company *Panteia*. The panel is primarily designed to map the management, organization and continuity of solo self-employed businesses. The sample is stratified by 10 economic sectors, and panel members are recruited using an address file which is based on the registers of the Dutch Chamber of Commerce. The panel has 2 waves per year. Each first wave is conducted using a telephone survey and mainly covers a fixed set of questions. The second wave is an internet-based follow-up questionnaire, covering rotating topics. Panel attrition is dealt with by filling up the sample to 3000 once per year. For more information on the panel, see Hoevenagel *et al* (2015).

For this study, the waves of 2014 are used. First, some background characteristics were retrieved from the first wave. Recruitment through the 2013–1 wave and fresh sampling yielded a response rate of 41 percent ($N = 3002$). Second, specifically for this study, a tailor-made module on the political preferences was added to the second wave of 2014. This follow-up survey was fielded between mid-December 2014 and mid-January 2015. In total 2498 panel members who participated in the first wave were invited again, of which 851 completed the questionnaire. With 34 per cent the response rate is comparable to earlier follow-up surveys (Hoevenagel *et al*, 2015). Ultimately, the analyses are based on 815 respondents with valid information on all relevant variables. Descriptive statistics (including bivariate tests) are presented in Appendix A. By and large, the sample corresponds to recent findings by Statistics Netherlands that the solo self-employed are often higher educated, predominantly male and that the majority is between 35 and 55 years old (CBS 2014). A sector weight is applied to retain the same distribution of sectors compared to the first 2014-wave.

Measures

Political orientations are measured using two kinds of variables, *policy* and *party orientations* First, respondents were asked to rate the importance of particular policy issues on an 11-point scale. Two out of four[4] issues relate to typical entrepreneurial interests, i.e.; (1) fewer rules and administrative burden for business, (2) lowering taxes for business. The other two issues relate to the alleged precarity of self-employment, i.e., (3) improving access to social security for solo self-employed (4) tackling false self-employment. Second, to measure party

orientations vote propensity questions (Van der Eijk *et al*, 2006) are used rather categorical vote choice questions. Respondents were asked to rate on a scale from 0 ("*will never vote for this party*") to 10 ("*will certainly vote for this party*") how likely it is that they would ever vote for a party. The advantage of vote propensities is that propensity scores provide the same level of information on each party in the party system, regardless of its actual size or popularity. A multinomial outcome variable would result in low frequencies for particular parties, also theoretically interesting ones. Note that in Table 1 "vote intention" records only 26 respondents with respect to the main left-wing party (PvdA), and only 48 for the populist PVV. Such low number are inappropriate for logit regression. Instead of grouping parties together, propensity scores are more informative, as the continuous nature of the variable allows similar linear regressions for each individual party. As a proxy of political alienation a dichotomous variable for "non-voting" is created by indicating respondents with a low propensity to vote for any party (i.e., reporting a score lower than the scale's midpoint of 5 for all parties).

Respondent's *occupation* is measured in an open question by asking people to describe their business (i.e., what kind of goods they sell or what kind of services/labor they provide). On the basis of this information each respondent was assigned an occupational code (ISCO-08). Following a procedure similar to Arum and Müller (2004) these occupations are classified into *traditional self-employment, manual self-employment* and professional-managerial self-employment. Yet, based on Güveli's (2006) distinctions, professionals and managers are further reclassified into sub-groups for *self-employed technocrats* and *self-employed social-cultural specialists*. An overview of the specific occupations allocated to each type is presented in Appendix B.

To measure *precariousness*, several items are used to assess whether the self-employed job is involuntary, insecure and dependent. First, *involuntary* self-employment is a dummy-variable indicating whether respondents would prefer to work in wage-employment.

Second, *insecurity* is measure using two variables: a dummy-variable is included for *financial vulnerability*, measured by a combination of the level of income and the availability of financial back-up (De Vries and Dekker, 2015). A dummy is created indicating whether a low level of income (i.e., <1500 euro) is combined with little to no financial buffers. Income is measured as respondent's net monthly income derived from their business. The size of the financial buffer is assessed by asking how many months respondents would be able to make a living in case their business would stop generating income. Respondents with low income who would survive only "less than a month" or "1–6 months" are classified as vulnerable. Next, to measure the *instable* nature of self-employment a scale in constructed based on four items. Respondents were asked to rate on an 11-point scale whether (a) their income is stable (regular [0] vs. irregular [10]); (b) their clients/orders are stable (very fixed [0] vs. very volatile [10]) and whether (c) their income and

(d) clients/orders are predictable (foreseeable in advance [0] vs. not foreseeable [10]). With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83, a reliability analysis confirmed that these items comprise a reliable scale. An index (range 0–1) was calculated by taking the mean over the four items divided by 10.

Third, to assess the *dependent* nature of self-employment, respondents were asked what portion of their annual turnover they drew from their most important client. A dummy variable was created to indicate whether a respondent was largely (i.e., for 75 percent or more) dependent on his/her most important customer. Finally, because turnover does not provide any information on a potential hierarchical work relationship, a job *autonomy* scale is added based on two item: Respondents were asked to rate on an 11-point scale whether (0) they themselves or (10) their client decided on (a) which tasks are carried out, and (b) how tasks are conducted. Again, an index (range 0–1, Cronbach's alpha of 0.65) was calculated by taking the mean over items divided by 10[5].

Finally, three control variables are included in the analysis, i.e., *age*, *gender* (female = 1), the number of *years since in self-employment*, and a dummy indicating whether the respondent has *other sources of personal income* than from his/her business (for example from wage-employment, social benefits, pensions etc.)

Analyses and Results

Policy orientations

Before looking at party orientations, attitudes towards policies (i.e., fewer rules, lower taxes, access to social security and tackling false self-employment) are investigated. As a first step policy attitudes are used as the independent variables and regressed on the propensity to vote for specific parties, see Table 2. This way, the theoretical assumption can be substantiated that "entrepreneurial policies", such as a reduction of rules and/or taxes, are related to liberal-conservatives party orientations, and that "social policies" are related to a left-wing party orientation. In a second series (Table 3) policy attitudes are used as the dependent variables.

Table 2 shows the unstandardized regression effects of the perceived importance of self-employment policies on party orientations. Following the left–right divide, support for reducing taxes is associated with a stronger tendency to vote VVD (0.32), CDA (0.26) and PVV (0.22), and a weaker tendency to vote PvdA (−0.26), SP (−0.17), GL (−0.25). Moreover, support for tax cuts negatively relates to non-voting, but appears unrelated to the propensity to vote D66. Next, support for a reduction of rules and regulations is associated with stronger propensity to vote VDD (0.24), and a weaker tendency to vote PvdA (−0.19), SP (−0.16) or GL (−0.29), but is unrelated to voting CDA, D66 or PVV or abstention.

