Preface by **KENAN MALIK** author of »From Fatwa to Jihad«

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European Populism
and Winning the Immigration Debate

Edited by Clara Sandelind

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Preface

Kenan Malik

Kenan Malik is a London-based writer, lecturer and broadcaster. His books include The Quest for a Moral Compass: A Global History of Ethics (2014), From Fatwa to Jihad: The Rushdie Affair and its Legacy (2009) and Strange Fruit: Why Both Sides are Wrong in the Race Debate (2008).

Golden Dawn in Greece. The Front National in France. UKIP in Britain. Sweden Democrats. The True Finns. Throughout Europe groups once seen as fringe organizations are dominating headlines, and often setting the political agenda. The challenge that such groups pose to mainstream political parties, and the instability they have unleashed upon the mainstream political arena, has created a sense of panic about the rise of 'populism'.

But what is populism? Why is it a problem? And how should it be combated?

What are considered populist parties comprise, in fact, very different kinds of organizations, with distinct historical roots, ideological values and networks of social support. Some, such as Golden Dawn, are openly Nazi. Others, such as the Front National are far-right organizations that in recent years have tried to rebrand themselves to become more mainstream. Yet others - UKIP for instance - have reactionary views, play to far-right themes such as race and immigration, but have never been part of the far-right tradition.

What unites this disparate group is that all define themselves through a hostility to the mainstream and to what has come to be regarded as the dominant liberal consensus. Most of the populist parties combine a visceral hatred of immigration with an acerbic loathing of the EU, a virulent nationalism and deeply conservative views on social issues such as gay marriage and women's rights.

The emergence of such groups reveals far more, however, than merely a widespread disdain for the mainstream. It expresses also the redrawing of Europe's political map, and the creation of a new faultline on that map. The postwar political system, built around the divide between social democratic and conservative parties, is being dismantled. Not only has this created new space for the populists, but it is also transforming the very character of political space.

The broad ideological divides that characterized politics for much of the past two hundred years have, over the past three decades, been

all but erased. The political sphere has narrowed; politics has become less about competing visions of the kinds of society people want than a debate about how best to manage the existing political system. Politics, in this post-ideological age, has been reduced to a question more of technocratic management rather than of social transformation.

One way in which people have felt this change is as a crisis of political representation, as a growing sense of being denied a voice, and of political institutions as being remote and corrupt. The sense of being politically abandoned has been most acute within the traditional working class, whose feelings of isolation have increased as social democratic parties have cut their links with their old constituencies. As mainstream parties have discarded both their ideological attachments and their long-established constituencies, so the public has become increasingly disengaged from the political process. The gap between voters and the elite has widened, fostering disenchantment with the very idea of politics.

The new political faultline in Europe is not between left and right, between social democracy and conservatism, but between those who feel at home in - or at least are willing to accommodate themselves to - the post-ideological, post-political world, and those who feel left out, dispossessed and voiceless. These kinds of divisions have always existed, of course. In the past, however, that sense of dispossession and voicelessness could be expressed politically, particularly through the organizations of the left and of the labour movement. No longer. It is the erosion of such mechanisms that is leading to the remaking of Europe's political landscape.

The result has been the creation of what many commentators in Britain are calling the 'left behind' working class. In France, there has been much talk of 'peripheral France', a phrase coined by the social geographer Christophe Guilluy to describe people 'pushed out by the deindustrialization and gentrification of the urban centers', who 'live away from the economic and decision-making centers in a state of

social and cultural non-integration' and have come to 'feel excluded'.

European societies have in recent years become both more socially atomized and riven by identity politics. Not just the weakening of labour organizations, but the decline of collectivist ideologies, the expansion of the market into almost every nook and cranny of social life, the fading of institutions, from trade unions to the Church, that traditionally helped socialize individuals – all have helped create a more fragmented society.

At the same time, and partly as a result of such social atomization, people have begun to view themselves and their social affiliations in a different way. Social solidarity has become defined increasingly not in political terms - as collective action in pursuit of certain political ideals – but in terms of ethnicity or culture. The question people ask themselves is not so much 'In what kind of society do I want to live?' as 'Who are we?'. The two questions are, of course, intimately related, and any sense of social identity must embed an answer to both. The relationship between the two is, however, complex and fluid.

As the political sphere has narrowed, and as mechanisms for political change eroded, so the two questions have come more and more to be regarded as synonymous. The answer to the question 'In what kind of society do I want to live?' has become shaped less by the kinds of values or institutions we want to struggle to establish, than by the kind of people that we imagine we are; and the answer to 'Who are we?' defined less by the kind of society we want to create than by the history and heritage to which supposedly we belong. Or, to put it another way, as broader political, cultural and national identities have eroded, and as traditional social networks, institutions of authority and moral codes have weakened, so people's sense of belonging has become more narrow and parochial, moulded less by the possibilities of a transformative future than by an often mythical past. The politics of ideology has, in other words, given way to the politics of identity.

Both these developments have helped make the 'left behind' feel more left behind. Atomization has played into the hands of the deraci-

nated middle class. Identity politics have helped foster communities defined by faith, ethnicity or culture. For many working class communities these two processes have helped both corrode the social bonds that once gave them strength and identity and dislocate their place in society.

The 'left behind' have suffered largely because of economic and political changes. But they have come to see their marginalization primarily as a cultural loss. In part, the same social and economic changes that have led to the marginalization of the 'left behind' have also made it far more difficult to view that marginalization in political terms. The very decline of the economic and political power of the working class and the weakening of labour organizations and social democratic parties, have helped obscure the economic and political roots of social problems. And as culture has become the medium through which social issues are refracted, so the 'left behind' have also come to see their problems in cultural terms. They, too, have turned to the language of identity to express their discontent.

Once class identity comes to be seen as a cultural attribute, then those regarded as culturally different are often viewed as threats. Hence the growing hostility to immigration. Immigration has become the means through which many of the 'left behind' perceive their sense of loss of social status. It has become both a catch-all explanation for unacceptable social change and a symbol of the failure of the liberal elite to understand the views of voters. The EU, meanwhile, has become symbolic of the democratic deficit in many people's lives, and of the distance (social, political and physical) between ordinary people and the political class.

In an age in which progressive social movements have largely crumbled, and in which there is widespread disenchantment with the very idea of collective social transformation, people's political anger often finds expression not through opposition to a particular policy or government, or even to capitalism, but through a generalized hatred of everything

and everyone in power. That is why populist groups position themselves as 'anti-political' parties. They play upon on and fuse together many of the themes that have become so corrosive of contemporary politics: not simply the contempt for mainstream politics and politicians, and the sense of voicelessness and abandonment, but also the perception of a world out of control and as driven by malign forces, of victimhood as a defining feature of social identity, and a willingness to believe in conspiracy theories. The result has been the creation of an indiscriminate rage that is not just politically incoherent, but also potentially reactionary. Inchoately kicking out against the system can all too easily mutate into indiscriminately striking out against the 'Other'.

So, how do we challenge the populists? First, we need to stop being so obsessed by the parties themselves, and start dealing with the issues that lead many voters to support them. It is true that many of the policies, even of relatively mainstream parties such as UKIP, are repellent, and many of their leaders hold obnoxiously racist, sexist and homophobic views. It is true, too, that many of their supporters are hardcore racists. But this should not blind us to the fact that many others are drawn to such parties for very different reasons – because these seem to be the only organizations that speak to their grievances and express their frustrations with mainstream politics. Given this, simply exposing UKIP or Front National politicians as racists will change little, especially given that virtually all politicians are busy stoking fears about immigration. It is not that such exposés should not be done, but that they are futile if wielded as the principal tactic.

Engaging with the concerns of potential UKIP or FN voters, rather than simply dismissing them as racists, does not mean, however, caving into reactionary arguments or pandering to prejudices. It means, to the contrary, challenging them openly and robustly; challenging the idea, for instance, that immigration is responsible for the lack of jobs and housing, or that lower immigration would mean a lower crime rate, or that Muslims constitute a social problem for the West.

Yet, mainstream politicians have generally done the opposite. What has made their assault on parties such as UKIP and the FN particularly ineffective is that at the same time as attacking them as racist, mainstream politicians have themselves assiduously fostered fears about immigration and adopted populist anti-immigration policies. All this has merely confirmed the belief that the populists were right all along. It has engorged cynicism about conventional politicians. And since immigration has not been primarily responsible for the 'left behind' being left behind, it has done nothing to assuage the sense of marginalization and voicelessness that many feel. Indeed, by stoking new fears about immigration, it has merely deepened the sense of grievance. To combat the populists, we need to challenge the rhetoric and policies not simply of UKIP or the FN but also of the Conservatives, the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats, of the Parti Socialiste, the UMP and the Nouveau Centre. It is the anti-immigration rhetoric of the mainstream parties that make people receptive to the anti-immigration rhetoric of the populists.

Finally, we need to establish new social mechanisms through which to link liberal ideas about immigration and individual rights with progressive economic arguments and a belief in the community and the collective. Those who today rightly bemoan the corrosion of collective movements and community organizations often also see the problem as too much immigration. Those who take a liberal view on immigration, and on other social issues, are often happy with a more individualized, atomized society. Until all three elements of a progressive outlook – a defence of immigration, freedom of movement and of individual rights, a challenge to austerity policies and the embrace of collective action - can be stitched together, and stitched into a social movement, then there will be no proper challenge to the populists.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Clara Sandelind (ed.)

University of Sheffield

Clara Sandelind is a Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Politics, University of Sheffield. Her PhD thesis is entitled Nationalism and Attitudes to Immigration and she has also written on issues of territorial rights and self-determination.

»My plan: Patriotism, not thieving Moroccans«. That was the message of a Freedom Party (FPÖ) candidate in local elections 2012. In the Austrian 2013 general election, FPÖ got 21.4 per cent of the votes using posters stating that »Vienna cannot become Istanbul«. In the Swiss 2007 election, The Swiss People's Party (SVP) used posters portraying white sheep kicking a black sheep off the Swiss flag. The Swedish 2010 election saw the Sweden Democrats having their televised advert censored. In the advert, women dressed in *burqas* were racing a group of scared pensioners to get to welfare spending first. In Italy, politicians from the Lega Nord party have compared Italy's first black minister, Cécile Kyenge, to an orangutan. Nigel Farage, leader of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), maintained in a radio interview in 2014 that it was understandable if people would rather have Germans than Romanians as neighbours.

Despite the notorious charge from populist, anti-immigration parties that so called political correctness has stifled the debate and prevented legitimate concerns about immigration to be voiced, the limits for what can be said about immigration appear to be few. Immigration became increasingly politicised in the 1980s and are now one of the key political issues in Europe.[1] Hostility towards immigration, as well as support for populist parties, increased during the 80s and 90s, but has since stabilized.[2] The trend in Europe therefore seems to be a stabilization of the presence of populist, anti-immigration parties as well as negative attitudes amongst European populations, while the arguments are getting more hostile, blunt or outright offensive.

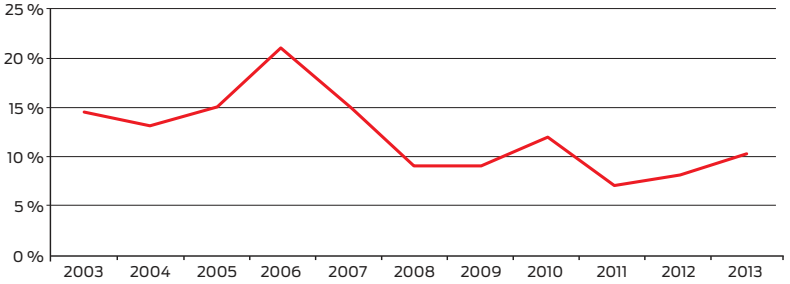
This book is about how this trend may be turned around. Its purpose stems from a concern that divisive and parochial ways of debating immigration are becoming entrenched in Europe. Inwards migration has doubtless re-shaped many European communities and this raises issues that need addressing, such as the economic and political integration of immigrants. The problem with populist, anti-immigration parties is that they talk about such issues using a xenophobic language and simplifica-

tions of complex issues, they neglect the interests of those not included in the »nation« and insinuate that migrants arrive with dishonest intentions, such as taking jobs, benefits or committing crimes. This is not only divisive but also very unhelpful in addressing important questions about the future of diversity and border regimes in Europe.

The contributions to this volume therefore focus on parties whose prime agenda is driven by opposition to immigration and who employ a populist rhetoric coloured by a chauvinist form of nationalism. They often spread, and feed off, a strong sense that national self-determination is being violated by domestic elites, by the European Union and by immigration. These concerns are presented as »common sense« politics; populists claim to speak the language of »the ordinary man«. This gives their message a flavour of truthfulness, allegedly lacking amongst other parties. But most Europeans do not, after all, vote for populist parties, thus populists' message is arguably not that appealing to the »ordinary man«. Yet their ability to reduce debates on immigration to simplistic and divisive statements is a cause for worry both for those on the side of openness and those who want to take seriously challenges faced by increased immigration in European countries. This book therefore seeks to answer questions of what lies behind the support of populist, anti-immigration parties and how their anti-immigration argument can be met.

As Mikael Hjerm and Andrea Bohman show in their contribution to this book (Chapter Three), attitudes to immigration have not become more negative in the past decade. Anti-immigration parties that were previously in or supporting governments have lost such influence in Denmark, the Netherlands and Italy. And as Matthew Goodwin discusses in Chapter Two, the financial crisis of 2008 did not bring the expected gains to populist parties, but, as Maurizio Ambrosini also points out in his case study of Italy, shifted focus towards economic issues. In many countries we find no anti-immigration party of significance, even in those struck the most by the financial crisis, such as Spain and Portugal,

Figure 1. Immigration is one of the two most important issues facing the country



Data source: Eurobarometer Interactive Search System

and the importance of immigration issues amongst the European public has dropped (see 1).

The actual political influence of anti-immigration parties is also questionable. Some academics have argued that anti-immigration parties have a so called »contagion effect« on mainstream parties; mainstream parties tend to adopt more restrictive immigration policies as a response to increasing popularity of the anti-immigration position.[3] Others, however, maintain that anti-immigration parties seem to have no impact at all on the positions of mainstream parties.[4] In Sweden, one of the case studies in this book, immigration policy was even liberalised in the same parliamentary period that saw the entrance of the anti-immigration far right party the Sweden Democrats.

Yet there can be no denying that in many countries immigration is being intensely and sometimes divisively debated. In Chapter Three, the authors argue that the main attraction of populist parties is their anti-immigration policies. As way of responding, it therefore becomes important to take seriously the worries and concerns people have in relation to immigration. This has become increasingly difficult to do for several reasons. One, which Jamie Bartlett discusses in Chapter Five, is that traditional means of political communication, such as mainstream media and political parties, enjoy less and less public trust. Another, pointed out by Sjoerdje van Heerden and Bram Creusen in Chapter Eight, is that politicians, journalists and commentators find it difficult

to talk about immigration. It appears not to be like other policy areas but involves a minefield both of prejudice and accusations of being »out of touch« with the concerns of ordinary voters. Thus while mainstream parties struggle to strike the right balance, populists are fuelling hostility with their unashamed message of narrow nationalism.

In the autumn of 2014, a former MP for the British Conservative Party, Matthew Parris, wrote an article in The Times in which he argued that the Conservatives should be »careless« about the opinions of the people of Clacton, a town where the UK Independence Party (UKIP) is set to win their first MP. The people of Clacton's hostility towards immigration and Europe is not where the future of Britain lays, Parris maintained. Of course, UKIP cheered the opportunity to use the words of a true »man of the establishment« to showcase their main selling point; that mainstream parties have turned their back on ordinary voters and are in denial about the consequences of immigration. No doubt, Parris gave a disrespectful account of the people of Clacton, denying them a part of Britain's future and patronising them for their tattoos and choice of clothing. Nonetheless, the temptation by mainstream politicians across Europe to adopt knee-jerk policy responses to concerns about immigration is equally disrespectful. The most respectful approach must be to have an old-fashioned argument about the advantages and disadvantages of immigration; economically and culturally as well as morally; for the receiving society as well as for the migrant. Disrespecting voters are those who refuse to engage in an informed argument by simply accepting the views of voters, regardless of what these entail, or those who think that voters' opinions should just be ignored.