Table 2: Regression analysis for solo self-employed on the propensity to vote for party ($N = 705$)

	VVD	CDA	D66	PvdA	SP	GL	PVV	Non-voting (logit model)
Intercept	3.07***	2.31***	6.41***	5.30***	3.46***	6.24***	−0.63	−3.22
Importance "fewer rules"	0.24***	−0.01	0.04	−0.19***	−0.16***	−0.29***	0.05	0.07
Importance "lower taxes"	0.32***	0.26***	−0.07	−0.26***	−0.17***	−0.25***	0.22***	−0.15**
Importance "access to social security"	−0.36***	−0.23***	−0.14***	0.13***	0.16***	0.12**	−0.02	0.17***
Importance "false self-employment"	−0.02	0.11***	−0.03	0.06	0.08**	0.05	0.05	0.05
R^2	0.12	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.06	0.10	0.05	
Nagelkerke R^2								0.04

* $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Source: Solo self-employment panel, 2014–2 (own calculations).

Table 3: Regression analysis for solo self-employed on the perceived importance of self-employment policies (N = 705)

Model	Fewer rules for business owners			Lower taxes for businesses			Access to social security			Tackle false self-employment		
	1A	1B	1C	2A	2B	2C	3A	3B	3C	4A	4B	4C
Intercept	7.08***	7.50***	7.25***	8.68***	8.84***	9.13***	6.41***	6.56***	6.88***	5.67***	5.42***	6.24***
Age	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.03**	−0.02**	−0.03**	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02
Gender (female = 1)	−0.13	0.14	0.05	−0.08	0.02	−0.01	0.57**	0.57**	0.41*	0.48*	0.71***	0.63**
Other sources of income (=1)	0.27	0.30	0.26	0.44**	0.44**	0.42*	0.07	0.22	0.13	−0.31	−0.18	−0.23
Years self-employment (log)	0.27***	0.27*	0.29**	0.27*	0.23	0.25*	0.31*	0.09	0.12	0.48**	0.25	0.27
Perceived instability	0.70*		0.78***	0.25		0.32	0.86*		0.62	0.24		0.04
Perceived job autonomy	−0.21		−0.12	−0.74**		−0.62*	−1.22***		−0.97***	−1.74***		−1.31***
Financial vulnerability (0/1)	0.21		0.17	0.17		0.09	0.89***		0.79**	0.65*		0.50
Involuntary (0/1)	0.64**		0.66**	0.64**		0.63**	0.95***		0.78**	1.01*		0.81**
Dependent (>75 per cent main client)	−0.25		−0.25	−0.07		−0.03	−0.64**		−0.47	−0.43		−0.23
Occupation (traditional = ref.)												
Technocrats		−0.32	−0.20		−0.71***	−0.60**		−1.37***	−1.09***		−1.59***	−1.36***
Social-cultural specialists		−0.95***	−0.95***		−1.00***	−0.96***		−0.02	0.09		−1.23***	−1.10***
Manual workers		−0.18	−0.26		−0.41	−0.47*		0.52	0.46		0.53	0.49
R^2	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.09	0.12	0.07	0.10	0.12

* $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Source: Solo self-employment panel, 2014–2 (own calculations).

Support for social self-employment policies (i.e., enables access to social security for self-employed persons without employees), is generally related to a weaker tendency to vote right-wing parties (VVD[−0.36], CDA[−0.23] and D66 [−0.14]) and a stronger tendency to vote left-wing (PvdA [0.13], SP[0.16], GL[0.12]). Hence, the relationship between social policy preferences and party orientations is largely in the expected direction. Moreover, support for social security is positively (0.15) related to non-voting, but unrelated to voting PVV. Finally, preventing false self-employment is generally not associated with any party orientation, except positive effects on supporting CDA (0.11) and SP (0.08).

In the next step, Table 3 shows the unstandardized regression effects using the attitudes towards policy orientations as the dependent variables. Because the precariousness-based and occupation-based variables are to some extent related (see Appendix, Tables A4 and A5), first separate models are shown for both types of variables (Models A and B), before reporting the final model including the two sets simultaneously (Model C). From Table 3 it appears that occupational differences are related to support for self-employment policies. Compared to traditional types of self-employment, the support for typical *entrepreneurial policies* (i.e., fewer rules, lower taxes) is significantly lower among social-cultural specialists (−0.95 and −0.96) and – with respect to taxes [and albeit at the 90 per cent level of confidence] – manual self-employed (−0.47). Technocrats, as expected, do not appear to differ from traditional self-employed in their preferences for typical entrepreneurial policies. These observations may support hypotheses 2 that compared to traditional types, new types are less strongly oriented towards liberal-conservative politics. Yet, the data in Table 3 do not provide evidence for stronger support for *social policies* (i.e., opening up social security, preventing false self-employment) among social-cultural specialists or manual self-employed. Although technocrats are generally less supportive of social policies (−1.09 and −1.36) relative to traditional self-employment, other new types are not found more supportive. Like technocrats, social-cultural specialists even reject (−1.10) prevention of false self-employment.

Turning to variables indicating precariousness, the data in Table 3 show that involuntariness, dependence and insecurity are not uniformly associated with weaker liberal-conservative attitudes, or stronger left-wing politics (hypothesis 1). Financial vulnerability and perceived instability, for example, are related to a higher support for access to social security (0.86 and 0.89, respectively) or preventing false self-employment (0.65 for financial vulnerability). Some of these effects, however, partially or fully disappear when taking into account occupational differences. Instability, on the other hand, is also related to stronger support (0.78) for cutting the administrative burden for small businesses. Moreover, involuntary self-employment is associated with higher support for all kinds of self-employment policy, both typical entrepreneurial policies (fewer rules [0.66], lower taxes [0.62]), as well as social policies (on social security [0.78] and false self-employment

[0.81]). In opposite direction, job autonomy is generally related to weaker support for all kinds of policies, but in particular regarding social policies.

Party orientations

Table 4 shows the regression estimates for the propensity to vote particular parties. To begin with the economic right-wing parties (VVD, CDA and D66), this table shows that relative to people in traditional types of self-employment, the propensity to vote VVD or CDA (Model 1 and 2) is lower for social-cultural specialist (−2.02 and −1.79, respectively) and manual workers (−1.53 and −1.04). Technocrats, however, although having a lower propensity to vote CDA (−0.86), do not differ from the traditional self-employed in their support for the VVD. These results largely confirm the expectations on liberal-conservative right-wing voting expressed in hypothesis 2. Indicators of precariousness, however, have no clear-cut effect on the propensity to vote VVD or CDA, except for financial vulnerability which is associated with a lower propensity to vote VVD or CDA (−1.08 and 0.67). Involuntary self-employment seems negatively related to support for the VVD, but this effect disappears when controlling for occupational differences. The effect of instability and dependence, on the other hand, provide no support for hypothesis 1. Contrary to the expectation even, dependent self-employed workers (i.e., respondents strongly relying on a single customer) even have a higher propensity to vote VVD (1.12).