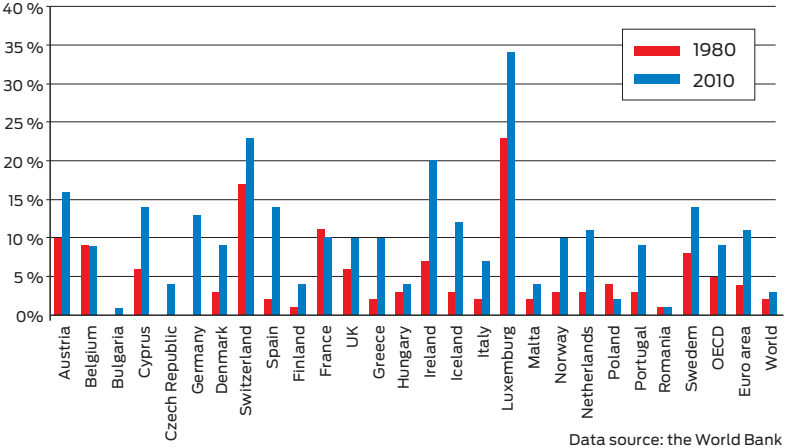
Europe looks different today than it did three decades ago (Figure 2). The increased diversity can be fascinating, economically beneficial, frightening, culturally enriching or corrosive. Whatever it is, it is there and it will cause discussions. The benefits and challenges it brings vary widely across Europe. The gap between native and foreign born unemployment, for example, differs substantially between European

countries (Figure 3). Some of the reasons for this gap can be found in different labour and welfare regimes, some stem from more specific cultural and social issues related to both the composition of the migrant population and specific features of the host country (such as language issues). The addition of an immigration element to socio-economic policies should not make anyone nervous – there is nothing inherently discriminatory in pointing out that some groups may face and/or pose extra challenges. Likewise, cultural issues can be discussed in an inclusive way, talking with people from minorities rather than about them. It is disrespectful to treat people as if they were determined by their cultural background, either by labelling all critique of minority cultures as prejudice or by making sweeping generalisations of how people behave based on their cultural or religious background. Yet more diverse societies will raise questions of the values and customs that we share and we cannot shy away from those debates.

At the same time, immigration raises issues not only of what binds us together within nation-states, but what unites us as human beings. As the world witnesses with horror the spread of the Islamic State (IS) in Syria and Iraq and as the situation deteriorates in Libya, migrants flock to Calais to find lorries to hide in to take them to the UK and thousands die at sea as they try to reach Italy or Malta. When people suffer in Syria, Iraq or Libya, they enjoy the compassion of Europeans, yet when they arrive at the border they are mostly met with a cold shoulder. Very little of the debates on immigration concerns this seeming contradiction of human solidarity.

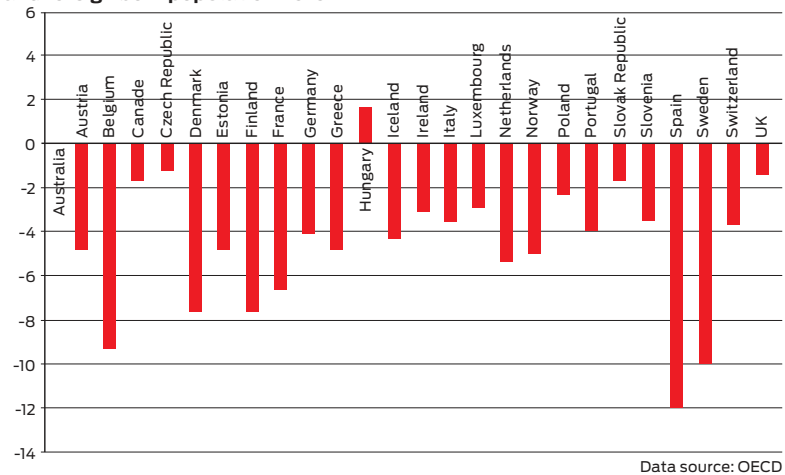
We learn from the contributions to this volume that we should not treat support for anti-immigration parties simply as protest votes, as a consequence of a deep economic crisis or as something that will soon be in the past. Populist parties may not be too dissimilar to mainstream ones, as they get further professionalised, gain governmental experience and have mastered a new media landscape. And, crucially, many voters in Europe are attracted to their message of more restrictions on

Figure 2. Foreign-born population 1980 and 2010 in European countries



Data source: the World Bank

Figure 3. Percentage point difference in unemployment rate between the native and foreign born population 2010



Data source: OECD

immigration. But as I have highlighted, the populist message on immigration is infected by hostility. By pointing out immigrants as the outside enemy they present an easy solution to complex social, economic and cultural phenomena. But established parties have still not found a forceful way of responding that can include all aspects of immigration – from those fleeing warzones to those, perhaps like some people in

Clacton, who see a world changing around them that they feel they are not part of or which they cannot control.

This volume will provide analyses that help understand the nature of support for anti-immigration populists is in post-crisis Europe. Why are people opposed to immigration and have they become more negative over time? Did the economic recession boost support for populist, anti-immigration parties? Why do some cast their vote on a populist party and how does the new media landscape, increasingly dominated by social media, affect support for populism? In the second part, four case studies will show how concerns about immigration have been met by politicians and civil society in Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark, in order to better understand how immigration can be debated in ways that challenge the populist message.

Thus, in Chapter Two, Matthew Goodwin asks why the radical right in Europe did not gain more ground following the economic crisis in 2008. Contrary to popular belief, there has not been a unison increase in support for these parties across Europe post-crisis. Goodwin questions popular assumptions about connections between poor economic conditions and low levels of political trust, on the one hand, and support for the radical right, on the other. Instead, he argues that support for the radical right is better understood as rooted in a cultural divide between »winners« and »losers« of globalization. Moreover, in times of crisis, voters may be more prone to vote for the party they trust most on the economy, which is more likely to be one of the established parties.

In the Third Chapter, Mikael Hjerm and Andrea Bohman show how attitudes to immigration have not become more negative during the past decade, despite what one might be led to believe given the attention given to the electoral successes of anti-immigration, populist parties. They begin by reviewing the factors influencing people's attitudes and focus on »group threat theory«. According to this theory, negative attitudes to immigration occur when people feel threatened by immigrants, for example on an economic or cultural basis. On a contextual

level, whether immigrants are perceived negatively also depend on how accepted prejudice is in society, while the size of the immigrant population has different effects in different contexts. On the individual level, higher levels of education, friendship with immigrants and a less authoritarian personality correlate with more positive attitudes to immigration. Hjerm and Bohman point out that because of increasing ethnic diversity and changing economic and political circumstances, negative attitudes to immigration should increase. Yet, as they show, this is not the case. By comparing different age cohorts, they argue that younger people tend to be more positive to immigration, but that demographic, economic and political circumstances cannot explain the reasons for this.

In Chapter Four, Wouter van der Brug, Meindert Fennema, Sjoerdje van Heerden and Sarah de Lange discuss the similarities and differences between radical right parties and their voters, on the one hand, and mainstream parties and their voters, on the other. They question popular demographic explanations for support of these parties, pointing out that socio-structural models mostly cannot account for the success or failures of these parties. Neither is it the case that charismatic leadership is particularly important for the radical right. Instead, it is the actual policy programmes of populist radical right parties that attract voters. Their support, the authors argue, is based on policy preferences of voters, just like support for mainstream parties. They also note that there is nothing distinct about radical right parties and mainstream ones in terms of cooperation within government in coalitions. In short, the radical right is not so different after all, at least not in terms of how they attract their supporters or how parties act in power.

Chapter Five is written by Jamie Bartlett, Demos, who takes a closer look at the changing nature of political activism brought about by the growing importance of social media. Bartlett argues that online activism benefits populist parties on right and left, in particular considering the low levels of trust in politics amongst the European public.

Supporters of populist parties have lower levels of trust also in mainstream media, fuelling the importance of the Internet amongst these voters. Examining data from a poll of 15,000 Facebook supporters of populist parties in Europe, conducted by Demos between 2011-2013, he explains how populist parties have been successful in exploiting this new format of political activism.

Chapter Six contains the first case study. Jeppe Fuglsang Larsen has looked at Danish Nørrebro, a district of Copenhagen in which the Danish People's Party (DPP) has witnessed big electoral losses. It is also an area characterised by high levels of immigration. Fuglsang Larsen shows how politicians from the mainstream parties have managed to win the argument on immigration by putting forward the positive impact immigration has had. They have portrayed the multicultural society as something essentially good. They have also focused the discussion on gang-related crime on issues of social conditions, rather than on issues of culture, the latter which has been the basis of DPP's argument. The chapter is based on several interviews with politicians in Nørrebro, including DPP representatives.

In Chapter Seven, I have examined the case of Landskrona, a southern Swedish, post-industrial city. In Landskrona, the Sweden Democrats (SD) rocketed in the 2006 election, but lost much support in the 2010 election, though they regained some support in 2014. The chapter starts by exploring why Sweden experienced a radical right party entering parliament comparatively late, before moving on to the specific case study. In Landskrona, the success of SD in 2006 can be explained by the focus on criminality, strongly connected to immigration in public debate, as well as by widespread dissatisfaction with the incumbent social-democratic party. In 2010, while criminality and social deprivation were still high on the agenda, the connection with immigration was less emphasised. There was also much more satisfaction with the new centre-right leadership, in particular the Liberal Party with its conservative policies on crime and social issues.

Chapter Eight is a case study of the Netherlands, written by Sjoerdje van Heerden and Bram Creusen, University of Amsterdam. The case study focuses on the electoral support for the Party for Freedom (PVV) and especially on the strategies of the mainstream parties in minimising the success of PVV. Through interviews with party representatives as well as strategists, the chapter looks at how, and to what effect, other parties have tried to (re)take command of the debate about immigration and integration. The authors conclude that mainstream parties have struggled to find the right tone in dealing with PVV, given that most of the time their responses to immigration and integration issues only seemed to have fuelled support for the PVV. Established parties especially have trouble altering the populist frame created by the PVV, which portrays them as incapable and impotent on these matters. Van Heerden and Creusen also note how party leader Wilders' way of communicating suits a new media climate, where one-liners produced by Wilders on Twitter make easy and ready-made headlines.

The last case study, Chapter Nine, is based on Italy and the role of civil society in promoting immigrants' rights in a hostile environment. It is written by Maurizio Ambrosini, Milan University. He shows how civil society, such as the Catholic Church, lawyer organisations and trade unions, have played an important part in campaigning for immigrants' rights and to change public opinion, while governmental immigration policy has remained largely the same despite political changes. One important campaign, »I am Italy too« has been backed by a large number of civil society actors who push for Italian citizenship law to be liberalised. The campaign has been successful in changing the stakes in the debate, though they have not yet reached their aim. Ambrosini also argues that the economic crisis has shifted focus away from immigration to the economy, providing opportunities for a more positive immigration debate. The chapter is based on several interviews with civil society actors.

Lastly, the key lessons from the contributions of this book are

summarised to suggest ways of moving forward in debates about the future of immigration. One key conclusion is that voters' concerns need to be taken seriously, rather than being treated as a side effect of something else, such as mistrust in politics or poor economic conditions. Voters of these parties are attracted to their policies and these need to be addressed, along with underlying societal changes that drive support for stricter immigration policies. Following on this, another lesson is that populist parties should not be treated differently to others, perhaps not even in terms of negotiating within parliament, though this will ultimately depend on their policies. Importantly, while immigration and integration ought to be discussed seriously, they should not be conflated or entangled with social and economic issues.

Mainstream parties and the civil society together must be able to offer a vision where immigration is not seen as a threat, yet which takes seriously the concerns of voters. These discussions also need to take place on the local level, in the communities that are affected by economic changes and where people have concerns about immigration. Only then can politicians show that they take the lived experience of voters seriously. It does not entail simply accepting those experiences as reality, without considering research and others' experiences as well, such as those of migrants. Such uncritical engagement with voters is significant of the populist strategy. Immigration debates in many European countries too often lack the perspective of migrants and contain widespread myths about the economic impact of immigration. This must not be encouraged. However, discussions of prospects and opportunities, as well as of immigration, must take place in the communities and with the people whom these issues concern.

Notes

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M., Hutter, S. and Wues, B. Political Conflict in Western Europe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 182-206.

2 Semyonov, Raijman and Gorodzeisky (2006), 'The Rise of Anti-foreigner Sentiment in European Societies, 1988–2000', American Sociological Review 71; Goodwin, M. (2011), 'Right Response: Understanding and Countering Populist Extremism in Europe.', A Chatham House Report, September 2011.

3 Van Spanje, J. (2010), 'Anti-Immigration Parties and Their Impact on Other Parties' Immigration Stances in Contemporary Western Europe', Party Politics 15 (5).

4 Akkerman, T. (2012), 'Immigration policy and electoral competition in Western Europe. A fine-grained analysis of party positions over the past two decades', Party Politics DOI: 10.1177/1354068812462928.

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Chapter 2

A Breakthrough Moment or False Dawn? The Great Recession and the Radical Right in Europe

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Followers of radical and extreme right parties often believe that a crisis will bring them to power. As the old economic and political order breaks down they will be propelled into office by insecure and anxious voters, who are looking for parties that project discipline, strength and a nationalist ethos. In 2009, the onset of the Great Recession and a wider financial crisis seemed to present Europe's radical right with the much anticipated moment of opportunity. While academics have long argued that latent support for these parties exists in most (if not all) Western democracies, largely because some voters will always feel 'left behind' by rapid social and economic change and angry toward perceived outgroups, the sudden economic downturn seemed to present a perfect storm for these parties in three ways.[2]

First, some argued that the crisis enlarged public sympathy for the radical right by heightening feelings of economic insecurity among citizens, especially those with low incomes and few qualifications who are already prone to voting for the radical right at elections. Research suggests that low-income groups are especially receptive to changes in unemployment, whereas high-income groups are often more receptive to changes in levels of inflation, and such voters might be expected to turn to the radical right as an outlet for these anxieties.[3] In Europe, the Great Recession was also followed by a period of harsh fiscal austerity measures and major structural reform of labour markets and social welfare that further impacted on individual prospects. The consequence, it is often argued, is that a greater number of insecure voters became receptive to the radical right's call to protect native workers and punish elites who failed to manage the crisis.

Second, from 2009 onward some European states such as Greece, Ireland and Portugal were forced to rely on external organizations for bailout packages, including the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund and European Central Bank (the »Troika«). These actions proceeded with little input from citizens and made little room for traditional democratic discourse, leading some academics to talk of

a 'temporary hollowing out of national democratic procedures' in European states.[4] Such developments would not have gone unnoticed by citizens across Europe and may benefit the radical right by heightening fears about 'threats' to national sovereignty from distant and often unelected external actors. Such actions play directly into the radical right's strategy of attacking political and financial elites for ignoring the demos. Indeed, even before the recession research had shown that those who are most attracted to the radical right tend to be more distrustful toward politicians and more dissatisfied with how their national democracy is functioning.[5]

Third, in broad terms the Great Recession also coincided with increased migration into Europe, which began in the 1980s and was followed by greater movement within Europe after the Schengen Agreement and enlargement of the EU. Unlike the economic turmoil in the 1930s, which erupted in countries that had little experience of multiculturalism, the Great Recession emerged amidst a period of rising ethnic and cultural diversity. This appears especially important given a long tradition of research that suggests that both a decline in economic conditions and an increase in the size of minority populations are central to explaining increased prejudice in society.[6] For example, studies have shown that public hostility toward immigrants is often strongest among economically insecure citizens, while at the extreme end of the spectrum outbursts of violence against minorities have also been traced to fears over growing economic competition.[7] The crisis may have increased public concern over threats to national identity, anxiety over the effects of immigration and the general availability of scarce resources given this increased 'ethnic competition'.

These three observations help to explain why the post-2008 crisis was followed by many predictions from commentators that Europe would witness an upsurge in public support for radical and extreme right-wing parties that are defined by their desire to protect the native group from 'threatening' others, to uphold traditional authoritarian

values and attack established politicians for betraying the people.[8] This is an old view, as it has long been argued that during periods of economic decline political actors assume an important and often manipulative role by targeting resentments and encouraging group conflict. As Green, Donald, Glaser and Jack and Andrew Rich[9] note, the mediating role of elites is especially prominent in the Marxist thesis that racial antagonism between groups is fomented by capitalists who want to deflect attention away from class politics in periods of economic strain.[10] In contemporary Europe this role is most often associated with the radical right, which targets economically vulnerable voters through a range of nativist, authoritarian and populist policies. Aside from framing migrants, asylum-seekers and settled minority groups as a threat to resources, the radical right often advocates a position of 'national preference', arguing that the native group should be prioritized when distributing scarce resources. Some of these parties have also devoted greater effort to opposing globalization and the European Union, offering economically protectionist messages to their struggling blue-collar voters. But to what extent has the radical right actually benefitted from the post-2008 financial crisis?

As discussed in this chapter, contrary to popular assumptions, even a cursory glance at national election results undermines the argument that the crisis triggered a sharp, overall rise in support for the radical right. While some of these parties have prospered, others have continued to languish on the fringe, unable to exploit the unique opportunity for mass mobilization. Drawing on a range of economic, political and public opinion data, this chapter puts the impact of the crisis on Europe's radical right under the microscope. After exploring support for the radical right since the crisis, the chapter turns to examine a range of economic data and its association with support for these parties. It concludes by setting out some possible explanations for why the Great Recession might more accurately come to represent a 'lost opportunity' for this party family.

Radical Right Support Since the Crisis: Conventional Wisdoms

Recent years have seen significant gains by the radical right. The first opportunity to gauge the impact of the financial crisis on this support arrived in 2009, with elections to the European Parliament. In Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Hungary, radical right parties polled at least 14 per cent of the national vote, while other less successful parties, such as the British National Party won seats for the first time. Interest in this diverse party 'family' was also fuelled by the subsequent formation of a pan-European alliance between some of these parties, which formalised links between the extreme and radical right in Britain, Bulgaria, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.[11]

Amidst the growing crisis, 2009 also saw the arrival of the more confrontational English Defence League (EDL), which rallied young working class men who voiced concern over their economic prospects, Islam and immigration.[12] The next year saw Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands more than double its number of MPs and agree to support a minority right-wing government after attracting over 15 per cent of the vote. Two years later, Marine Le Pen won a record 17.9 per cent of the vote at the Presidential elections in France, while in legislative elections her party, the National Front (FN), won 13.6 per cent of the vote, its best result since 1997. Attention then moved to Greece where an openly neo-Nazi party, Golden Dawn, polled almost 7 per cent of the vote at two national elections in 2012 and attracted considerable publicity after its members were associated with criminality, racial violence and murder. Outside of elections in 2011 this interest in Europe's extreme right was also fuelled by the murder of 77 young people on the island of Utøya in Norway, by Anders Breivik.

Reflecting on events such as these, commentators began to draw a straight line between the financial crisis and support for the radical right. 'The politics of populist anger', wrote the New York Times in 2013, 'are on the march across Europe, fuelled by austerity, recession and

inability of mainstream politicians to revive growth'.[13] Others also argued that Europe's radical right has 'been force-fed by the worst world recession since at least the 1930s, and possibly since before 1914. Mass unemployment and falling living standards in the euro-area and the wider EU made worse by the crazy and self-defeating austerity obsession of European leaders has opened the door to the revival of the far right'.[14] By 2013, the World Economic Forum contributed to this debate by warning that economic stagnation could produce tension and a deterioration of Europe's social fabric.[15]

Much of this marked a continuation of older thinking about the rise of fascism in interwar Germany and Italy. Despite an academic consensus that it is inaccurate to describe the modern radical right as fascist, and also evidence that openly neo-Nazi and fascist parties have performed poorly in post-war election,[16] commentators continued with the comparison, attributing the rise of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini to financial depression and hyperinflation, even though the drivers of support for fascism and Nazism were far more complex. As Roger Eatwell[17] observes, much of this was based on a misreading of European history. Whereas in Italy some strikes did spark anxieties over the threat from communism and an uncertain economic future, the country was not engulfed by a major economic depression when Mussolini came to power in 1922. While a severe depression was present in Germany, research suggests that voters hit hardest by the crisis did not respond in a uniform fashion. While the unemployed tended to switch to the Communists it was the 'working poor' and self-employed who were at low risk of unemployment who often switched to Hitler and the Nazis.[18] There is also scant evidence of a strong correlation between economic distress and support for the Nazis.

Nonetheless, the 2014 European Parliament elections produced a similar response. Much of the media coverage focused only on successful cases, with three radical right parties winning a national election in their respective countries for the first time. Compared to 2009

the Danish People's Party increased its share of the vote by ten points to finish in first place with almost 27 per cent of the vote. In France Le Pen and the FN finished first after increasing its vote share by 18 points to 25 per cent, and meanwhile the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) also finished first after its support increased by over ten points to almost 27 per cent of the vote. It was the first time since 1906 that a party other than the Conservative Party or Labour Party won the highest share of the vote in a nationwide election.

The radical right also polled strongly in other states: support for the Freedom Party of Austria increased by 7 points to 19.7 per cent; the Sweden Democrats won seats in the European Parliament for the first time after attracting 9.7 per cent of the vote; in Greece, Golden Dawn also won three seats after attracting 9.4 per cent; the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party of Germany captured one seat; and the anti-Semitic and anti-Roma Jobbik retained its three seats after finishing in second place with 14.6 per cent. At least at first glance, such results appeared to validate the claim that the Great Recession was now directly benefitting the radical right. But was this really the case?

Support for the radical right: a surge or stable?

To explore the impact of the Great Recession on Europe's radical right we can make use of a range of data including electoral support for these parties, economic conditions, the perceived importance (or 'salience') of immigration to voters and public trust in political institutions. The data on public opinion that we will examine are drawn from the 'Eurobarometer' surveys at three points in time; before the crisis fully arrived in May 2007; mid-crisis in May 2010; and November 2013, when relative economic stability had returned to some states.

First, to what extent was the Great Recession followed by a general upsurge in support for the radical and extreme right-wing? Before

turning to our data one useful starting point is analysis by Cas Mudde[19] who compares support for the radical right during the pre-crisis (i.e. 2004–07) and post-crisis (2009–13) periods, and based on results at national elections. Overall, Mudde observes that 10 of the 28 EU member states have no significant radical or extreme right party. This includes countries that experienced some of the worst effects of the crisis and were forced to obtain bailout packages, namely Cyprus, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Each of these states does have an active extreme right that is represented in examples such as the National Popular Front in Cyprus, Immigration Control Platform in Ireland, National Renovation Party in Portugal, National Republican Movement and Platform for Catalonia in Spain, but such groups failed to make a noticeable impact at the national level.[20] Greece is the only country to have received a bailout and experienced growing support for the extreme right in the form of Golden Dawn, which polled 7 per cent of the national vote at two elections in 2012 before gaining 9.4 per cent and three seats at the 2014 European Parliament elections.[21]

What of the remaining 18 countries where the radical or extreme right is present? As Mudde notes, between 2005 and 2013 only nine states saw an increase in support for the radical right while nine did not. Of the countries that saw an increase only four – Austria, France, Hungary and Latvia – saw the radical right increase its national vote share since the crisis. Nor does this appear to be solely a response to economic events. The Freedom Party of Austria and National Front in France have attracted growing support since the 1980s, while in Hungary Jobbik was recruiting rising support since it formed as a party in 2003 and the National Alliance in Latvia polled strongest after the peak of the crisis (although it is plausible that its effects were delayed).[22] Meanwhile, based on Mudde's calculations, the radical right in a host of other countries has suffered a loss of support since the crisis, including Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Denmark, Slovenia, Belgium, Italy, Slovakia and Romania.

This complicated picture is also reflected in closer analysis of the

results in 2014. Overall, only 10 of 28 EU member states elected candidates from radical right parties and although the total number of radical right MEPs increased by 15 compared to 2009, much of this growth was driven by the strong performances of the French National Front and Danish People's Party. As Mudde[23] observed after the elections, the radical right in Europe actually only gained additional seats in six countries while it lost seats in seven others, with parties such as the British National Party, Popular Orthodox Rally in Greece, Greater Romania Party and Slovak National Party losing elected representation. Only in Greece has the extreme right appeared to prosper amidst the crisis.

An alternative method of gauging the strength of the radical right is to examine its support not at the national but European level. This appears especially important given that public anxiety or anger over the Eurozone crisis and its management is likely to be directed more strongly toward the EU, which was involved directly with these events. Table 1 presents the combined vote share for radical right parties at elections to the European Parliament over a ten-year period that covers the Great Recession and its immediate aftermath, from 2004 until 2014. The four countries of Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovenia have been omitted as no radical or extreme right party was found in these cases, while Croatia has been excluded because it only joined the EU in 2013. We also adopt a wide definition of the radical right, including right-wing extremist groups like Golden Dawn alongside moderate radical right Eurosceptic parties like the True Finns and the UK Independence Party. In broad terms, this provides insight into public support for parties that offer a combination of populist, anti-immigration and anti-establishment messages to voters.

Based on these data, since 2004 public support for the radical right at the European level has increased in sixteen countries. In seven of these countries – Denmark, France, Latvia, Austria, Finland, Hungary and the Netherlands – the radical right has increased its overall share of the vote since 2004 by more than 10 per cent. Interestingly, in all of the countries

Table 1. Support for the Radical Right at European Parliament Elections, 2004–2014

	2004	2009	2014	% change 2004–2014
Denmark	6.8	15.3	26.6	19.8
France	9.8	6.3	24.9	15.1
Latvia	-	7.5	14.3	14.3
Austria	6.3	17.3	20.2	13.9
Finland	0.5	9.8	12.9	12.4
Hungary	2.4	14.8	14.7	12.3
Netherlands	2.6	17	13.3	10.7
Sweden	1.1	3.3	9.7	8.6
Greece	4.1	7.7	12.1	8
United Kingdom	21	22.9	29.1	7.5
Slovakia	-	14.6	5.3	5.3
Cyprus	-	-	2.7	2.7
Romania	-	8.7	2.7	2.7
Italy	5	10.2	6.2	1.2
Portugal	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.3
Spain	-	0.1	0.04	0.04
Czech Republic	1.2	-	0.5	-0.7
Germany	1.9	1.3	1	-0.9
Bulgaria	-	12	3	-9
Belgium	17.1	11.2	6.4	-10.7
Poland	17.8	3	7.1	-10.7

Notes: Austria is combined vote for Freedom Party of Austria and Alliance for the Future of Austria; Belgium is Flemish Interest, Popular Party and National Front; Bulgaria is Ataka; Cyprus is National Popular Front; Czech Republic is Right Block, Workers Party; Denmark is the Danish People's Party; Finland is the True Finns; France is the National Front; Greece includes combined vote for the Popular Orthodox Rally and Golden Dawn; Hungary is Hungarian Justice and Life Party and Jobbik; Netherlands is List Pim Fortuyn and Party for Freedom; Poland is League of Polish Families, Real Politics Union, Right of the Republic, Congress of the New Right and United Poland; Portugal is National Renovation Party; Romania is Greater Romania Party; Slovakia is People's Party – Our Slovakia and Slovak National Party; Spain is National Democracy, Republican Social Movement; Sweden is Sweden Democrats; and United Kingdom is combined support for the British National Party, UK Independence Party and An Independence from Europe.

that saw growth for the radical right these parties consistently failed to win over 10 per cent of the vote in 2004, yet by 2014 received at least 12 per cent in four countries and at least 20 per cent in another three (Denmark, France and Austria). These data also suggest that the share of the

vote for the radical right in 2014 was strongest in the United Kingdom, a country that is traditionally known for having a weak radical right. In the UK these elections were won outright by the UK Independence Party, while the British National Party and a splinter group from Ukip, An Independence from Europe, failed to win seats but attracted at least 1 per cent of the vote. In sharp contrast, the radical right is barely visible in two southern European democracies – Portugal and Spain – while since 2004 and amidst the crisis similar parties have lost support in five countries; the Czech Republic, Germany, Bulgaria, Belgium and Poland. This confirms the general picture from above; of a radical right family that has experienced considerable variation in its level of support across Europe since the onset of the crisis.

To what extent does the crisis explain this variation in support and the increased support that some parties experienced since 2004? We can address this question by turning to explore economic data, public concern over the radical right's core issue of immigration and public trust in politics. Beginning with economic conditions, the Great Recession unsurprisingly had profound effects. Across the Eurozone, and between 2007 and 2013, unemployment increased from 7.5 to 12 per cent while in countries such as Greece and Spain these figures would rise to over 25 per cent (and reach even higher levels among youths). At the same time, growth in overall gross domestic product (GDP) across the Eurozone slumped from around 3 per cent in 2007 to -4.4 per cent in 2009, and by 2013 had only risen to -0.4 per cent.[24] Government debt as a percentage of GDP also reached striking levels; in Eurozone countries increasing from 66 per cent in 2007 to over 92 per cent in 2013, but elsewhere reaching 175 per cent in Greece, 133 per cent in Italy and 124 per cent in Ireland. Given these trends, it is not surprising that when asked to describe the condition of Europe's economy the proportion of citizens across the EU who thought it was 'good' more than halved, falling from 58 per cent in 2007 to 28 per cent in 2013.[25]

Table 2 presents data on how these three trends – GDP, unemploy-

Table 2. Economic Conditions and Radical Right Support, 2004-2014 (Bold indicates above Eurozone average)

	GDP 2007–2012	Unemployment 2007–2012	Gross debt 2007–2012	% change radical right support, 2004-2014
Euro area average	**-3.7**	**9.4**	**73.8**	-
Austria	-2.8	4.3	68.9	+13.9
Belgium	-3.0	7.6	94.4	-10.7
Bulgaria	**-5.8**	8.9	16	-9
Cyprus	**-7.5**	6.5	64.2	2.7
Czech Republic	**-6.7**	6.2	36.2	-0.7
Denmark	-2.0	6.0	39.3	+19.8
Estonia	-3.6	**10.4**	63	-
Finland	**-6.3**	7.6	44.1	+12.4
France	-2.3	8.8	**78.5**	+15.1
Germany	-2.6	7.1	**75**	-0.9
Greece	**-10.5**	**13.4**	**137.6**	+8
Hungary	-3.3	**9.7**	**77.3**	+12.3
Ireland	**-4.8**	**11.1**	**74.3**	0.0
Italy	-4.1	8.0	**115.4**	+1.2
Latvia	**-4.8**	**13.7**	32.2	+14.3
Netherlands	**-5.1**	4.1	60.8	+10.7
Poland	**-4.8**	9.0	51.6	-10.7
Portugal	**-5.6**	**11.4**	**91.6**	+0.3
Romania	**-6.9**	6.8	25.5	+2.7
Slovakia	**-8.7**	**12.5**	38.4	+5.3
Spain	**-5.1**	**17.2**	58.1	+0.04
Sweden	-2.4	7.5	39.6	+8.6
United Kingdom	-3.1	7.0	69	+7.5

Note: GDP is gross domestic product change over the period 2007-2012. Unemployment is average annual rate 2007-2012. Government debt is government debt as a percentage of GDP, with the average taken between 2007 and 2012.

ment and government debt – impacted on individual states and alongside changes in support for the radical right. Clearly, this does not incorporate other important factors such as the impact of economic conditions at local or regional level, and on individual voters. But it

nonetheless contains useful insights. If the crisis is largely responsible for increases in support for the radical right, then we might expect to find the parties that have prospered to be based in states that experienced the worst effects of the crisis. However, even a cursory look at the data reveals that the picture is far more complicated.

Of the three countries where all three indicators are above the Eurozone average, and where the economic conditions are most severe –Greece, Ireland and Portugal – only one saw the emergence of what could be described as a reasonably successful extreme right party. The rise of Golden Dawn coincided with a sharp deterioration in the economy, although even still the party has not (yet) polled over 10 per cent of the national vote.

Of the seven countries identified above that have seen the sharpest gains for the radical right since 2004, Denmark and Austria have remained below the Eurozone average on all three indicators. In fact Denmark has seen one of the strongest performances by the radical right and yet has experienced a relatively low reduction in GDP growth, low unemployment and low levels of government indebtedness. Latvia and Hungary have exceeded the average on two indicators while Finland and the Netherlands experienced a sharper than average contraction of GDP. It is worth emphasizing, however, that while two of the most popular radical right parties in Europe are found in Austria and the Netherlands, these two states also saw the lowest average unemployment rates in Europe. The relationship between macro economic conditions and support for the radical right, therefore, appears far more complicated than popular assumptions would have us believe.