The propensity to vote D66 shows a different picture, see Model 3. Compared to people in traditional self-employment, both professional-managerial types (that is, technocrats and social-cultural specialists alike) have a higher propensity to vote for this social-liberal party (1.42 and 1.51, respectively). Manual self-employed, on the other hand, are less supportive of D66 (−1.17). However, none of the 'precariousness' variables affect the propensity to vote D66. Again, these results indicate stronger support for hypothesis 2, than for hypothesis 1.

Next, Models 4 to 6 provides the regression estimates for the propensity to vote for a left-wing party (PvdA, SP and GL). Relative to people in traditional self-employment, social-cultural specialists have a higher propensity to vote PvdA (1.24) or GL (2.52). Manual workers are neither stronger nor weaker associated with left-wing voting. Compared to traditional self-employed, technocrats are somewhat less likely to vote SP, and somewhat more likely to vote GL. Hence, this results only partially supports hypothesis 2. Moreover, contrarily to hypothesis 1, involuntariness and instability are not associated with a higher propensity to vote left-wing. For GL the reverse seems true, a higher degree of instability is associated with a lower propensity to vote GroenLinks. Also the other results are mixed: Involuntariness is associated with stronger support for the SP (0.79), but not PvdA or GL. Financial vulnerability is associated with stronger support for GL (0.85), but

Table 4: Regression analysis for solo self-employed on the propensity to vote for party ($N = 815$)

Model	VVD			CDA			D66			PvdA		
	1A	1B	1C	2A	2B	2C	3A	3B	3C	4A	4B	4C
Intercept	7.19***	8.12***	7.76***	5.69***	6.50***	6.48***	6.17***	6.26***	5.90***	3.01***	3.92***	3.08***
Age	−0.05***	−0.05***	−0.05***	−0.04***	−0.04***	−0.04***	−0.02	−0.03**	−0.03**	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gender (female = 1)	−0.91***	−0.88***	−0.71**	−0.62***	−0.65***	−0.54**	0.80***	0.43	0.42	1.36***	1.01***	0.98***
Other sources of income (=1)	−0.05	−0.25	−0.15	0.36	0.26	0.32	0.04	−0.15	−0.14	−0.27	−0.31	−0.31
Years self-employment (log)	0.07	0.22	0.20	−0.12	−0.11	−0.13	−0.36*	−0.13	−0.11	−0.47***	−0.48***	−0.48***
Perceived instability	−0.29		0.06	−0.65		−0.53	−0.66		−0.26	−0.21		−0.25
Perceived job autonomy	0.72		0.68	0.34		0.47	1.19**		0.68	1.54***		1.43***
Financial vulnerability (0/1)	−1.02**		−1.08***	−0.55		−0.67*	−0.53		−0.33	−0.42		−0.37
Involuntary (0/1)	−0.70*		−0.52	−0.33		−0.31	0.26		0.62	0.12		0.15
Dependent (>75 per cent main client)	1.25***		1.12***	0.47		0.48	0.23		−0.02	−0.31		−0.29
Occupation (traditional = ref.)												
Technocrats		0.22	−0.09		−0.66**	−0.86***		1.48***	1.42***		0.09	−0.04
Social-cultural specialists		−1.89***	−2.02***		−1.72***	−1.79***		1.56***	1.51***		1.33***	1.24***
Manual workers		−1.53***	−1.50***		−1.09***	−1.04***		−1.16***	−1.17**		−0.16	−0.14
R^2	0.07	0.11	0.13	0.04	0.07	0.08	0.04	0.13	0.14	0.08	0.10	0.12

Table 4: (Continued)

Model	GL			SP			PVV			Non-voting (logit model)		
	5A	5B	5C	6A	6B	6C	7A	7B	7C	8A	8B	8C
Intercept	2.98***	3.23***	2.66***	1.83***	3.22***	2.30***	3.77***	4.37***	4.85***	−3.34***	−4.91***	−4.41***
Age	0.00	−0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	−0.02*	−0.02*	−0.02*	0.01	0.01	0.02
Gender (female = 1)	1.66***	1.28***	1.11***	1.08***	0.93***	0.79***	−0.95***	−0.85***	−0.87***	−0.79**	−0.49	−0.47
Other sources of income (=1)	−0.38	−0.35	−0.45*	−0.29	−0.26	−0.30	0.07	0.13	0.12	−0.07	0.05	0.04
Years self-employment (log)	−0.38*	−0.35*	−0.33*	−0.23	−0.35*	−0.31*	0.04	−0.16	−0.14	0.49**	0.51**	0.47**
Perceived instability	−0.81*		−0.81*	0.94**		0.85*	−0.35		−0.52	−0.27		−0.52
Perceived job autonomy	1.42***		1.12***	0.70*		0.76*	−0.87***		−0.46	−0.39		−0.30
Financial vulnerability (0/1)	0.70*		0.85**	0.23		0.18	0.34		0.11	−0.26		−0.19
Involuntary (0/1)	0.12		0.22	0.84**		0.79**	0.93***		0.74**	−0.16		−0.30
Dependent (>75 per cent main client)	−0.69**		−0.73**	−0.58*		−0.49	−0.44		−0.25	−0.87*		−0.82*
Occupation (traditional = ref.)												
Technocrats		0.64**	0.66**		−0.84***	−0.74***		−1.99***	−1.89***		0.75*	0.76*
Social-cultural specialists		2.51***	2.52***		0.34	0.33		−2.09***	−2.04***		0.54	0.54
Manual workers		−0.05	0.03		−0.17	−0.26		−0.39	−0.41		1.42***	1.44***
R^2	0.11	0.17	0.20	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.05	0.13	0.15			
Nagelkerke R^2										0.06	0.09	0.10

* $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Source: Solo self-employment panel, 2014–2 (own calculations).

not PvdA or SP. Interestingly, job autonomy is positively related to the propensity to vote PvdA (1.43), SP (0.76) and GL (1.12). This result indicates that – contrary to the expectation – self-employed are not more inclined to vote left-wing when they are more dependent, but rather when they enjoy greater autonomy in work. Dependent self-employment seems associated with a lower propensity to vote GL (−0.73) and, to some extent, SP (−0.58, uncontrolled for occupation).