One alternative possibility is that while the Great Recession does not appear to have had a direct impact on support for the radical right, it might have had an indirect effect by heightening public concerns over immigration. Amidst this destabilizing event did voters in Europe suddenly become far more concerned about this issue? In 2007, 2010 and 2013 voters were asked to rank the two most important problems in

Table 3: Salience of Immigration across the EU, 2007–2013. What are the two most important issues facing (our country) at the moment (max two answers possible)? Ranked by change 2007–2013

	2007	2010	2013	Change 2007–2013
Germany	8	5	14	+6
Sweden	9	9	13	+4
Latvia	6	5	9	+3
Lithuania	9	6	11	+2
Finland	4	16	5	+1
Greece	5	3	6	+1
United Kingdom	32	28	32	0
Hungary	2	1	2	0
Romania	2	1	2	0
Malta	30	24	29	-1
Czech Republic	5	3	3	-2
France	10	6	8	-2
Portugal	3	1	1	-2
Slovenia	3	1	1	-2
Bulgaria	5	1	2	-3
Slovakia	3	1	0	-3
Belgium	19	16	15	-4
EU	15	9	10	-5
Ireland	12	4	7	-5
Poland	10	1	3	-7
Austria	20	14	12	-8
Netherlands	13	10	4	-9
Denmark	21	10	10	-11
Italy	15	12	4	-11

Source: Eurobarometer

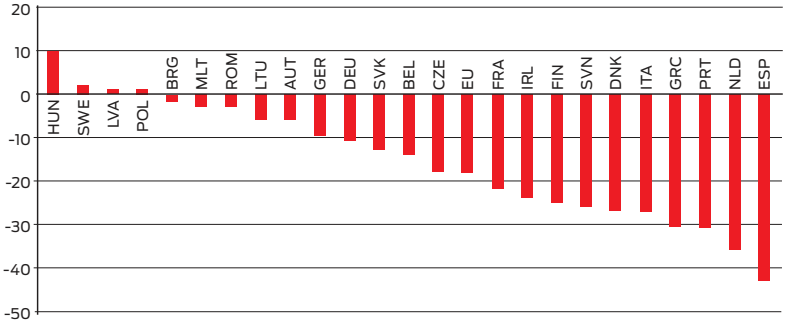
their respective countries. As shown in Table 3, across the EU as a whole the average percentage of voters who selected immigration as one of the two most important issues actually declined from 15 per cent in 2007, to 10 per cent toward the end of 2013. Contrary to popular assumptions, the onset of the Great Recession was not followed by a sharp and sudden

increase in public concern over immigration. The most plausible explanation for this finding is that anxieties over immigration were relegated in the minds of voters behind by far stronger concerns over the national economy, unemployment and the cost of living, all issues that tend not to favour radical right parties that target social and cultural issues.

There are some interesting variations across countries and when considering the relative strength of radical right parties. The voters who are most concerned about immigration are in the UK and Malta, both countries where the extreme has remained weak and where the salience of immigration also did not increase during the crisis. While the radical right-wing UK Independence Party has polled stronger, interestingly this was from 2010 and after the onset of the crisis. Only six states actually witnessed an increase in the salience of immigration – Germany, Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and Greece – none of which are known for exceptionally high levels of support for the radical right. Moreover, all of these states started with low levels of public concern over the issue, while the increase since the crisis has not been striking. Meanwhile, public concern over this issue has remained at comparatively low levels in Finland, France, Greece, Hungary and the Netherlands, yet all of these countries have seen more successful incursions by radical right parties since the onset of the crisis. This provides further evidence that while the Great Recession did not trigger an upsurge in public concern over immigration, the relationship between this issue and radical right support is far more complex than many assume.

Another possible indirect effect of the crisis is that it was followed by a collapse of political trust that enlarged the number of potential and politically dissatisfied voters for the radical right. Drawing on the same data, we can track overall levels of trust in governments between 2007 and 2013. While the full data is presented in Appendix 1, Figure 1 presents the overall change in the percentage of voters who said that they trust their national government. Across the EU, public trust in national governments declined significantly; while 41 per cent of voters trusted

Figure 1. Change in percentage of voters who trust their national government, 2007–2013



Source: Eurobarometer

their national government in 2007, this subsequently declined to 29 per cent in 2010, and 23 per cent by 2013. By the end of 2013, therefore, fewer than in one in four voters trusted their national government.

As above, there are interesting variations across countries. Unsurprisingly, the sharpest declines in trust were recorded in the southern European democracies of Spain (-43 per cent), Greece (-31 per cent) and Portugal (-31 per cent). These are also joined by the Netherlands, where trust similarly fell sharply in the crisis period by 36 points (but started at one of the highest levels in the pre-crisis area). A similar picture emerges in the European Social Survey, which suggests that the decline in economic conditions from 2009 did negatively affect the democratic legitimacy of countries that were worst affected by the Great Recession. Comparing political trust and satisfaction with democracy between 2004 and 2010, there is clear evidence of a significant decline in these key indicators across most countries. But this decline is especially visible in countries that were hit the hardest, namely Greece, Ireland and Spain, and also France. In the Eurozone countries changes in these attitudes toward the political system were strongly correlated with a decline in GDP over the same period. Further analysis revealed that this decline in support for the political system can be explained by a parallel increase in overall levels of dissatisfaction with the economic conditions. It is the

economically disadvantaged in society – those who work in low status jobs, are unemployed or have experienced unemployment in the past – who are the most likely to be more distrustful toward the political system, and dissatisfied with how democracy is working.[26]

But how does this relate to support for the radical right? As above, there does not appear to be a clear relationship between overall declines in trust and the strength of radical right parties. While those countries that have witnessed some of the largest declines – including Ireland, Portugal, Spain and Slovenia – have no successful radical right parties, others that have either seen only a slight drop in trust or even an increase in overall trust –including Austria and Hungary – have radical right movements that are well entrenched in their respective party systems.

Discussion: Explaining the Disconnect

Why has Europe's radical right not prospered more fully from the great recession? At the outset of the chapter it was noted how an economic crisis is often thought to improve the radical right's electoral fortunes by heightening feelings of economic insecurity, anxieties over immigration and resentment toward political elites. With this in mind we can now put forward some possible explanations for why the crisis has not more clearly impacted on support for the radical right.

As shown, the relationship between macroeconomic conditions and support for the radical right is far from clear. Economic conditions are certainly important to explaining voting behaviour more generally, but despite a large academic literature there is little evidence of a positive relationship between macroeconomic conditions and radical right support.[27]

One reason can be found in the growing research on the emergence of a so-called 'new cultural divide' in West European party systems, which suggests that perceived conflicts over values are equally if not more important than perceived conflicts over economic resources. As

one academic notes, these evolutions have meant that 'certain social groups have lost in terms of life-chances or privileges, while others feel threatened in their identity by the policies enacting universalistic values and by European integration',[28] allowing the radical right to increasingly mobilize votes from citizens who are described as the 'losers' of globalization[29] or 'the left behind'.[30]

While the exact nature of these value conflicts continue to be debated, there appears a consensus that the underlying dividing line separates two broad groups in society: those who subscribe to a libertarian and universalistic outlook, who have the skills and education to adapt and prosper in a global economy and diverse society; and those who adhere to a traditionalist and communitarian outlook, who often do not have the resources to adapt to the changed reality and thus are especially likely to feel threatened by these rapid changes.

A second possible explanation for the failure of the radical right in Europe to prosper more fully from the Great Recession is found in research on 'valence' models of voting behaviour. Rooted in the work of academics like Donald Stokes[31], the valence approach essentially argues that what matters most to voters when making decisions about who to support are their evaluations of the competence or management abilities of different parties on the most pressing issues. The economy has long been considered to be the 'classic' valence issue, as most voters are united in wanting low unemployment, low inflation and economic growth, so their decisions about who to support will be influenced strongly by their perception of which party is most able to deliver these key outcomes.

These perceptions of competence are likely to be especially crucial during periods of crisis when there is a much stronger public consensus on the most important national problem, and the need for a competent manager.[32] Indeed, since the onset of the post-2008 crisis, research has shown that voters have often switched their loyalty to parties that hold an image of economic competence, and to party leaders who are seen as a 'safe pair of hands' in managing the economy.[33] Similarly, during an

Appendix 1: Trust in national government, 2007–2013

	2007	2010	2013	Change 2007–2013
Hungary	27	40	37	10
Sweden	55	57	57	2
Latvia	20	13	21	1
Poland	18	28	19	1
Bulgaria	22	43	20	-2
Malta	51	33	48	-3
Romania	19	12	16	-3
Lithuania	26	13	20	-6
Austria	57	54	50	-7
United Kingdom	34	26	24	-10
Germany	49	32	38	-11
Slovakia	42	38	29	-13
Belgium	62	22	48	-14
Czech Republic	34	32	16	-18
EU	41	29	23	-18
France	36	25	14	-22
Ireland	41	21	17	-24
Finland	75	49	50	-25
Slovenia	36	27	10	-26
Denmark	67	50	40	-27
Italy	37	25	10	-27
Greece	41	25	10	-31
Portugal	46	20	15	-31
Netherlands	73	47	37	-36
Spain	52	20	9	-43

earlier financial crisis in Britain over the Exchange Rate Mechanism, it was shown how negative perceptions of the competence of the Conservative Party were a significant driver of support for Tony Blair and 'New' Labour.[34] In contrast to established parties that can point to a record of economic management, parties on the radical right are often not viewed in the same light.

Furthermore, when evaluating the various parties, voters often obtain their information from sources such as the mass media and opinion leaders, many of whom are often overtly hostile toward the radical right. Lacking an image of economic competence, and framed in a negative light by mainstream media, such parties might often struggle to fully mobilize mass support amidst a crisis when public concerns over the economy are dominant. Each of these three reasons provide some insight into why the relationship between economic conditions and support for the radical right is not as straightforward as is often assumed, although clearly there is a need for more research in this area.

Notes

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2 See for example Akkerman, Mudde & Zaslove (2013), Ford (2010), Kestilä (2006) and Mudde (2010).

3 On low income groups see Palmer and Whitten (2011). On radical right voters see for example Evans (2005), Ivarsflaten (2005) and Norris (2005).

4 Armingeon, K. and Guthmann, K. (2014) 'Democracy in crisis? The declining support for national democracy in European countries, 2007-2011' European Journal of Political Research Vol. 53(3): pp. 423-442.

5 See for example Cutts, Ford and Goodwin (2011); Kitschelt (1995); Van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie (2000).

6 One of the most influential versions of this account was presented by Quillian (1995).

7 See for example Bobo (1988) and Olzak (1990). On violence see the debate over lynching in the United States (Tolnay and Beck 1995).

8 Mudde, C. (2007) »Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe« Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

9 Green, D. P., Glaser, Jack and Andrew Rich (1998) 'From Lynching to Gay Bashing: The Elusive Connection Between Economic Conditions and Hate Crime', Journal of Personality and Social Psychology Vol. 75(1): pp.82-92.

10 For example see Cox (1948) and Horowitz (1985).

11 At the 2009 European Parliament elections two radical right parties in Austria (the Freedom Party of Austria and the Alliance for the Future of Austria) collectively polled 17.3 per cent, the Danish People's Party polled 15.3 per cent, the Dutch Party for Freedom polled 17 per cent and in Hungary Jobbik polled 14.7 per cent.

12 Goodwin, M. J. (2013) The Roots of Extremism: The English Defence League and the Counter-Jihad Challenge. London: Chatham House.

13 NY Times: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/16/opinion/europes-populist-backlash.html?_r=0.

14 The Guardian: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/nov/15/far-right-rise-european-marine-le-pen-geert-wilders.

15 Telegraph: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/financialcrisis/10450811/Youth-unemployment-could-tear-Europe-apart-warns-WEF.html.

16 Carter, E. (2005) The Extreme Right in Western Europe: Success or Failure? Manchester: University of Manchester Press.

17 Eatwell, Roger (2014) »The Return of the Far Right: Lessons from Inter-War Fascism«, American Political Science Association (APSA) European Politics and Society Newsletter, Winter 2014

18 King, G., Rosen, O., Tanner, M. and Wagner, A.F. (2008) 'Ordinary Economic Voting Behavior in the Extraordinary Election of Adolf Hitler' Journal of Economic History Vol. 68(4): pp.951-996; Lipset, Seymour Martin (1963) Political Man, London: Mercury.

19 Mudde, C. (2014a) The Far Right and the European Elections. Address to the German Federal Agency for Civic Education. Available online: http://works.bepress.com/cas_mudde/75/ (accessed June 3 2014).

20 The Immigration Control Platform is more accurately a pressure group, although it did run candidates in the 2002 and 2007 national elections who stood as independents.

21 On the rise of Golden Dawn see Dinas et al. (2013)

22 Although as Mudde (2014a) notes, while the rise of Jobbik has arguably owed more to domestic political scandal than to the effects of the economic crisis in Latvia the National Alliance attracted higher support after the peak of the crisis (between 2010 and 2011).

23 Mudde, C. (2014b) 'The Far Right in the 2014 European Elections: Of Earthquakes, Cartels and Designer Fascists', Monkey Cage Blog. Available online: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2014/05/30/the-far-right-in-the-2014-european-elections-of-earthquakes-cartels-and-designer-fascists/ (accessed 2014-10-02).

24 These data are obtained from Eurostat.
25 These data like others in the chapter are taken from the Eurobarometer survey.
26 On this evidence see Polavieja (2013).
27 Arzheimer, K. & Carter, E. (2006). »Political Opportunity Structures and Right-Wing Extremist Party Success«, European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 45(3): pp 419–43; Lubbers, M., Gijsberts, M. & Scheepers, P. (2002). »Extreme Right-Wing Voting in Western Europe«, European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 41: pp 345–378; Rink, N.n Phalet, K. & Swyngedouw, M. (2009). »The Effects of Immigrant Population Size, Unemployment and Individual Characteristics on Voting for the Vlaams Blok in Flanders, 1991–1999«, European Sociological Review, Vol. 25(4): pp 411–424.
28 Bornschier, S. (2010) pp.421.
29 Betz (1994).
30 Ford, R. and Goodwin, M. J. (2014) Revolt on the Right: Explaining Public Support for the Radical Right in Britain, Routledge
31 Stokes, Donald (1966) 'Spatial Models of Party Competition', in A. Campbell et al. (eds). Elections and the Political Order, New York: Wiley, pp.161-179.
32 Palmer, H. D., Whitten, G. D. and Williams, L. K. (2013) 'Who Should be Chef? The Dynamics of Valence Evaluations across Income Groups During Economic Crises' Electoral Studies Vol. 32: pp.425-431.
33 Clarke, H. D., Scotto, Thomas J. and Kornberg, A. (2011) 'Valence Politics and Economic Crisis: Electoral Choice in Canada 2008' Electoral Studies, Vol. 30(3), pp.438-449; Clarke et al. 2004.
34 Curtice, J. (1997) 'Anatomy of a Non-Landslide', Political Review, Vol. 7(1): pp.2-8; Sanders, D. (1996) 'Economic Performance, Management Competence and the outcome of the Next General Election', Political Studies, Vol. 44(2): pp.203-31.

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Chapter 3

Is it getting worse? Anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe during the 21st century

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Last years' media headlines about an anti-immigrant wave that spreads across Europe, increased mobilization around far right ideas and European racism on the rise, leaves you with the feeling that attitudes towards immigrants are deteriorating in Europe.[1] Indeed, much has happened over the past decade that we, on theoretical grounds, expect to increase immigrant antipathies among the native populations in Europe. First, the global recession and Euro zone crisis have put considerable strain on European economies. Large government debts and high unemployment rates have implied cuts in public spending and an increased labor market uncertainty, which in turn have had direct consequences for people's lives. Second, declining birth rates, aging populations and increasing international migration have altered the demographic composition of countries, where heterogeneity has been increasing in some countries in Europe. Third, political and institutional developments, such as the EU enlargement and the electoral success of extreme right parties, have impacted the political landscape both in terms of new decision-making structures and shifts in policy focus. Nationalist and anti-immigrant elements have gained momentum in local, regional and national elections in Europe during several years. The Freedom party in the Netherlands, Jobbik in Hungary and the Sweden Democrats in Sweden are examples of parties that have entered parliaments and made their mark on the political climate in their respective countries after 2002. Their entry on Europe's political arena has increased the saliency of the immigration issue as well as the negative framing around immigrants and immigration.

Drawing on group threat theory, a theory that explains anti-immigrant attitudes by looking at relations between groups, we expect these important economic, political and demographic changes to have generated an increase in anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe.[2] In this chapter, we review the theoretical grounds for such an expectation. We also look closer at past trends in anti-immigrant attitudes and how these are explained in previous research before asking how attitudes

towards immigrants in Europe have evolved in the first decade of the 21th century. Is the average native European more or less negative towards immigrants today than at the turn of the century, and what is the direction for the future?

Group threat theory

According to group threat theory, anti-immigrant sentiments is a response to a perceived threat from an out-group, due to intergroup competition for scarce resources such as political power, jobs, or welfare benefits. Blumer identified group identity as:

- identification with one's own group;
- out-group stereotyping;
- how people understand other groups;
- preferred group status;
- which hierarchical position people want different groups to have.[3]

He described perceived threat as how threatened people feel that their own group is by other groups, as being intrinsic to prejudice. The last of these preconditions, the group threat condition, states that prejudice is a reaction to explicit or implicit challenges to the dominant group's position. Such challenges function as a catalyst that makes the other three preconditions lead to prejudice.

Put differently, and more precisely, group threat theory assumes that people make group classifications that will have political and economic saliency in that they are more likely to want to benefit their own group over other groups in the struggle for scarce resources. When one or more minority groups threaten the majority group, it elicits negative out-group attitudes among the members of the majority population. For anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe this implies that a rise is anticipated

when natives feel that their interests are threatened by the presence of immigrants.[4] However, it is important to note that these threats do not have to be real; it is enough that people perceive them as being real. In other words, it does not matter if immigrants actually are competing for jobs or not as long as people think that they are.

In addition to the threat in itself, group threat theory also stresses the importance of the context where such threat takes place. Given the group aspects of prejudice, what goes on in the wider community may affect people's attitudes towards immigrants regardless of whether it affects them personally. Previous studies have shown that contextual factors may increase or mitigate feelings of threat and thereby either add to or reduce anti-immigrant attitudes.[5] Economic conditions, political contexts and demographic compositions are particularly likely to affect anti-immigrant attitudes. The next paragraphs describe how these contextual factors affect anti-immigrant attitudes.

First, economic circumstances are identified as an important explanation as to why groups of people hold certain views towards immigrants. Ever since the early 50s the existence of prejudice has been explained by the competition for scarce economic resources: that immigrants pose a threat to the material well-being of the majority population.[6] As Giles and Hertz put it, the relationships between different ethnic groups are viewed 'as a function of their competitive positions' (p. 317).[7] Many studies similarly conclude that economic threats are of importance.[8] Quillian shows that low GDP and a large proportion of immigrants produce anti-minority prejudice in Europe.[9] The less the majority feels that their jobs are in jeopardy, the more likely they are to be in favor of, or at least not against, increased levels of immigration.[10] Moreover, anti-immigrant sentiments rise during economic downturns and are also dependent on the respondents' perception of national economics.[11] A poor economy does not only affect the labor market, but also the possibilities for redistribution and thus there is an increased competition for welfare state resources. Competition that,

according to group threat theory, breeds anti-immigrant sentiments.

Second, the political context also constitutes an important contextual determinant. Previous research suggests that a negative political climate increases anti-immigrant sentiment as political rhetoric makes the presence of foreigners salient and activates feelings of economic, political, and/or cultural threat.[12] Hopkins demonstrates that a negative rhetoric significantly influences how people interpret an increase in the share of immigrants in their surrounding area.[13] Other studies relate negative attitudes to the mobilization of the extreme right, including how other political parties behave in response to their parliamentary presence, as well as to institutional features such as citizenship regimes.[14] Clear social norms are important for how prejudicial attitudes develop.[15] If societal norms against prejudice are weak, or eased by repeated hostile statements, certain political elements will have greater political leeway to influence attitudes on issues related to immigration and immigrant presence. Anti-immigrant expressions may also increase if such ideas are legitimized by trusted elites.[16] People who are negatively disposed are more likely to articulate their views, as well as to advocate or act on their beliefs, if they resonate with views and interpretations conveyed in rhetorical frames. Hostile rhetoric by political representatives may, in other words, moderate any stigma associated with anti-immigrant attitudes; attitudes which consequently become more likely to spread further in society.[17]

The third contextual feature of importance to anti-immigrant attitudes is the demographic composition of a geographic area. To the extent that a large minority population implies higher levels of competition, group threat theory expects a strong relationship between the size of the immigrant population and individuals' attitudes.[18] The size argument can explain the relationship between whites and African-Americans in the United States, but becomes questionable when we consider other group relations.[19] Hood and Morris show that attitudes towards immigration and immigrants in the US are more positive when

the concentration of immigrants is high.[20] The latter result concurs with Taylor, who demonstrates that size matters when it comes to African-American minorities, but does not influence whites' prejudice towards immigrant groups in the United States.[21] Dixon and Rosenbaum present similar evidence.[22] However, inconsistent findings in the European context suggest that other demographic features might be more important in regard to the level of threat.[23] Also, recent research suggests that the size of immigrant population may interact with other contextual and individual features in producing anti-immigrant attitudes.[24]

Individual explanations

In addition to these contextual factors, anti-immigrant attitudes are also predicted by a number of different individual features. For example, sociological research unequivocally shows that education is a very good antidote against anti-immigrant attitudes. In general, the more education one has (measured in years of studies or degrees earned), the less likely one is to hold negative attitudes towards immigrants. According to group threat theory, the relationship between education and anti-immigrant attitudes is primarily due to the privileged labor market position held by the higher educated. Compared to people with lower education, the highly educated generally have a more secure employment, where they to a lesser extent are competing with immigrants over jobs. Socio-economic position and labor market security are important explanations, but research also shows that education may decrease anti-immigrant attitudes through transmitting fundamental social values and critical thinking to reject simplistic stereotypes.

Another important indicator of anti-immigrant attitudes is actual experiences with immigrants and members of ethnic out-groups. Contact with individuals from other ethnic groups reduces a reliance on stereotypes and ultimately decreases anti-immigrant sentiments.[25] However, not all forms of contact are equally effective. In fact, superficial contact between members of different groups, especially in

competitive environments, can lead to conflict and only exacerbate negative attitudes. Positive outcomes are most likely when social interaction is meaningful. Thus, in terms of reducing anti-immigrant attitudes, friendships are better than superficial interaction.

Further psychological research finds a relationship between particular personality traits and anti-immigrant sentiment. Individuals with an inherent preference for hierarchy and a strong reverence for rules are said to have an authoritarian personality. Even if the debate is not settled regarding the degree to which personality types are genetically determined, individuals with an authoritarian personality tend to articulate antipathy and hostility towards immigrants and other minority groups.

One of the most important insights in research on anti-immigrant attitudes so far is that the triggers of out-group prejudice are more or less universal. In fact, Pettigrew claims that individual-level predictors of prejudice (or anti-immigrant attitudes) are consistent over geographical areas, across groups as well as over time.[26] In other words, the factors that contribute to anti-immigrant sentiment are more or less the same in Sweden as in the USA, in Poland or in Italy. However, since there are only small changes in the individual determinants over time, knowledge about the individual explanations is of limited help when it comes to understanding changes in attitudes over time. The relative stability of individual determinants implies that we cannot expect them to have any large influence on attitudinal trends – especially not when studying the development over a relatively short period of time.

Group threat and change

Even if we acknowledge that social circumstances can affect anti-immigrant attitudes, the mechanism at an aggregate level is not obvious as aggregate changes in anti-immigrant attitudes can stem from two sources. First, attitudinal shifts can be the expression of individual changes. Put differently, it can be the result of individuals turning more

or less aversive towards immigrants. Second, anti-immigrant changes can be related to shifts in generations. This implies that new generations with lower levels of anti-immigrant attitudes replace generations with less benevolent views.

Studying the effect of age on anti-immigrant attitudes, we know that younger people are less likely than older people to possess negative attitudes about immigrants.[27] The reason for this could be that anti-immigrant sentiments increase with age, perhaps related to an increased perception of threat once retired and more dependent on the welfare state. A more popular explanation is that individual attitudes tend to be fairly stable over the life course and that the oldest generation has, on average, the same attitudes today as they had when they were young. Many attitudes and political values are formed already during late adolescence or early adulthood, during what is generally described as the formative years, and remains largely the same during the course of life.[28] For trends in anti-immigrant attitudes this would imply that most change over long periods of time is related to cohort replacement rather than to individual changes.[29] For example, Lewis and Gossett show that half of the positive attitude change in Californian attitudes towards same sex marriages can be attributed to changes between generations.[30]

Looking at changes up until the mid-1990s the general picture is clear, anti-immigrant attitudes decline over time.[31] The main reason for this long term change is related to cohort replacement where older cohorts both have grown up in different times and are composed differently. The fact that cohorts diverge in their composition means that individual characteristics related to anti-immigrant attitudes are unevenly dispersed across generations. The most obvious example is perhaps education where younger cohorts in Europe today have higher education than older cohorts. That education generally implies less negative attitudes is well-established in previous research. Also, older cohorts of today experienced their formative years in a time where both interracial contacts were scarce and the political sanctioning of racism was more or

less widespread. The latter can be exemplified with Apartheid in South Africa or the Jim Crow laws in the USA. Individuals who grew up during those times were less exposed to immigration and ethnic diversity and may therefore not have developed positive attitudes towards immigration and ethnic diversity either. However, it is important to note that this does not imply that tolerance or an appreciation of diversity automatically will increase over time. Individuals are influenced by *zeitgeist* or the spirit of the age. Even relatively rapidly shifting circumstances such as the levels of unemployment are shown to influence attitudes among young people in their formative years.[32] Given the increasing electoral success of explicitly anti-immigrant, radical right parties throughout Europe, it is perfectly reasonable to expect that the younger generations of today will be less tolerant than their parents.

Given the fact that the three social circumstances; demography, economy and political circumstances have changed rapidly over the last decade in Europe there are reasons to suspect that anti-immigrant attitudes are increasing in Europe.

However, there are two possible changes at stake. First, it is possible that all people are equally affected by the social circumstances. Second, it is also possible that the effect of social circumstances is more related to a generational effect. In other words, the social circumstances affect the youngest generation the most as they are in their formative years, whereas the effect on other generations is smaller. After presenting the data we will examine changes in anti-immigrant attitudes in general, as well as examine if there are differences across different cohorts.

Data

Our data comes from the European Social Survey (ESS). The ESS is a comparative attitude and behavioural survey conducted in more than 30 European countries. It is carried out every second year and consists of a comprehensive base module encompassing standardized back-

ground variables as well as numerous central attitudes, values and behavioural questions. Added to this are two thematic modules that are rotated between the survey periods. In terms of all aspects, from survey construction and translation to sampling, data collection and supplementary work, the ESS is by far the most thorough and standardized cross-country comparative project of this nature yet undertaken.

This study relies on ESS data from six rounds (2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 and 2012). Not all countries have participated in all rounds. To increase comparability over time, we will in this case include only the countries that have participated in at least five rounds of ESS.

To be able to measure anti-immigrant attitudes we use three items:

1. Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries?
2. Would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?
3. Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?

All responses to the questions range from 0 to 10 on an 11-point scale, where high numbers indicate stronger anti-immigrant attitudes. We have added the three items into an index, where higher number indicates more anti-immigrant attitudes.[33]

Results

Figure 1 illustrates the average development in anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe 2002-2012. The relatively flat line suggests that not much has happened in how Europeans view immigrants during this period of time. The mean score in 2002 was 4.9 on the attitudinal scale 0-10, where lower values represent more negative and higher values

Figure 1. Anti-immigrant attitudes 2002–2012, mean development

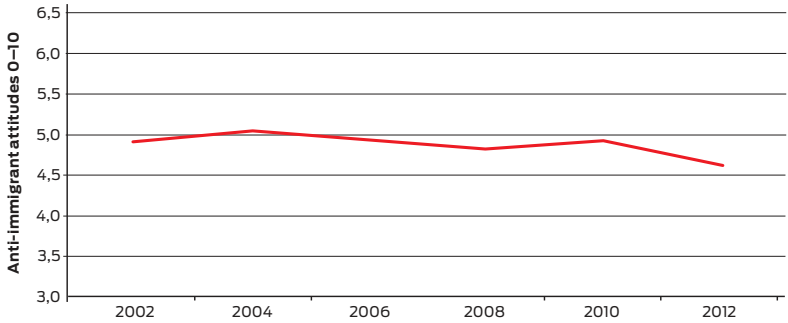


Figure 2. Anti-immigrant attitudes 2002–2012, mean development

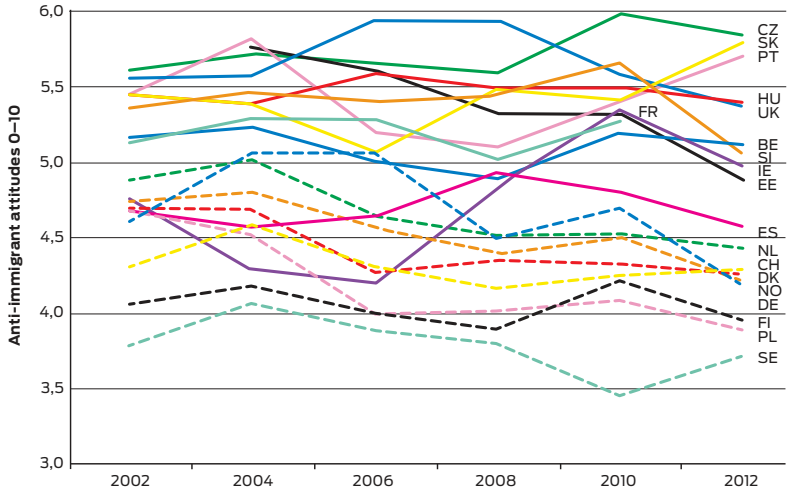
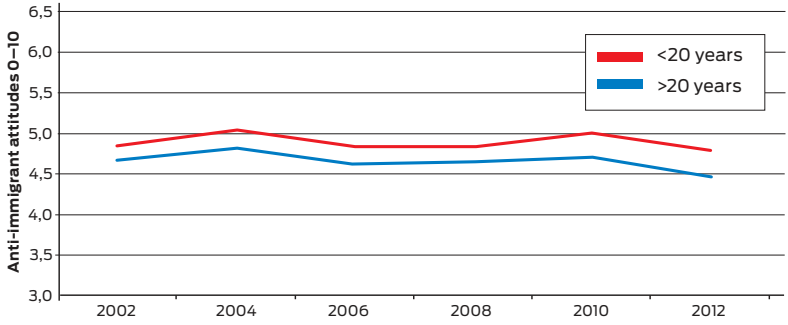


Figure 3. Anti-immigrant attitudes 2002–2012, development by age group



more positive attitudes towards immigrants. Ten years later, in 2012, the general pattern is largely the same, with a European average of 4.6. Nor can any clear trend be observed in this period as anti-immigrant attitudes first rise marginally between 2002 and 2004, and then slightly decrease until 2008, only to increase and decrease again to the final year of measurement. If anything, the average level of anti-immigrant attitudes has decreased somewhat between 2002 and 2012. Further, figure 2 shows the development in anti-immigrant attitudes by country, and reveals that the attitudinal trends look somewhat different in different countries. While Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Portugal and Slovakia display higher degrees of anti-immigrant attitudes at their last point of measurement compared to their first, the opposite pattern is visible in the remaining countries, in particular in Poland, Germany, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway and Estonia. However, the differences are marginal in most countries and, again, do not follow any clear direction. Taken together, this suggests that the dramatic changes in the European economy, political context and demography during the last decade, have – at least so far – had limited impact on European attitudes towards immigrants.

Given how much previous research points to cohort replacement as the main trigger behind attitudinal change, focusing on how attitudes have developed among young Europeans in their formative years is still interesting. Although the economic, political and demographic developments do not seem to have generated any general increase in anti-immigrant attitudes, it is still possible that the contextual changes have had implications for how the youngest cohort feels about immigrants.

Figure 3 demonstrates the attitudinal development in two age groups: those that were 20 years and younger at the time of measurement, and those that were older than 20 years. By comparing the development in these two groups, we set out to examine whether the economic, political and demographic developments in Europe specifically have influenced attitudes among those in their formative years. In line with findings

from previous studies, the youngest cohort displays the lowest level of anti-immigrant attitudes. The older category is on average somewhat more prone to express negative views on immigrants. In terms of development over time, no significant differences are visible between the different age groups. The two lines largely follow each other up until 2008 when the rise in anti-immigrant attitudes appears to be slightly more pronounced in the older group. The difference remains between 2010 and 2012, when the two curves both turn downwards again, albeit very small. Thereby, it is clear that the theoretical expectations of a rise in anti-immigrant attitudes in response to a deteriorating economy, harsher political climate and increased ethnic heterogeneity, are not supported in our data – not in relation to general attitudes in Europe and not in regard to young people in their formative years. Instead, the levels of anti-immigrant attitudes in Europe seem to have been rather stable over the last decade.