Finally, in Model 7 and 8 hypothesis 3 is tested stating precarious self-employment is associated with either radical-right wing voting (PVV) or abstention (non-voting). It appears that in their support for the PVV manual self-employed workers do not differ from traditional self-employment. This correspondents to the idea that manual self-employed may share their radical tendencies with the "petty bourgeois". Social-cultural professionals (−2.04) and technocrats (−1.89), on the other hand, strongly reject the PVV. With respect to precariousness, model 7 shows that only involuntary self-employment is associated with stronger PVV support (0.74). For the other elements of precariousness, hypothesis 3 does not seem to hold. In Model 8 the "propensity" of non-voting is estimated through a logit model. Compared to other types, unskilled self-employed workers are more likely to abstain from voting (1.44). Yet, none of the 'precariousness' identifiers is associated with abstention. Dependent self-employment seems even negatively (−0.82) associated with non-voting.

Conclusion

In the second half of the twentieth century, social scientists considered the self-employed as a residual social class, doomed to disappear as they would not be able to cope with the increasing concentration of capital, and either be driven out of existence or be absorbed by ever bigger companies (cf. Goss, 1991; Arum and Müller, 2004). Recent developments indicate that self-employment has resisted the pressures of capitalist accumulation. Rather than fading away, the number of "micro" businesses without employees has grown over the last decades. With its rise, self-employment has become increasingly diverse. This article set out to assess whether the notion of the self-employed as a single, homogenous, and right-wing class can be maintained. The relevance of this question is clearly supported by the fact that, in the sample under study, only a third of the self-employed without employees reported having voted for the main liberal party (VVD) at the last general elections.

The first conclusion of this study is that simple association between "petty bourgeois" self-employment and rightest political orientations is largely an oversimplification, and for a growing segment of self-employment even a misrepresentation. It should be noted that in the current sample less than a quarter of the solo self-employed is labeled as "traditional self-employed" (e.g., farm

owners, small shopkeepers, retailers, wholesalers etc.), meaning that the vast majority works in "new" self-employment. For people in traditional self-employment the image of a right-wing category largely persists. Together with self-employed technocrats, they most strongly support typical entrepreneurial policies such as reducing taxes and regulations for small business. Yet, even these 'core' groups do not overwhelmingly support right-wing parties: Rated on a scale from 0 to 10, the average propensity to vote VVD among traditional and technocratic self-employed is approximately 5.4 and 5.9, respectively (see Appendix A3). This finding confirms the idea already expressed by Aldrich *et al* (1986) that small shop owners, although adhering to rightist values, are not particularly enthusiastic in their alignments to particular parties.

For other "segments" of self-employment, the association with conservative right-wing politics is simply inaccurate. In particular self-employed social-cultural professionals – and to some extent also self-employed manual workers – sharply deviate from the traditional "petty bourgeois", and are generally less right-wing. Social cultural specialists, for example, are less oriented towards typical entrepreneurial policies such as tax reduction or lenient regulations, and have only a weak adherence to liberal-conservative parties. Alternatively, social-cultural specialists, who hold occupations that entail high autonomy, specialized social-cultural knowledge, and tasks that are not directly instrumental to profit-maximization, have a relatively high propensity to vote left-wing (PvdA) and new-left/green (GroenLinks). Apart from economic motives driving left-wing voting behavior, the political preferences of this group may also reflect the prevalence of cultural issues in the political debate (Achterberg and Houtman, 2006; Houtman *et al*, 2009).[6]

The second conclusion to arise from this study is that precarious self-employment has mixed implications for political orientations. Instability and financial vulnerability were investigated to examine the effect of insecure jobs. Of these two indicators only financial vulnerability has some effect on party preferences. Self-employed with low incomes and little financial back-up are less likely to support right-wing parties. Yet, neither financial vulnerability, nor instability is associated with support for the PvdA, the main leftwing party. Yet, precariousness seems to stimulate support for the Socialist Party. Self-employed with more instable jobs and who would rather work in wage-employment are more likely to support the SP. Interestingly, involuntariness is related to a higher propensity to vote for parties at both extremes of the party system, i.e., far-left (SP) and far-right (PVV). It should be noted, however, that still the overall support among the self-employed for such radical parties remains rather low. The effect of precariousness on the political preferences of solo self-employed workers should therefore not be overestimated. There is some evidence for precarious forms of self-employment that deviate from traditional rightwing entrepreneurship, but the effects are not as convincing as the occupational differences in political

preferences. This is not to say that precarious self-employment does not exist. But on average, the findings indicate that solo self-employed workers in the Netherlands are not "outsiders" (cf. Muffels, 2013). One reservation applies to this conclusion, because the nature of the sampling framework implies that the self-employed under study, all have formally registered businesses. By design, this excludes self-employment activities in the informal sector, which is potentially more precarious. Unfortunately there is no reliable quantitative data available on the size and economic composition of this informal segment.

This article also sheds new light on the effect of dependent self-employment and the effect of job autonomy. First, contrary to the expectation, *dependence* is not associated with weaker liberal/conservative support. Instead, solo self-employed who largely depend on a single customer have a higher propensity to vote VVD and CDA. This finding indicates that job insecurity is not an urgent problem for dependent self-employed who may have built long-lasting and stable relationships with a single client (Muehlberger, 2007). Muehlberger, for example, points to the case of 'tied agents' in the insurance sector, who are formally self-employed but have tied and long-lasting business relationships with insurance companies they contract with (2007, p. 12). Also in the current sample, 'dependent' work relationships are most common among technocratic professionals, who are economically relatively well-off (cf. Appendix A4 and A5). Hence, dependence may be an indicator for stability rather than precariousness.

For job autonomy, this study shows that self-employed who enjoy a high degree of autonomy in their professional life, have a greater propensity to vote for political parties on the left. This contradicts the notion that autonomy stimulates a rightist interpretation of economic self-reliance – as for example suggested by Kitschelt and Rehm (2014, pp. 1674–75) who put forward that people with greater job autonomy generalize these experiences of accountability and action to the political domain. Instead, job autonomy seems to relate more strongly to a progressive interpretation of self-actualization (Scase and Goffee, 1981, p. 731). In particular for professionals in liberal occupations who combine high levels of job discretion with social-cultural knowledge, and tasks that are not directly instrumental to profit-maximization, autonomy at the workplace may reflect a post-materialist value orientation (Brint, 1984)[7]. In this respect, future research on self-employment and politics may investigate whether autonomy means something different for people who enter self-employment from the ambition to avoid a boss or restrictions, compared to those whose start-up motives relate to opportunities for self-development (Van Gelderen and Jansen, 2006).

In sum, in their political behavior the new self-employed are neither "petty bourgeois" nor "outsiders". In majority, small self-employed in the Netherlands are professionals, albeit with diverging types of occupations, i.e., rightist technocrats and leftist social cultural specialists. The heterogeneity in self-employment makes the political voice of solo self-employed rather fragmented. And the lack of a uniform

political orientation hinders the understanding of the self-employed as an undivided social category, or class, with a demographic identity and shared interests (Goldthorpe, 2000). Although support for the VVD is evident, it seems mainly clustered among traditional self-employed and technocrats. The only party that strongly appeals to the whole professional group, both self-employed technocrats and social-cultural specialists, is D66 (i.e., a liberal democratic party that is often considered more progressive than the VVD, mainly on social-cultural issues). With the majority of self-employed working in either one of these types, D66 has a strong position to become the main party for solo self-employed professionals in the Netherlands.