Concluding discussion

Group threat theory predicts that social circumstances should affect anti-immigrant sentiments and previous empirical research have indicated that economic, political and demographic circumstances are particularly likely to influence anti-immigrants views. In spite of substantial changes within those areas in Europe during the last decade we do not witness any general increase in anti-immigrant sentiments. There are a number of possible reasons for this outcome.

The first possibility is the counterfactual argument. Namely, that we without the changes in social circumstances in Europe we would have been able to observe a decline in anti-immigrant sentiments. In general, tolerant attitudes have been increasing for a long period of time. For example, people in general are less homophobic as well as less prejudiced.[34] Ford shows that the number of people who would mind having a black boss in the UK dropped from approximately 20 per cent in 1983

to approximately 13 per cent in 1996, but as our data show we do not observe any decline in the UK during our point of examination.[35] So, it may be possible that we would have continued to witness a steady decline in anti-immigrant sentiments during the last decade if it were not for the changes in the social circumstances. This possibility can be partly tested by modelling different effects in different countries dependent on changes in the three important social circumstances, but the latter is beyond the scope of this paper.

Second, and partly related to the first explanation, is the possibility that the changes in social circumstances in fact have limited effect on the examined attitudes. If this was the case we would expect anti-immigrant attitudes to continue diminishing during the examined time period. However, the reason that this is not happening, i.e. that such attitudes are not decreasing, could be related to an increased marginal cost. By this we mean that it gradually becomes more difficult to decrease anti-immigrant attitudes, as the baseline is relatively low already. For example, it can be that a greater proportion of those holding such attitudes today are ideologically convinced individuals, who less easily change their views. Note, however, that we do not claim that anti-immigrant attitudes never would disappear or that such attitudes cannot decrease further, only that it is possible that the marginal cost make it more difficult.

Third, even though previous research has indicated that the factors we have discussed are of importance it may still be possible that there are other social circumstances that counteract the negative impact of those examined. For example, even though increasing heterogeneity is claimed to be perceived as a threat to the native population we must realize that increasing heterogeneity also results in increasing interethnic contacts – contacts that reduce anti-immigrant sentiments.

Fourth, due to the long time decline in anti-immigrant sentiments it is possible that the relation between the previously important social circumstances and anti-immigrant sentiments is weakening as people

are less prone to view such social circumstances as related to immigrants. The latter is in line with the finding that cultural threats tend to be more threatening than economic ones.[36] It is possible that people are more inclined to dislike immigrants because they perceive the threat towards their way of living as bigger than the threat of immigrants coming to take their jobs. If the latter is changing in favor of more culturally based anti-immigrant attitudes it does not matter if there is a recession or not.

We cannot provide the answer to the displayed results. We can only acknowledge that the level of anti-immigrant sentiments is very stable during the first decade of the millennium. Moreover we also acknowledge that there are currently no indication of Europe turning more xenophobic in time to come, as the there are no signs that the anti-immigrant sentiments are increasing amongst the youngest generation. We must, however, bear in mind that anti-immigrant sentiment is but one factor that affects the lives of newcomers to European societies. The fact that such sentiments have become increasingly politicized during the last decade cannot be neglected. More people in more countries are increasingly willing to cast their vote for parties around Europe that, to varying degree, want to weaken rights for immigrants. So, even though it is positive that anti-immigrant attitudes are not on the rise those attitudes are present in all societies in Europe. Combined with the success of the extreme right where such attitudes carry even more political importance than before there is still reason to worry both about the level of tolerance in Europe today as well as in the future.

Notes

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26 Pettigrew, T. F. (2000) »Systematizing the Predictors of Prejudice«. Racialized Politics. The Debate about Racism in America. In D. O. Sears, J. Sidanius and B. Lawrence. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press: pp. 280-301.

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32 Coenders, M., Lubbers, M., Scheepers, P. and Verkuyten, M. (2008) »More than two decades of changing ethnic attitudes in the Netherlands.« Journal of Social Issues, 64(2), pp. 269–285.

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34 Firebaugh and Davis (1988); Lewis and Gosset, (2008).

35 Ford, (2008).

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Chapter 4

Not that different after all: radical right parties and voters in Western Europe

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Since the 1980s parties have emerged in various West-European countries that have been labelled either ´anti-immigration parties´, ´extreme right parties´, ´far right parties´, or ´populist radical right parties´. For well-known historical reasons the rise of these parties has created the fear of a right-wing backlash and has therefore often evoked bitter reactions from grass root organizations, the political establishment, as well as the state. In Belgium established parties have made their antipathy towards anti-immigration parties most explicit by forming a 'cordon sanitaire', that is, by signing a formal agreement that they will not collaborate with anti-immigrant parties in any arena (e.g. electoral, executive or legislative) or at any level (local, national, or regional). Dutch, French and German anti-immigration parties (e.g., the *Centrum Democraten*, the *Front National*, and the *Republikaner*) have also been treated as political lepers by the establishment, even though these parties are not subject to a formal cordon sanitaire. Such strategies of exclusion are often justified by claims that the anti-immigration parties in question are anathema to modern pluralistic democracies. On the same grounds established politicians, but also public figures, mainstream journalists and commentators, often advise voters not to support these so-called dangerous political outcasts.

In this chapter we demonstrate that these justifications are mostly unfounded and that the accompanying advise is counterproductive. Drawing on existing research of ourselves and others, we show, for example, that a vast majority of anti-immigration parties are not anti-democratic in the strict sense and that voters that support these parties are in many ways similar to established party voters. Moreover, we reveal that, for a variety of reasons, exclusionary strategies, are unlikely to prove effective and are also, by and large, unnecessary.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, we will discuss different conceptualisations of the parties under study. Second, we will discuss their support base, and examine in which respects these

parties' voters are different from or similar to supporters of established parties. Third, we will discuss research on how these parties behave, especially once they assume office. Fourth, we will discuss the literature on the consequences of different responses to the rise of anti-immigration parties. Finally, we will discuss the practical implications of this research.

Which parties are we talking about?

Anti-immigration parties, such as the *British National Party* (BNP), the Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV), French *Front National* (FN), or the Norwegian *Fremskrittspartiet* (FrP) have contested elections since the 1970s, albeit with varying success. The most important ideological feature shared by these parties, irrespective of their lines of descent is their resentament against immigrants and the immigration policies enacted by European governments. They typically campaign, for instance, for a reduction in the inward flow of immigrants – especially from outside Western Europe – and for integration programmes that have strict requirements and are compulsory. Within the group of anti-immigration parties, a distinction can be made between different groups of parties: extreme right parties, radical right parties with roots in the ultra-nationalist milieu, and radical right parties without ties to neo-Nazi, neo-fascist or extreme right movements.

The first group of parties consists of, amongst others, the German *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD), the Greek *Laïkós Sýndesmos - Chrysí Avgí* or Golden Dawn, and the Hungarian *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Jobbik). These parties are the direct or indirect descendants from pre-war fascist movements and explicitly refer to neo-fascist or neo-Nazi symbols and ideas. Therefore, anti-communist, anti-democratic, anti-Semitic, and racists elements can be recognized in their ideology.[2] Moreover, they have a tendency to glorify violence, or, as in the case of Golden Dawn, are actively involved in violent and

criminal acts. However, it should be noted that few extreme right or neo-fascist parties compete in elections in Europe and that they tend to be relatively unsuccessful.[3]

A second group of parties also had ties to neo-fascists *groupusacules* when they were founded, but have transformed into radical right parties in the 1980s and 1990s. Prominent members of this group are the Belgian *Vlaams Blok* (VB), the Dutch *Centrumapartij* (CP) and *CentrumDemocraten* (CD), and the French *Front National* (FN). More recently elected anti-immigration parties, such as the Swedish *Sverigedemokraterna* (SD), also have roots in the neo-Nazi or neo-fascist milieu. However, in recent years these parties have changed their discourse, avoiding any references to neo-Nazi or neo-fascist ideas and cutting ties with the extra-parliamentary extreme right. Instead, they have adopted an ideology that combines nativism with populism.

A third group of parties is ideologically very similar to the second group, but unlike the second group, they are not the offspring of neo-fascist clubs and cliques. The Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ), for example, developed from the *Verband der Unabhäangigen* (VdU), which was founded in 1949 by two liberal journalists who wanted to stay clear of the socialist and Catholic '*Lagear*'. Other anti-immigration parties, like the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties, the Italian *Lega Nord* (LN) and the short-lived Swedish *Ny Demokarati* (ND) and Dutch *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF), have also been created by leaders who had no links whatsoever to fascist groups. In recent years, parties such as the Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV), the Finnish *Perussuomalaiset* (PS) or the Swiss *Schweizerische Volkspartei* (SVP), have joined this group, by transforming from mainstream to radical right parties. The PS and SVP, for example, were originally founded as agrarian parties, while the PVV was established by a former member of parliament of the Dutch liberal *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD). Given that the ideology does not prominently feature anti-democracy, anti-Semitism, or classic racism[4], it would be misleading to call these parties extreme right.

While we can thus distinguish three groups of anti-immigration parties, the main distinction is between the first group (which we may call extreme right) and the second and third group (which we may call radical right). The second and third group have a different historical heritage, but their current political programs are largely identical. One key element that all of these radical right parties share is populism, in addition to the already discussed nativism. The most general characteristic of populist parties is that they consider the political establishment to be technically incompetent and morally corrupt. Populist parties find 'something rotten in the state'. They assume that the common man is basically good and his opinions are always sound, whereas the political elite is — by its very nature — selfish and dishonest.[5] Members of the elite hide their selfish interests behind a veil of democratic and technocratic rhetoric. Populist parties see a fundamental split between what politicians say and what they do. Subsequently, conspiracy theories frequently surface in populist discourse.

Populists claim to solve the social problems they see — whether it is public safety, immigration or medical care for the elderly — by introducing more direct forms of democracy. The populist politician has a conception of democracy that emphasises majority rule and direct democracy. Typical elements of liberal democracies, most notably individual rights and freedoms as well as minority rights, are trumped by majority rule. Such populist claims for more democracy are part and parcel of the democratic tradition that has always hovered between the constitutional protection of minority rights and untrammelled majority rule. So, populist parties are essentially democratic, because they accept the basic rule that decisions have to be taken by parliamentary majorities. However, they often have an uneasy relationship with the constitutional pillar of liberal democracies, which are institutionalized to protect individual citizens from majority decisions.

In sum, we may distinguish two groups of anti-immigration parties. The first group consists of radical right parties, which are generally

populist, and which accept the basic norms of parliamentary democracy. The second group consists of extreme right parties, which do not accept parliamentary democracy as the most appropriate form of governance. Most of the discussion below focuses on the first group and in these instances we will refer to radical right parties. When we speak of anti-immigration parties, we refer to both groups (extreme and radical right parties).

What determines support for these parties?

In the 1980s and early 1990s much research on anti-immigration parties concentrated on the political biographies of their leaders, in an attempt to find out whether or not they had links with neo-fascist groups. Other studies examined whether these parties promoted ethnic violence or used racist propaganda in their electoral campaigns. Most of these early studies were case studies, which resulted in monographs about individual anti-immigration parties (examples are Bakkes and Jesse (1990), Furlong (1992), Ignazi (1989), Mayer and Perrineau (1989), Luther (1988) and Van Donselaar and Van Praag (1983). In the early 1990s other scholars began to conduct comparative research on these parties. These comparative studies were primarily conducted by political scientists and sociologists, such as Meindert Fennema, Cas Mudde, Hans-Georg Betz and Piero Ignazi.

It was, however, not until the publication of Herbert Kitschelt's *The Radical Right in Western Europe* (1995) that mainstream political science theories were employed to explain support for anti-immigration parties. Since then, the research on support for anti-immigration parties has flourished. In a very general sense, four models (not mutually exclusive) have been proposed to explain the support for these parties: socio-structural models, protest vote models, charismatic leadership models and policy voting models. We will discuss each of these in turn.

Socio-structural models

Until the late 1990s, socio-structural models inspired most research on anti-immigration parties. According to these models, the rise of anti-immigration parties should be seen as a backlash response to modernization. The crux of socio-structural explanations is that support for anti-immigration parties comes from citizens who feel threatened by rapid changes in post-industrial societies. Manual workers with low education tend to lose their jobs as a result of changes in modes of production. Moreover, they are competing with immigrant groups for scarce resources such as jobs and houses. These 'losers of modernity'[6] feel threatened by rapid social change and tend to support anti-immigration parties out of generalized feelings of discontent. However, the results of much research shows that reality is more complex, or more nuanced, than implied by this modernization perspective.

Analyses of the socio-demographic profiles of supporters of anti-immigration parties indicate that there is indeed an overrepresentation of men, manual workers with low education and an underrepresentation of highly educated professionals, particularly from the public sector. Moreover, in some countries there is an underrepresentation of religious people among voters for anti-immigration parties. Yet, research from the late 1990s and early 2000s showed that all of these socio-demographic characteristics combined explain only seven percent of the differences in preferences for anti-immigration parties.[7] In other words, the differences within social groups are much larger than the differences between them.

At the aggregate level, differences in socio-structural conditions do not explain the differences in support for anti-immigration parties very well either.[8] Countries with very similar socio-structural conditions like Sweden and Denmark may differ enormously in the success of anti-immigration parties.VB, one of the most successful anti-immigration parties, surged in Flanders, which is one of Europe's most pros-

perous areas. In Wallonia, which is known for its high unemployment, due to the fact that old industries relocated or went bankrupt, the anti-immigration party *Front National belge* (FNb) has had very limited support. Various studies have tried to link support for anti-immigration parties to economic conditions or to the presence of immigrants, but the results of those studies have been quite inconsistent and most studies did not show a statistically significant relationship.[9]

While socio-structural models do not have much predictive power for explaining support for anti-immigration parties, there seems to be renewed interest in this model. In a volume edited by Jens Rydgren (2012), several scholars have looked at the class basis of support for anti-immigration parties, and at the implications of the rise of these parties for social democracy. Much of this research is inspired by the idea that the liberalization of economic markets have generated new inequalities between winners and losers of globalization.[10] The losers are the low educated manual workers who therefore would be inclined to support parties that promote strict rules on immigration and who are against further European unification. The contributions to Rydgren's volume mainly confirm that highly educated citizens are strongly underrepresented among the supporters for anti-immigration parties. Van der Brug et al. show that socio-structural and demographic variables explain a larger proportion of the variance in support for anti-immigration parties in a 2009 data set than in older data sets (from 1999 and 2004).[11] So, these kinds of parties are now attracting voters more exclusively from specific layers of society than they did in the past. Having said that, they also conclude that the predictive power of these socio-structural models is still weak. So, the fact that lower educated citizens are *on average* more likely to support anti-immigration parties than people with a university degree, tells us very little about *individuals*. Most people with little education do *not* support anti-immigration parties, while some highly educated people do.

Political discontent

Some contributions to the literature have looked at the role of political discontent as drivers of support for anti-immigration parties.[12] Since the vote for radical parties is related to political discontent, it has sometimes been concluded that voters for these parties are protest voters. In some of our research we have tested the *protest-vote* model. In line with Van der Eijk et al.[13] we conceptualised protest voting as a rational, goal directed activity, with the prime motive to show discontent with 'the' political elite. Since anti-immigration parties are treated as outcasts by a large part of the elites in their countries, votes for these parties frighten or shock these elites, which is exactly what the protest voter wants to accomplish. So, the concept of a protest vote consists of two elements. The first element that distinguishes protest votes from other types of votes is that discontent with politics (reflected in political cynicism, or lack of political trust) should have a strong effect on support for an anti-immigration party.[14] That is to say, that voters with low levels of political trust and high levels of political cynicism are more inclined to vote for anti-immigration parties, than voters with high levels of political trust and low levels of political cynicism. The second element is, in the words of Lubbers and Scheepers that »political attitudes ... are expected to be of minor importance«.[15] So, protest voters do not support a party for substantive reasons, such as its policy proposals and ideological position, but rather to show their general discontent with the political establishment.

There are two causal mechanisms that might theoretically explain the relationship between support for anti-immigration parties and political discontent: expressing discontent and fuelling discontent. The protest vote model assumes that voters support anti-immigration parties in order to express their feelings of discontent. Yet, as argued by Van der Brug[16] and by Rooduijn et al. (forthcoming), the causal effect can also run in the opposite direction. One of the messages of anti-immigration parties is that the elite in their countries is either corrupt or incompetent and has lost contact with the concerns of ordinary citizens. To the

extent that supporters of these parties are influenced by these messages, voters for anti-immigration parties might become more discontented as a consequence. Van der Brug[17] and by Rooduijn et al. (forthcoming) have demonstrated that anti-immigration parties do indeed fuel discontent among their voters. So, the empirical evidence underlying the first element of the protest vote model is weak at best.