The scope of this study was limited in at least two respects. First, the sample only included self-employed persons without employees, thereby excluding both self-employed with employees and respondents in wage-employment. Further research is needed to compare various types of solo self-employment to employers (with employees), and to employees in (temporary) wage-employment. Second, being limited to the Netherlands, this study was not able to address the voting patterns of self-employed in other countries. The Netherlands provided relevant case given the steep rise of solo self-employment over the last decade. For future research it would be interesting to assess political heterogeneity in countries with a similar growth in solo-self-employment, such as the United Kingdom – or with larger share of self-employed such as Italy. Country comparative studies are required as the risks associated with self-employment may be stronger in more competitive markets, or weaker in countries with inclusive social security systems. The somewhat narrow research design did not allow to address such wider issues here, but it provides a necessary step towards a more nuanced understanding of the political orientations associated with self-employment in advanced democracies.

About the Author

Giedo Jansen is Assistant Professor at the University of Twente, Institute for Innovation and Governance Studies. His research is on the intersection of political science, sociology, and labor relations. He has recently published in these areas in journals such as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Electoral Studies*, *Social Science Research*, and *West European Politics*. Currently, he works on a research project on self-employment and political alignments, based on a VENI grant from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO).

Notes

1 The only exceptions, to my knowledge, are Form (1982) on self-employed manual workers in the U.S. and a few small-scale, largely qualitative, studies on the political attitudes of shopkeepers the UK in 1970 and 1980s (Bechhofer and Elliott, 1978; Scase and Goffee, 1981; Aldrich *et al*, 1986).

2 Class measures and class voting studies typically make no distinction between self-employed professionals and those in wage-employment, grouping them together in "service class" occupations (e.g., Nieuwbeerta, 1995; Evans and De Graaf, 2013).Yet, this practice conceals that professionals/managers are nowadays the dominant form of self-employment. The typologies of social class in sociology therefore do not fit the changing nature of self-employment.

3 "Outsider" self-employment may not lead to support for collective arrangements in all policy domains. Dekker (2010b), for example, shows that even precarious self-employed have no desire for collective insurance against unemployment.

4 A fifth issue was in this set "how important to you think it is to stimulate entrepreneurship" was excluded from the analysis. Virtually none of the socio-economic characteristics and/or elements of precariousness showed a significant correlation with attitudes towards stimulating entrepreneurship.

5 A factor analysis confirmed that the perceived autonomy index and the index for perceived instability constitute two separate dimensions. The two scales correlate only weakly ($r = 0.17$).

6 Title phrase is adapted from Houtman *et al* (2009) "Farewell to the Leftist working class."

7 Education is often mentioned as important factor related to "new" political dimensions; separating libertarian from authoritarian values between the higher and lower educated, respectively. Education is not controlled for in this study. Yet, additional analyses reveal that a higher education is related to stronger support for D66 and GroenLinks, and weaker support for the PVV.

References

Achterberg, P. and Houtman, D. (2006) Why do so many people vote 'unnaturally'? A cultural explanation for voting behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research* 45(1): 75–92.

Aldrich, H., Zimmer, C. and Jones, T. (1986) Small business still speaks with the same voice: a replication of 'the voice of small business and the politics of survival'. *The Sociological Review* 34(2): 335–356.

Arum, R. and Müller, W. (eds.). (2004) *The Reemergence of Self-Employment: A Comparative Study of Self-Employment Dynamics and Social Inequality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Barbieri, P. (2003) Social capital and self-employment a network analysis experiment and several considerations. *International Sociology* 18(4): 681–701.

Barbieri, P. and Scherer, S. (2009) Labour market flexibilization and its consequences in Italy. *European Sociological Review* 25: 677–692.

Bechhofer, F. and Elliott, B. (1978) The voice of small business and the politics of survival. *The Sociological Review* 26(1): 57–88.

Blau, P. M. and Duncan, O. D. (1967) *The American Occupational Structure*. New York: Wiley.

Blumberg, B. F. and De Graaf, P. M. (2004) Dutch self-employment between 1980 and 1997. *The Reemergence of Self-employment. A comparative study of self-employment dynamics and social inequality*, 104–134.

Bosch, N. and Van Vuuren, D. (2010) De heterogeniteit van zzp'ers. *Economisch Statistische Berichten* 95(4597): 682–684.

Brint, S. (1984) "New-Class" and cumulative trend explanations of the liberal political attitudes of professionals. *American Journal of Sociology* 90: 30–71.

Buschoff, K. S. and Schmidt, C. (2009) Adapting labour law and social security to the needs of the'new self-employed' – comparing the UK, Germany and the Netherlands. *Journal of European Social Policy* 19(2): 147–159.

Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2014) Achtergrondkenmerken en ontwikkelingen van zzp'ers in Nederland (Published online at 1-12-2014), www.cbs.nl, accessed 25 May 2015.

Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2015) CBS Statline – Arbeidsdeelname; kerncijfers, http://statline.cbs.nl/Statweb/publication/?VW=T&DM=SLNL&PA=82309ned&D1=7-8&D2=0&D3=0&D4=0&D5=4,9,14,19,24,29,34,39,44,49,54,59&HD=150610-1529&HDR=G4&STB=G1,G2,G3,T.

Corbetta, P. and Colloca, P. (2013) Job precariousness and political orientations: The case of Italy. *South European Society and Politics* 18(3): 333–354.

De Grip, A., Hoevenberg, J. and Willems, E. (1997) Atypical employment in the European Union. *International Labour Review* 136: 49.

De Vries, N. and Dekker, F. (2015) Determinants of a precarious financial position of solo self-employed. Paper Presented at the CRSE Global Workshop on Freelancing and Self-employment Research: London 26–27.

De Witte, H. and Klandermans, B. (2000) Political racism in Flanders and the Netherlands: Explaining differences in the electoral success of extreme right-wing parties. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 26(4): 699–717.

Dekker, F. (2010a) Self-employed without employees: Managing risks in modern capitalism. *Politics & Policy* 38(4): 765–788.

Dekker, F. (2010b) Opvattingen van zelfstandig ondernemers over sociale zekerheid. *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken* 26(2): 146–161.

Emmenegger, P., Häusermann, S., Palier, B. and Seeleib-Kaiser, M. (2012) *The Age of Dualization: The Changing Face of Inequality in Deindustrializing Societies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Emmenegger, P., Marx, P. and Schraff, D. (2015) Labour market disadvantage, political orientations and voting: how adverse labour market experiences translate into electoral behaviour. *Socio-Economic Review* 13(2): 189–213.

Eurostat (2014) European Labor Force Surveys. LFS Series – Detailed Annual Survey Results, 1994–2014 [Database], http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database.

Evans, G. (ed.). (1999) *The End of Class Politics?: Class Voting in Comparative Context.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evans, G. and de Graaf, N. D. (eds.). (2013) *Political Choice Matters: Explaining the Strength of Class and Religious Cleavages in Cross-National Perspective.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Form, W. (1982) Self-employed manual workers: petty bourgeois or working class? *Social Forces* 60(4): 1050–1069.

Goldthorpe, J. H. (2000) *On Sociology: Numbers, Narratives, and the Integration of Research and Theory.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goss, D. (1991) *Small Business and Society.* London: Routledge.

GroenLinks. (2012) *Groene Kansen voor Nederland. Verkiezingsprogramma Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2012.* Utrecht: Partijbestuur GroenLinks.

Guillaud, E. and Marx, P. (2014) Preferences for employment protection and the insider-outsider divide: Evidence from France. *West European Politics* 37(5): 1177–1185.

Güveli, A. (2006) New social classes within the service class in the Netherlands and Britain: Adjusting the EGP class schema for the technocrats and the social and cultural specialists. ICS-dissertation, Radboud University Nijmegen, Nijmegen.

Güveli, A., Need, A. and De Graaf, N. D. (2007) The rise of new 'social classes within the service class in the Netherlands political orientation of social and cultural specialists and technocrats between 1970 and 2003. *Acta Sociologica* 50(2): 129–146.

Hoevenagel, R., De Vries, R. and Vroonhof, P. (2015). *Arbeidsmarktpositie van zzp'ers. Zzp Panel: Resultaten eerste meting 2014. Rapportnummer A201435.* Zoetermeer: Panteia.

Houtman, D., Achterberg, P. and Derks, A. (2009) *Farewell to the leftist working class*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Jansen, G. (2011) Social Cleavages and Political Choices. Large Scale Comparisons of Social Class, Religion and Voting Behaviour in Western Democracies. Nijmegen: ICS-Dissertation, Radboud University Nijmegen, Nijmegen.

Jansen, G., De Graaf, N. D. and Need, A. (2011) Class voting, social changes and political changes in the Netherlands 1971–2006. *Electoral Studies* 30(3): 510–524.

Kalleberg, A. L. (2011) *Good jobs, bad jobs: The rise of polarized and precarious employment systems in the United States, 1970s–2000s*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Kanas, A., Van Tubergen, F. and Van der Lippe, T. (2009) Immigrant self-employment testing hypotheses about the role of origin-and host-country human capital and bonding and bridging social capital. *Work and Occupations* 36(3): 181–208.

Kangas, O. E. (1997) Self-interest and the common good: the impact of norms, selfishness and context in social policy opinions. *The Journal of Socio-Economics* 26(5): 475–494.

Kautonen, T., Down, S., Welter, F., Vainio, P., Palmroos, J., Althoff, K., et al. (2010) "Involuntary self-employment" as a public policy issue: a cross-country European review. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research* 16(2): 112–129.

King, M. W. (2014). Protecting and representing workers in the new gig economy. In R. Milkman & E. Ott (Eds.), *New Labor in New York. Precarious Workers and the Future of the Labor Movement* (pp. 150–170). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Kitschelt, H. and Rehm, P. (2014) Occupations as a site of political preference formation. *Comparative Political Studies* 47(12): 1670–1706.

Kösters, L., Smits, W. and de Vries, R. (2013) De ene zzp'er is de andere niet. In R. V. Van Galen, et al. (Eds.), *Dynamiek op de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt. De focus op flexibilisering* (pp. 139–153). Den Haag: Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek.

Kösters, L. and Souren, M. (2014) De toename van zzp'ers in Europees perspectief. *Economisch Statistische Berichten,* 99(4683): 247–249.

Kriesi, H. P., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschier, S. and Frey, T. (2008) *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization* (pp. 154–182). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindvall, J. and Rueda, D. (2014) The insider–outsider dilemma. *British Journal of Political Science* 44(02): 460–475.

Lipset, S. M. (1959) Democracy and working-class authoritarianism. *American Sociological Review* 24(4): 482–501.

Lofstrom, M. (2013) Does self-employment increase the economic well-being of low-skilled workers? *Small Business Economics,* 40(4): 933–952.

Lucardie, P. (1987) Van ondernemerspartij tot volkspartij? De VVD en haar verhouding tot de werkgeversorganisaties CSWV en VNO. *Jaarboek DNPP*, Groningen: Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen.

Lucardie, P. (2007) *Nederland stromenland: een geschiedenis van de politieke stromingen*. Assen: Uitgeverij Van Gorcum.

Manza, F. and Brooks, C. (1999) *Social Cleavages and Political Change. Voter Alignments and U.S. Party Coalitions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, P. (2014) Labour market risks and political preferences: The case of temporary employment. *European Journal of Political Research* 53(1): 136–159.

Marx, P. and Picot, G. (2013) The party preferences of atypical workers in Germany. *Journal of European Social Policy* 23(2): 164–178.

Mau, S. (2003) *The moral economy of welfare states: Britain and Germany compared*. New York: Routledge.

McManus, P. A. (2000). Market, state, and the quality of new self-employment jobs among men in the US and Western Germany. *Social Forces* 78(3): 865–905.

Millán, J. M., Congregado, E. and Román, C. (2014) Persistence in entrepreneurship and its implications for the European entrepreneurial promotion policy. *Journal of Policy Modeling* 36(1): 83–106.

Mudde, C. (2000) *The Ideology of the Extreme Right*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Muehlberger, U. (2007) *Dependent Self-Employment: Workers on the Border Between Employment and Self Employment*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Muffels, R. (2013) Zzp'ers: Insiders of Outsiders. In F. Dekker (ed.), *En toen waren er zzp'ers* (pp. 37–56). Boom Lemma Uitgevers: Den Haag.

Nieuwbeerta, P. (1995) *The Democratic Class Struggle in Twenty Countries 1945–1990*. Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers.

Nieuwbeerta, P. and De Graaf, N. D. (1999) Traditional class voting in twenty postwar societies. In G. Evans (ed.), *The End of Class Politics* (pp. 23–56). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, P. (2005) *Radical right: Voters and parties in the electoral market*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

OECD (2015) Self-employed without employees (indicator), 10.1787/5d5d0d63-en, accessed on 26 May 2015.

Oesch, D. (2008) The changing shape of class voting: An individual-level analysis of party support in Britain, Germany and Switzerland. *European Societies,* 10(3): 329–355.