The second element was tested by Van der Brug et al. and Van der Brug and Fennema.[18] These studies showed that policy preferences and ideological positions are the best predictors of support for the more successful radical right parties. Voters are attracted by these parties because of their programs, just as is the case for other parties. This does not rule out the possibility that *some* voters for anti-immigration parties, especially those who support small *extreme right* parties, do so mainly to express discontent with politics in general, but this explains the voting behaviour of a small group of voters. The overwhelming majority of voters who support *radical right* parties do so because they agree with its political program. Thus, votes for these parties cannot be considered protest votes, because the second element of the protest vote model (protest voters do not support a party for substantive reasons) does not apply.

Characteristics of the parties and their leaders

There is some limited support for the notion that the typical low educated 'angry white man' is the driver of support for these parties. So, if these structural characteristics of voters do not explain support for anti-immigration parties, characteristics of the parties themselves and their leaders might explain it? In this line of reasoning, some have argued that charismatic leadership would be very important for the success of anti-immigration parties. Yet, the evidence underlying this claim is often quite sketchy and there is some tautological reasoning, because the perception of charisma is inherently related to success. An unpopular politician will never be called charismatic.

Van der Brug and Mughan[19] designed an empirical test of the claim

that the success of anti-immigration parties depends in particular upon the charisma of the party leader. Following Weber, they defined charisma as an unusually strong bond between party leaders and their supporters. So, they argued that if support for anti-immigration parties would depend particularly upon the charisma of the leader, there ought to be exceptionally strong effects from evaluations of the leader onto support for the party. Yet, they found that leadership effects are just as important for anti-immigration parties as they are for other parties. So, while all parties may well benefit from having leaders who are convincing in the media and in public debates, there is nothing exceptional that distinguishes anti-immigration parties from other parties in this respect.

Carter and Golder[20] have pointed out that there is an enormous difference among anti-immigration parties in their electoral success, which is mainly the result of their ideological profile. Extreme right and neofascist parties tend to be small and electorally unsuccessful, while radical right parties can be quite successful. The main difference seems to lie in their acceptance of the core principles of parliamentary democracy.[21] Parties that are perceived by the voter as posing a threat to democracy are unlikely to become successful. We want to stress here that it is the perception of potential supporters of these kinds of parties that matters. Parties like the FN, the FPÖ, VB and the PVV are seen by many mainstream politicians and by many left-wing voters as a threat to democracy. Yet, this does not hurt these radical right parties electorally as long as many voters on the right side of the spectrum do not share this image.

Policy voting

It appears that protest voting and charismatic leadership do not perform well in explaining support for radical right parties. Socio-structural models explain only 13 per cent of the variance in support for these parties.[22] So, what motivates people to support them? The answer is: the substance of politics, that is policy preferences. Voters for radical right parties are motivated by the same substantive and pragmatic conside-

rations that motivate supporters for established mainstream parties:[23] they vote for these parties because they are ideologically related (in left/right terms) or because they agree with them on their core issues.[24]

Left/right distances are the most important driver of support for all sorts of parties, including anti-immigration parties. Yet, this does not mean that voters support these parties for their positions on socio-economic issues only. Rather, socio-cultural issues have become increasingly integrated in the left/right dimension as well.[25] As for the issue of immigration, the left/right divide is quite straightforward: left wing parties advocate lenient immigration policies, while right wing parties promote stricter policies. Considering the issue of integration, the socio-economic left/right dimension is illustrated by left wing parties that stress the role of the government in elevating the socio-economic status of immigrants, opposed to right wing parties that emphasize the immigrant's own responsibility to acquire a stable socio-economic position. On the socio-cultural left/right dimension, left wing parties advocate a multiculturalist society in which immigrants are able to keep their cultural identity, while right wing parties favour a monoculturalism where immigrant have to adapt to the culture of the host society. This implies that mainstream right-wing parties, rather than social democratic parties, are the main competitors of anti-immigration parties.[26] After all, they are closest to anti-immigration parties on the left/right divide. Consequently, the potential level of support for anti-immigration parties depends to a large degree upon the policy positions of their main opponent on the right. If the main competitor takes a firm stand on immigration, there is less room for anti-immigration parties than if this party promotes an open border policy.[27]

Do anti-immigration parties behave like other parties?

Although anti-immigration parties' ideology clearly differs from that of established parties, their strategic motivations and behaviour closely resemble those of Christian-democratic, conservative, liberal and

social-democratic parties. The existing research that we present in this part of the chapter focuses primarily on the radical right, as little is known about the behaviour of the few extreme right parties that have entered Western European parliaments. This research shows that in many ways radical right parties are 'normal parties', in the same way their voters are 'normal voters'. The parties do not simply shout from the sidelines, nor do they refuse to get their hands dirty in the executive or the legislative. Instead, they seek to realize the same party goals as established parties and go about achieving these in similar ways. Moreover, radical right parties are in many respects treated as 'normal parties' by established parties, because their approach to the radical right is primarily guided by strategic considerations (e.g. winning back electoral support and gaining office) and far less by normative considerations.[28]

Radical right parties' goals and behaviour

Radical right parties have the same objectives as other parties: they aim to control cabinet portfolios, influence policy-making, and maximize their share of votes (cf. Müller and Strøm 1999). They formulate policy programmes, for example, to attract followers, whose support can be converted into parliamentary seats. Having a parliamentary presence enables the parties to directly or indirectly influence policy-making, which they greatly desire despite often being perceived as protest parties (De Lange 2008). However, like established parties, radical right parties are not always able to maximize office, policy and votes at the same time. Important trade-offs exist between these goals, because strategies that serve to maximize one goal hamper the maximization of others. Government participation, for example, provides parties with cabinet portfolios and direct influence on policy-making, but it is likely to lead to electoral losses in subsequent elections. After all, governing parties are often responsible for unpopular reforms and are therefore likely to be punished by voters. Although it has every so often been assu-

med that those trade-offs are more pronounced for radical right parties than for established parties, existing studies show the opposite (De Lange 2008).[29]

Radical right parties in office

The executive arena is an area in which the strategic behaviour of radical right parties and the strategic responses of established parties can be clearly observed. Despite their success at the polls, radical right parties have long been kept out of public office. In the 1980s and early 1990s, both established parties of the left and the right refused to ally with these parties. However, since the mid-1990s established parties of the right have invited these parties into national governments in a number of countries (see Table 1), for strategic reasons that will be outlined below. In Italy in 1994, for example, Silvio Berlusconi forged a coalition of the *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN), *Forza Italia* (FI) and the LN. Although initially short-lived, the coalition resigned the same year, it resumed office in 2001 and most recently in 2008. Austria was the second country to have a government in which a radical right party participated. In 2000 the Austrian *Österreichische Volkspartei* (ÖVP) formed a government with Jorg Haider's FPÖ after lengthy coalition negotiations with the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs* (SPÖ) broke down. Three years later ÖVP-leader Wolfgang Schüssel decided to reform his coalition with the FPÖ and its successor the *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (BZÖ), despite the poor electoral showing of the latter party in the 2002 elections. In 2002 the LPF entered the Dutch parliament with an impressive 17 per cent of the popular vote and was immediately invited into a government alliance by Jan Peter Balkenende, leader of the *Christen Democratisch Appèl* (CDA). The SVP had been represented in Swiss Federal Council for many years, but in 2003 the radical wing of the party got the upper hand in the council when its leader Christoph Blocher was elected to it. Hence, most studies consider it to be a radical right party with government experience since this year. Most recently, the Norwegian FrP assumed office after

Table 1. Anti-immigration parties in public office in Western Europe

Country	Cabinet	Established parties	Anti-immigration party	Year	Months in office	Incumbency result
Austria	Schüssel I	ÖVP	FPÖ	2000–2003	37	-16.9%
	Schüssel II	ÖVP	BZÖ/FPÖ	2003–2006	46	+4.1% / +1.0%
Denmark	Rasmussen I	V, KF	DF*	2001–2005	39	+0.9%
	Rasmussen II	V, KF	DF*	2005–2007	33	+0.6%
	Rasmussen III	V, KF	DF*	2007–2011	47	-1.6%
Italy	Berlusconi I	FI, AN, CCD-UDC	LN	1994**	8	+1.7%
	Berlusconi II+III	FI, AN, CCD-UDC	LN	2001–2006	59	+0.7%
	Berlusconi IV	PdL-MpA	LN	2008–2011**	42	-4.2%
Netherlands	Balkenende I	CDA, VVD	LPF	2002–2003	10	-11.3%
	Rutte I	VVD, CDA	PVV*	2010–2012**	25	-5.4%
Norway	Solberg I	H	FRP	2013–	-	-
Switzerland		FDP, CVP, SP	SVP	2003–2007	48	+2.2%
		FDP, CVP, SP	SVP	2007–2011	48	-2.3%
		FDP, CVP, SP	SVP	2011–	-	-

* Anti-immigration acts as support party to minority government
** Years include care take period

the 2013 elections, in a government led by the conservative *Høyre* (H).

Although the BZÖ, FPÖ, FrP, LN, LPF, and SVP are the only radical right parties that have held cabinet portfolios, other parties have acted as support parties to right-wing minority governments. Between 2001 and 2011 Denmark was governed by minority coalition consisting of the conservative *Det Konservative Folkeparti* (KF) and liberal *Venstre* (V), which survived by the grace of the support of the *Dansk Folkeparti* (DF). In the Netherlands, a country without a tradition of minority governance, the PVV concluded a *gedoogakkoord* (support agreement) with the Dutch Christian-democratic CDA and the liberal VVD in 2010. However, the government resigned a mere two years later after the PVV withdrew its support.

As the overview highlights, especially established parties of the right (e.g. Christian-democratic, conservative and liberal parties) have resorted to governing with radical right parties. In Western Europe, coalitions including on the one hand radical right parties, and on the other green, social-democratic or social-liberal parties have not (yet) been constructed, at least not at the national level. However, in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as at the regional and the local level, these alliances are not uncommon. Examples include the Carinthian coalition between FPÖ and SPÖ that was formed in 2004 and the Fico government in Slovakia, which included both the radical right *Slovenská národná strana* (SNS) and the social-democratic *Sociálna demokracia* (Smer).

Government participation in coalitions led by established parties of the right is an attractive possibility for the radical right. Radical right parties on the one hand and Christian-democratic, conservative and liberal parties on the other hand, have partially overlapping orientations,[30] but prioritise different issues. This makes it possible to reach coalition agreements in which every party can implement preferred policies on its core issues. Radical right parties, for example, attribute high levels of salience to immigration and integration issues, while liberal parties are keen on economic reform. These differences make it possible for these

parties to exchange favours for mutual gain, that is to negotiate on a *quid pro quo* basis where advantages are granted in return for something. When this bargaining strategy is used, parties are willing to give each other free reign in policy domains that are not central to their party platforms. This trading of influence over certain policy domains facilitates the conclusion of a coalition agreement. Hence, the way in which radical right parties negotiate about coalition agreements with established parties differs from traditional ways of forming coalitions, which is based on compromising, meeting in the middle, and splitting the difference. As a result, coalition agreements between radical right parties and established parties of the right yield substantial policy pay-offs for all involved parties.[31]

Despite this rationale for radical right parties' government participation, it is often believed that they are either unwilling or unable to take up responsibility in the executive. However, reality proves otherwise. First of all, when invited to participate in government coalitions by Christian-democratic, conservative or liberal parties, radical parties are generally inclined to accept this invitation for the strategic motivations already mentioned. They negotiate about the contents of coalition agreements, trying to get concessions on issues that are important in their programmes, and make deliberate decisions to fill junior ministerial and ministerial portfolios, such as the Ministry of Interior Affairs or the Ministry of Justice, which preside over asylum, immigration and integration policies.[32] Thus, contrary to popular belief, radical right parties are often willing to take up government responsibility when asked to do so.

Secondly, once they are in office, radical right parties seek to reform policies in key areas, such as immigration and integration policies. Although not all radical right parties in office have had equal levels of influence on policy output, especially the BZÖ, the DF, the FPÖ and the SVP have managed to tighten legislation that impacts upon immigrants' rights.[33] In this respect, the parties are capable government partners. At the same time it should be noted that a number of right-wing govern-

ments that have not included radical right parties have made similar adjustments to immigration and integration legislation,[34] suggesting that these parties are not instrumental to policy reform.

Thirdly, coalition governments including radical right parties are not less stable than other kinds of coalitions. The governments that include these parties have an average tenure that is not significantly shorter than that of other types of government (see Table 1). The Balkenende I and Berlusconi I governments were, by comparative standards, rather short-lived (10 and 8 months respectively) and in both cases the radical right party caused upheaval in the governing coalition and was forced to resign (Netherlands) or quit voluntarily (Italy). The Rutte I cabinet lasted a little longer (25 months), but had to resign because the PVV refused to support a package of budget cuts. However, it should be noted that all governments in the Netherlands, also those not including radical right parties, that have assumed office in the past decade have been rather short-lived. Other governments that included radical right parties have been rather stable and have (come close to) finishing their terms. On average governments including or supported by radical right parties have governed for 37 months, which is considerably more than the 18 months the average post-war government in Western Europe lasts.[35]

Fourthly, radical right parties have experienced both positive and negative incumbency effects (the effect on party support as a consequence of their government participation) (see Table 1). On average the incumbency effect has been negative, but a number of parties have gained support among voters in post-incumbency elections. For the FPÖ and the LPF the first elections after their term in office proved disastrous. The FPÖ lost 16.9 per cent of the voters in the 2003 elections, while the LPF was abandoned by 11.3 per cent of the voters in the same year. In other cases the losses were considerably smaller or minimal gains were made.[36] When we compare the results of radical right parties to those of other parties, the former do not appear to have fared badly.

They have done better than radical left parties, a group in which no party managed to win votes after their government participation.[37] Moreover, the average electoral punishment they have experienced is comparable to that endured by the green parties that have been in office.[38]

Thus, it can be concluded that radical right parties are in many respects normal parties, or at least comparable to established parties. Of course, this does not mean they do not differ in any way in terms of stragegy and behaviour from their established counterparts. Radical right parties have been known »to keep one foot in and one foot out of government«[39] and maintain their populist profile even when taking up responsibility in the executive. In most cases, they no longer focus on criticising the establishment as a whole, but attack first and foremost left-wing parties (greens and social-democrats) and progressive parties (social-liberals). The PVV, for example, accuses Dutch left-wing parties *GroenLinks* (GL) and *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA) of promoting 'left-wing hobbies' and being part of a 'left-wing church' to which also Dutch mainstream media outlets and opinion leaders belong. Moreover, most governing radical right parties shift their criticism to other institutions and actors, such as the European Union, the judiciary, and the media, which are accused of preventing them from executing their policy reforms.[40]

How do established parties respond?

Before we elaborate on the consequences of different responses to anti-immigration parties, we briefly discuss the different strategies available for established parties to combat these parties.

Different responses to anti-immigration parties

Established parties can choose between two strategies to respond to anti-immigration parties: to engage or disengage.[41] By disengaging from anti-immigration parties, established parties deprive these parties

from any sense of legitimacy. To this end, established parties can either ignore or isolate anti-immigration parties. By ignoring anti-immigration parties, established parties hope to accomplish that these anti-immigration parties will quickly wither and fade due to a lack of attention and/or recognition. Isolation is achieved by way of legal or political means, such as raising the electoral threshold, outlawing the party, or forming blocking coalitions. Both strategies of disengagement – ignore and isolate – are so-called 'clean-hands' strategies; these strategies are politically correct and adhere to the advice of most anti-racism groups.[42]

Established parties can also pursue a strategy of engagement. One way of engaging with the anti-immigration party is to (partially) adopt their policy positions. Another way of engaging with anti-immigration parties is formal collaboration. This latter strategy of collaboration can occur in three domains: the legislative, executive, and electoral domain. Legislative collaboration entails that, from time to time, established parties vote together with anti-immigration parties on a particular piece of legislation. Executive collaboration takes the partnership one step further, and entails that established parties agree to form a governing coalition with the anti-immigration party. The highest order of collaboration is the formation of a formal coalition agreement between an anti-immigration party and one or more established parties, to contest elections jointly.[43] Of course, the two strategies of engaging and disengaging may to some extent be combined. Established parties may partially adopt the policy positions of an anti-immigration party, while at the same time challenging its legitimacy.