Pedersini, R. and Coletto, D. (2010) Self-employed workers: industrial relations and working conditions.Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

Pernicka, S. (2006) Organizing the self-employed: theoretical considerations and empirical findings. *European Journal of Industrial Relations* 12(2): 125–142.

PvdA. (2012) *Nederland Sterker en Socialer. Verkiezingsprogramma Tweede Kamerverkiezingen 2012*. Amsterdam: Partij van de Arbeid.

Reeskens T and van Oorschot W (2011) Equity, equality or need? Explaining preferences towards welfare redistribution principles across 23 European countries. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Seattle, WA, pp. 1–4.

Rueda, D. (2007) *Social Democracy Inside Out: Partisanship and Labor Market Policy in Advanced Industrialized Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Scase, R. and Goffee, R. (1981) Traditional petty bourgeois attitudes: The case of self-employed craftsmen. *The Sociological Review* 29(4): 729–747.

Skocpol, T. and Williamson, V. (2012) *The Tea Party and the remaking of American conservatism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

SP (2012) Nieuw vertrouwen. *Verkiezingsprogramma SP 2013–2017.* Amersfoort: Socialistische Partij.

Standing, G. (2011) *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Stanworth, C. and Stanworth, J. (1995) The self-employed without employees. autonomous or atypical? *Industrial Relations Journal* 26(3): 221–229.

Van der Eijk, C., Van der Brug, W., Kroh, M. and Franklin, M. (2006) Rethinking the dependent variable in voting behavior: On the measurement and analysis of electoral utilities. *Electoral Studies* 25(3): 424–447.

Van Gelderen, M. and Jansen, P. (2006) Autonomy as a start-up motive. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development,* 13(1): 23–32.

Van Oorschot, W. (2000). Why pay for welfare? A sociological analysis of reasons for welfare solidarity. *The Netherlands Journal of Social Sciences* 26(1): 15–36.

Van Stel, A. J., Wennekers, S. and Scholman, G. (2014) Solo Self-employed Versus Employer Entrepreneurs: Determinants and Macro-economic Effects in OECD Countries (Vol. 201212). EIM Research Report.

Wells, K. and Watson, S. (2005) A politics of resentment: shopkeepers in a London neighbourhood. *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 28(2): 261–277.

Wright, E. O. (1997) *Class counts: Comparative studies in class analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix A: Descriptive Statistics and Comparing Means ($N = 815$)

.

Table A1: Descriptive statistics

	Min	Max	Mean	S.D.
Vote propensity				
VVD	0.00	10.00	4.74	3.59
PvdA	0.00	10.00	3.10	3.01
SP	0.00	10.00	2.61	3.01
CDA	0.00	10.00	3.26	3.08
PVV	0.00	10.00	1.61	2.78
D66	0.00	10.00	4.94	3.42
GL	0.00	10.00	3.17	3.29
Policy issues ($N = 705$)	0.00	10.00	7.92	2.30
Fewer rules	0.00	10.00	6.97	2.82
Lower taxes	0.00	10.00	7.84	2.33
Access to social security	0.00	10.00	6.53	3.13
Tackling false self-employment	0.00	10.00	7.92	2.30
Perceived precariousness (index)	0.00	1.00	0.54	0.24
Perceived job autonomy (index)	0.00	1.00	0.66	0.26
Involuntary (=1)	0.00	1.00	0.10	0.30
Financial vulnerability (0/1)	0.00	1.00	0.11	0.31
Dependent (>75 per cent main client)	0.00	1.00	0.14	0.35
Occupation (traditional self-employed = ref.)	0.00	1.00	0.21	0.41
Technocrats	0.00	1.00	0.29	0.45
Social-cultural specialists	0.00	1.00	0.25	0.43
Manual workers	0.00	1.00	0.26	0.44
Other sources of income	0.00	1.00	0.22	0.41
Years in self-employment (logged)	0.00	52.00	13.00	9.12
Age	24.00	76.00	51.01	9.27
Gender (female = 1)	0.00	1.00	0.33	0.47

Table A2: Perceived importance of self-employment policies, mean values by groups and correlations ($N = 705$)

	Fewer rules for business owners	Lower taxes for businesses	Opening up Social security	Prevent false self-employment
Means	7.9	7.8	7.0	6.5
Occupation (F-test/K–W test)	F***/KW***	F***/KW***	F***/KW***	F***/KW***
Technocrats	7.9	7.7	5.8	5.4
Social-cultural specialists	7.4	7.4	7.4	6.1
Traditional self-employed	8.3	8.4	7.3	7.3
Manual workers	8.1	8.0	7.7	7.6
Involuntary (T test/M–W test)	T***/MW**	T***/MW*	T***/MW***	T***/MW***
Prefer wage-employment	8.6	8.5	8.2	7.7
Prefer self-employment	7.8	7.8	6.8	6.4
Dependent (t test/M–W test)	T**/MW(n.s.)	T***/MW(n.s.)	T***/MW**	T***/MW(n.s.)
<75 per cent or no main client	7.8	7.8	6.8	6.4
Turnover >75 per cent from main client	8.6	8.5	8.2	7.7
Financial Vulnerability (t test/M–W test)	n.s.	n.s.	T***/MW***	T***/MW**
Higher income and/or more buffer	7.9	7.8	6.8	6.4
Low income and little buffer	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.4
Instability				
Pearson's r	0.10**	0.04	0.13***	0.08**
Spearman's rho	0.07*	0.04	0.14***	0.08**
Job autonomy				
Pearson's r	−0.05	−0.10**	−0.14***	−0.17***
Spearman's rho	−0.05	−0.08**	−0.15***	−0.19***

F test ANOVA; *K–W test* Kruskall–Wallis test; *M–W test* Mann–Whitney test: * $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Table A3: Propensity to ever vote for a party, mean values by groups and correlations ($N = 815$)

	VVD	PvdA	SP	CDA	PVV	D66	GL
Means	4.7	3.1	2.6	3.3	1.6	4.9	3.2
Occupation (*F* test/K–W test)	F***/KW****	F***/KW****	F***/KW****	F***/KW****	F***/KW****	F***/KW****	F***/KW****
Technocrats	5.9	2.8	1.9	3.6	1.0	5.9	2.9
Social-cultural specialists	3.4	4.3	3.4	2.3	0.5	6.1	5.2
Traditional self-employed	5.4	2.9	2.9	4.0	2.6	4.5	2.5
Manual workers	4.3	2.4	2.4	3.2	2.6	3.2	2.1
Involuntary (*T*-test/M–W test)	T***/MW***	n.s.	T***/MW***	T**/MW(n.s)	T**/MW***	n.s.	n.s.
Prefer wage-employment	3.7	3.1	3.5	2.7	2.4	5.0	3.4
Prefer self-employment	4.9	3.1	2.5	3.3	1.5	4.9	3.2
Dependent (*T*-test/M–W test)	T**/MW***	n.s.	T***/MW*	T**/MW(n.s.)	n.s.	n.s.	T**/MW*
<75 per cent or no main client	4.5	3.1	2.7	3.2	1.7	4.9	3.3
Turnover >75 per cent from main client	5.9	2.8	1.9	3.8	1.3	5.2	2.5
Financial Vulnerability (*T*-test/M–W test)	T***/MW***	n.s.	T**/MW***	T**/MW**	n.s.	T***/MW***	T***/MW***
Higher income and/or more buffer	4.9	3.1	2.5	3.4	1.6	5.0	3.0
Low income and little buffer	3.3	3.1	3.3	2.5	1.8	4.7	4.2
Instability							
Pearson's r	−0.09**	−0.03	0.10***	−0.09***	−0.01	−0.07**	−0.05
Spearman's rho	−0.09**	−0.01	0.10***	−0.09**	−0.04	−0.05	−0.04
Job autonomy							
Pearson's r	0.06*	0.16***	0.05	0.04	−0.10***	0.12***	0.14***
Spearman's rho	0.08***	0.18***	0.06*	0.05	−0.08**	0.13***	0.14***

F-test ANOVA; *K–W test* Kruskall–Wallis test; *M–W test* Mann–Whitney test: * $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Table A4: Indicators of precariousness, mean values and frequencies by occupational groups ($N = 815$)

	Perceived instability Means	perceived autonomy Means	Involuntary Per cent	Dependent Per cent	Financial vulnerability Per cent
Technocrats	0.48	0.71	4.3	22.0	4.7
Social-cultural specialists	0.56	0.69	10.7	11.7	12.6
Traditional self-employed	0.55	0.63	11.4	10.2	18.0
Manual workers	0.59	0.60	15.3	10.5	10.5
Total	0.54	0.66	10.2	14.0	10.9
F-test/K–W test	F***/KW***	F***/KW***			
Cramers' V			CR-V***	CR-V***	CR-V***

F-test ANOVA, K–W test = Kruskall–Wallis test, CR-V Cramers' V: * $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Table A5: Perceived instability and autonomy, mean values by involuntariness, dependence, and vulnerability ($N = 815$)

	Perceived instability	Perceived autonomy
Involuntary (T-test/M–W test)	T*** MW***	T*** MW***
Prefer wage-employment	0.63	0.56
Prefer self-employment	0.53	0.67
Dependent (T-test/M–W test)	T***/MW***	n.s.
<75 per cent or no main client	0.56	0.66
Turnover >75 per cent from main client	0.43	0.67
Financial vulnerability (T-test/M–W test)	T***/MW***	n.s.
Higher income and/or more buffer	0.53	0.66
Low income and little buffer	0.61	0.63

M–W test Mann–Whitney Test: * $P < 0.1$; ** $P < 0.05$; *** $P < 0.01$; sector weights applied.

Appendix B: Overview of Occupational Groups

Occupational Group	ISCO-2008 codes[1]	Examples (most frequent)
Self-employed technocrats Based on Adjusted-EGP classes for professional-managerial occupations: classes I-a (higher grade technocrats) and II-a (lower grade technocrats)[2]	2142; 2145; 2264; 2265; 2411; 2412; 2421; 2431; 2511; 2512; 2513; 2522; 2523; 2619; 3112; 3115; 3116; 3118; 3142; 3152; 3153; 3240; 3251; 3313; 3321; 3322; 3333; 3334; 3339; 3343; 3352	• Business agents • Management and organization • Analysts • System analysts • Software developers • Accounting associates professionals

Occupational Group	ISCO-2008 codes[1]	Examples (most frequent)
Self-employed social-cultural specialists Based on Adjusted-EGP classes for professional-managerial occupations: classes I-b (higher grade social-cultural specialists) and II-b (lower grade social cultural specialists)[3]	2161; 2163; 2164; 2166; 2211; 2212; 2222; 2230; 2250; 2261; 2263; 2266; 2269; 2320; 2353; 2354; 2355; 2359; 2422; 2423; 2424; 2432; 2621; 2622; 2632; 2634; 2635; 2641; 2642; 2643; 2651; 2652; 2654; 3332; 3412; 3413; 3422; 3431; 3432; 3521	• Training and staff developments • Professionals • Other teaching professionals • Authors, journalists and other writers • Film directors, producers and photographers • Medical specialists and other health professionals
Traditional self-employed (agricultural and petty bourgeois) Based on EGP classes III (non-manual in sales in services) and IV-c (self-employed farmers)[4]	1420; 3433; 4221; 5111; 5120; 5141; 5142; 5151; 5152; 5163; 5164; 5165; 5211; 5221; 6111; 6112; 6113; 6121; 6222	• Shopkeepers and retailers • Wholesalers • Farmers • Other service and sales businesses (small restaurateurs, bed and breakfast operators, hairdressers, beauticians)
Manual self-employment Based on EGP classes VI (skilled worker), VII-a (unskilled workers) and VII-b (farm laborers)[5]	3214; 5153; 5311; 5322; 7111; 7112; 7113; 7114; 7115; 7119; 7121; 7123; 7124; 7125; 7126; 7131; 7132; 7133; 7211; 7212; 7221; 7223; 7231; 7233; 7311; 7312; 7313; 7314; 7315; 7317; 7412; 7421; 7522; 7531; 7532; 7536; 8211; 8322; 8343; 9112; 9211; 9212; 9214; 9215; 9332	• Car, taxi and van drivers • Building and Construction workers • Electronics, mechanics and servicers • Home-based personal care and child care workers • Farm laborers

[1]To convert ISCO-08 codes into (Adjusted) EGP categories conversion tables based on ISCO-88 (Güveli, 2006) were adapted. The above-mentioned codes match ISCO-88 conversions, with a few exceptions.

[2]Accounting associate professionals (isco-08: 3313) were classified as self-employed technocrats. And isco-88-2419 (business professionals n.e.c.) was broken down into social-cultural specialists (isco-08-2422 and 2432, policy advisors and PR professionals, respectively), and technocrats (isco-08 2412, 242, 2431, 2619, for financial, management, marketing, and legal professionals).

[3]Social work associate professionals (isco-08 3412) and other teaching professionals (isco-08 3422), and conference and event planners (isco-08 3332) were classified as self-employed social-cultural specialists.

[4]Cooks (isco-08 = 5120) Hairdressers and Beauticians (isco-08 5141 and 5142) and Undertakers (isco-08 5163) were classified as traditional self-employment.

[5]Home-based personal care workers (isco-88 = 5322) and childcare workers (isco-08 5311) coded as manual self-employment.