All strategies entail possible drawbacks for the established party. Ignoring the anti-immigration party, for example, can seem as a renouncement of democratic duties. Also, while co-optation of policy positions might win back voters, in turn, the party now risks losing its own core constituents. And although collaboration may register immediate positive effects, established parties also run the risk that voters dismiss them as power-hungry politicians who sold their soul. Besides, the decision to

collaborate can cause friction within the party itself. For example, when the Dutch Christian democratic CDA took part in a minority government that was officially supported by the PVV, this led to a serious rift within the party. Legal and political containment most likely weakens anti-immigration parties, but it inherently concerns a strained relation with the democratic right of freedom of expression. To put legal or political restraints on certain actors, opposes this democratic principle.[44]

Consequences for anti-immigration parties

Art[45] maintains that when established parties enforce a strategy of disengagement, they can effectively weaken anti-immigration parties. Strategies of disengagement signal to potential voters that the party is illegitimate, and in general, elite cues are expected to reduce electoral support. Besides, strategies of disengagement impair anti-immigration parties' ability to recruit qualified party members and thus to organize effectively; capable politicians are unwilling to work for parties that have no hope of gaining executive authority. Art[46] takes Germany as an example of a country where anti-immigration parties have been successfully repressed. Germany's Nazi past produced a 'culture of contrition' among all elite actors, making them extremely sensitive and vigilant towards parties that bore any resemblance to the Nazis, or sought to downplay the Second World War atrocities. Therefore, German political actors adopted a clear strategy of de-legitimization of *Die Republikaner* (REP), following this party's electoral breakthrough in 1989. While political collaboration could have been beneficial for some established parties, this was not considered an option. The Germans followed a collective policy of seclusion (*Ausgrenzung*) that prohibited personal contacts with REP politicians, legislative collaboration with REP politicians, and support for any REP policy proposal or candidate. At the same time, REP was heavily combated and marginalized by media and civil society. In the end, these measures prevented REP from consolidating itself.[47] Fennema and Van der Brug (2006) also maintain that

one of the main reasons that the Dutch anti-immigration party CD failed to establish itself in the late 1980s early 1990s, was that its message was widely and consistently de-legitimized by relevant political actors and the media.

The usefulness of strategies of disengagement is also illustrated by Bos and Van der Brug[48] who show that party support for anti-immigration parties, depends to a large degree on the extent to which voters perceive these parties as legitimate. By this they mean that the party is seen as democratic. Voters are only willing to support an anti-immigration party, when they de not consider this party to be a threat to democracy.[49]

More recently, Van Spanje and De Vreese (*forthcoming*) conducted a study into the electoral effects of the prosecution of PVV party leader Geert Wilders for hate speech. Their study shows that Wilders benefited electorally from the decision to prosecute him. The authors provide four reasons for why this may have been the case. First, the defendant's party most likely wins a lot of media attention by being prosecuted, and an increase in media attention is expected to increase the party's perceived effectiveness, and thus party support.[50] Second, prosecution can lead to a stronger association between the defendant's party and the political issue at stake. A further strengthening of the association between a party and a political issue, amplifies the party's 'issue ownership'. 'Issue ownership' is an important political strength since parties win votes most easily on the issues they 'own'.[51] Third, the electorate perceives an issue more important when it gets more media attention.[52] Provided that prosecution indeed brings more media attention and voters are exposed to this, prosecution would increase the importance of the issues of immigration and integration. This increase in perceived importance benefits anti-immigration parties, since they 'own' these issues.[53] Fourth, prosecuted politicians benefit from prosecution by portraying themselves as martyrs for freedom of speech. Political martyrdom is a successful populist strategy to attract voters that are suspicious of the political establishment.[54]

This conclusion supports Fennema[55], who asserts that strategies of de-legimization have been met with increasing opposition. From the 1980s onwards, elite actors started to reject the idea of a so called 'militant democracy'[56] and argued that there is no moral or philosophical ground to restrict the freedom of political expression, even when it is directed at the fundamental principles of democracy.

Based on a broader survey of the apparent co-variation between anti-immigration parties' success and the strategies adopted by the established parties, Downs[57] concludes that overall strategies of constructive engagement have been more productive than strategies of disengagement. Downs observed counterproductive effects of legal and political repression of the VB in Belgium, while he also noticed that anti-immigration parties have been weakened or 'tamed' effectively in countries where it was granted at least some executive authority, such as in France, and to a lesser extent in Denmark and Norway. Constructive engagement can weaken or 'tame' anti-immigration parties in two ways. First, in search for greater legitimacy and effectiveness, anti-immigration parties challenge their hard line politics; they have to make concessions in order to stay in power. Second, anti-immigration parties in office have shown prone to internal divisions, poor candidate selection, party schisms and rifts, eventually causing these parties to self-destruct. Either by design or by chance, established parties have sown the seeds of anti-immigration parties' undoing by granting them a taste of incumbency.[58] Downs, however, does not suggest that national governments should carelessly welcome anti-immigration parties in their legislative assemblies. According to the author, collaboration should be coupled with an aggressive intellectual/educational campaign that alerts the public to the possible dangers of anti-immigration parties.[59]

Art[60] disputes the effectiveness of strategies of engagement more generally, and asserts that these strategies also have counterproductive effects; by legitimizing anti-immigration parties, the establishment allows these parties to become permanent forces in the political sys-

tem. Allowing anti-democratic forces to blossom can put the system in danger, especially in times of crises.[61] Therefore, strategies of disengagement should not be readily dismissed. On that matter, Art stresses the importance of timing in order for strategies of legal or political repression to work. Once the organizations of anti-immigration parties have become strong, their supporters loyal and their official entrenched in government, efforts to de-legitimize them are likely to become ineffective or even counterproductive.[62] A recent study indeed shows that 'demonizing' anti-immigration parties only has a negative effect on their support in the first years after the party was founded (Van Heerden, 2014).

However, it should be noted that responses of established parties to anti-immigration parties are often guided by strategic rather than normative considerations. As we discussed in the previous section, the government cooperation between radical right parties and established parties of the right, was mainly brought about by strategic factors.

Conclusion

In this contribution we distinguished between two kinds of anti-immigration parties, the extreme right and the radical right. Extreme right parties are anti-democratic, whereas radical right parties accept the main rules of parliamentary democracies. We discussed much research which shows that radical right parties are in many ways 'normal parties' and that the people that vote for them are in many ways 'normal voters'. Some political commentators and policy analysist might find this conclusion somewhat controverisial since it does not fit the 'politically correct' idea that radical right parties are anathema to modern day pluralistic democracies. Much research shows, however, that most citizens consider radical right parties to be like any other party, no matter what the intellectual and political elites think of them. For this reason, it is not likely that (potential) voters will be affected by appeals

not to support these parties because of their allegedly anti-democratic, anti-system and/or neo-fascist character. This leads up to the question of whether the approach to radical right parties and extreme parties should be different.

Moreover, debates about the government participation of radical right parties have often had a strong normative component. Many commentators have voiced concerns that the rise to power of these parties has had negative consequences for the stability of governments or the quality of democracy. Although these debates are certainly important, they should not distract from the fact that the interactions between radical right and mainstream parties are part of the broader process of party cooperation and competition, in which strategic considerations often prevail over normative ones. To understand why established parties in many countries stopped treating the radical right as political pariahs, it is necessary to analyse how the success of these parties has transformed the competitive and cooperative dynamics of the party systems in those countries. The rise of the radical right has shifted the balance of power in many West European parliaments to the right and has therefore provided some established parties with new coalition alternatives and hence a competitive advantage.

Notes

1 The four authors contributed equally to this chapter and are therefore listed alphabetically.

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Chapter 5

Populism, Social Media and Democratic Strain

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Changes in the way we communicate – from the Gutenberg printing press to the first televised US presidential debate – always have an effect on politics. The Internet is no different: Since the net's wide adoption from the early 1990s on, analysts have long argued that mass communication through the web would facilitate collective action by bringing groups together around single issues, lowering barriers to entry and thereby fundamentally changing the nature of political movements.[1] Social media – a very large and varied mix of platforms and sites which prioritize content put up by the users – is now at the forefront of this change. More and more of us live a greater part of our social, professional and political lives online. Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn are all examples of the rapid transfer of people's lives – interactions, identities, arguments and views – onto a new kind of public sphere; a vast digital social commons. Europeans spend an average of four hours a day online and around three in four Europeans use at least one social networking site.[2] And it's still growing: 2010–12 saw an increase in online penetration of twenty per cent.[3] My argument in this chapter is that populist parties in Europe have been quicker to spot the opportunities these new technologies present to reach out and mobilize an increasingly disenchanted electorate. The rest need to catch up. We are finally beginning to witness how this enormous transformation impact how people interact with politics. The size, diversity and dynamism of social media platforms allow people to connect and form social movements outside the existing political channels far more quickly and easily than ever before, often at zero cost. New social movements have emerged that use social media extensively in their operations and challenging existing parties and methods in a way unthinkable a decade ago: the English Defence League in the UK, the Pirate Party in Germany and the Occupy movement are all examples of movements that have employed social media to grow rapidly and create a significant political and social impact all in the last five years.

In this chapter, I will argue that these changes – the dramatic reduc-

tion in costs of organising, mobilizing and communication – are currently helping populist parties of left and right enjoy significant levels of support and prominence, especially when coupled with large declines in the levels of trust and confidence people have in existing political systems. I will examine some of these broad shifts in Internet use across the continent, and explain why and how populist parties and movements have been so effective at using them. I will then present some new research looking at the motivations of people who support these parties and conclude with the significant challenge these movements pose to the status quo. Throughout, I will draw on a poll of 15,000 Facebook supporters of populist parties in Europe, conducted by my research group Demos between 2011–2013.[4]

The populist moment

Recent election results and opinion polls across Europe appear to show that populist parties are growing across the Continent. Over the past five years, focus has mainly been on those which are broadly right wing, defined by their opposition to immigration, multiculturalism (with a special focus on Islam) and concern for protecting national culture, often against the EU and/or globalization. They vary of course: Some, like the UK Independence Party, are a non-racist, liberal, but anti-European Union party with a restrictive approach to immigration. Others, such as Greece's Golden Dawn, are defiantly racist and often openly Neo-Nazi. Although they are often defined as the 'populist right' or 'the extreme right', they do not fit neatly into traditional political divides. The growth of these parties over the past three decades has been remarkable and they now command political weight in the parliaments of Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Latvia, as well as the European Parliament.

However, the economic crisis appears to have also helped lift what is sometimes called the 'populist left', which focuses more on citizens' and

workers' rights against global capitalism, and opposes spending cuts and austerity measures (subsequently often being fairly anti-European Union in outlook and rhetoric). Jean-Luc Mélenchon, a rabble rousing Communist candidate, secured 11 per cent of the first round vote in last year's French Presidential race, while SYRIZA (The Coalition of the Radical Left) in Greece might beat the New Democrats in the next national election.[5] In the February 2013 Italian elections, Beppe Grillo's party, the 'Five Star Movement', became the largest single party in the Italian parliament. In fact, Beppe Grillo straddles both left and right. He is a popular comedian and blogger; and he ran a vehemently anti-establishment campaign, selecting his candidates online, and refusing to give any interviews to the Italian media, communicating instead through his own blog. These parties also performed well at the 2014 European parliamentary election – with Beppe Grillo coming second in Italy, while SYRIZA came top in Greece. Overall, the results were viewed as a success for the anti-EU populist parties, at the expense of the mainstream centre-left and centre-right.

Despite offering radically different solutions to perceived social problems, both sets of movements are part of the same general trend, broadly defined as 'populist'. Populist parties across the spectrum pit the good, honest, ordinary voter against the out of touch, liberal, mainstream political elite. They claim to represent the former against the latter, an authentic and honest voice in a world of spin and self-interest.[6] Taken together, 'populist' parties across the spectrum are increasing in size and popularity.

Democratic crisis

One of the key social trends over the last decade has been the decline in trust, engagement and support for the national democracies and the institutions of political and social life across much of Europe. There is a growing democratic deficit: the perception and reality that there is a

large distance in understanding between the governors and the governed. Political parties, sitting at the heart of both national and European elections, are highly distrusted almost everywhere. In Germany 68 per cent distrust them, as do 86 per cent of French citizens and 83 per cent of British citizens. Their formal membership has been falling for the past 30 years: Parties in the UK and France have lost around one million members and German parties half a million. Only around two per cent of voters in these countries are now members of a mainstream political party.[7]

By representing the ordinary person against the out of touch professional politician, populist parties can surf the wave of this widespread disillusionment against 'the system'. Of course, the supporters of left and right populist parties differ on specifics. While the right tend to concern themselves with immigration, integration and identity, the left are more worried by economics and jobs (although, it is important not to exaggerate that distinction). They are united, however, in their general dissatisfaction with the institutions of political life. In my research looking at the online supporters of populist parties and movements, supporters consistently displayed significantly lower levels of trust in political parties, the justice system, parliament and the media, compared to the typical citizen. Whether they were from the left or right was immaterial. For example, in Demos' recent research on new political movements in Hungary, levels of trust in the government were exactly the same for the far right Jobbik party and the left wing populist movements like the Hungarian Solidarity Movement (or Dialogue for Hungary), with a mere five per cent tending to trust their government.[8] Amongst the general Hungarian population, 31 per cent tend to trust the government.[9] Similarly, while only 12 per cent of Jobbik supporters and 9 per cent of supporters of left-wing populist groups trusted political parties, 20 per cent of Hungarians more generally tended to trust them.[10] The same patterns were found in our studies of the German Pirate Party and the Italian Five Star Movement – both broadly left wing –the German Die Freiheit

and Italian Casa Pound party (although this is perhaps more accurately described as a 'movement') – both broadly right wing. In terms of the level of trust with which the press, the police and a host of other institutions are regarded, right and left wing populists have more in common with each other than with the population more generally.[11]

Turning disenchantment into politics

Yet disenchantment and disillusionment on their own are rarely enough – new forms of communication, particularly the networking, organizing and mobilizing potential of social media, is allowing disenchantment to materialise into real world affect. This is why the new digital public space has become extremely important – a new space for this political frustration to be expressed. Close to 350 million people in Europe currently use social networking sites: That's three in four EU citizens. More of us sign into a social media platform at least once a day than voted in this year's European elections. Facebook has 232 million users across the EU and 16 per cent of European Internet users have a Twitter account. Crucially, it's also political: People use social media to discuss news stories, join political movements and talk about public issues that matter to them. Unlike a decade ago, a public space is now more easily available to citizens willing to learn about and discuss issues beyond national borders at essentially no cost. The ability to use social media to reach and mobilize voters is increasingly important in a period where electoral turnout is so low. Only half voted in radical anti-establishment politician George Galloway's recent by-election landslide win in the North of England and under 25 per cent in UKIP's recent breakthrough at local council elections in the UK. While some European countries have much higher turnout than others – Belgium for instance, where voter turnout is compulsory, achieved over 90 per cent turnout in 2009 – the downward trend is unmistakable. Only 43 per cent of eligible EU citizens voted in the 2009 Parliamentary elections, down from 45.5 per

cent in 2004, 49.5 per cent in 1999, 56.7 per cent in 1994, 58.4 per cent in 1989, 59 per cent in 1984, and 62 per cent in 1979.[12] In the 2014 elections – for the first time – turnout did not fall overall, although nor did it increase. As the recent US elections demonstrate, social media can be an incredibly useful way to quickly and easily reach and mobilize voters. Indeed, you don't need the weighty machinery of an established party: Facebook groups and Twitter feeds can spread a message and mobilize voters for next to no cost.

Subsequently, social media is increasingly part of political campaigns – for all parties. It is affecting the way political parties form, organize, communicate and listen to potential voters.[13] There has been a marked increase since 2005 in participation in online polls, surveys, petitions and joining political groups. The political habits of many European citizens are changing in other ways too. Voters and non-voters alike are increasingly non-partisan, less likely to be bound by tightly defined political ideology or even a defined identification with one party or another. While this trend is most prevalent amongst young people, it is a general attitudinal shift rather than a generational phenomenon.

Populist parties have been quick to spot the opportunities this presents. Indeed, generally speaking, political radicals are early adopters of new forms of technology. In the eighties and nineties, for example, the American white supremacist organisations Stormfront and the Aryan Brotherhood created and maintained popular support groups on Usenet and Bulletin Board Systems. According to the Alexa, a company that ranks website traffic, the British National Party's website is significantly more popular than either Labour's or the Conservative Party's. The number of Facebook supporters of European populist parties often dwarfs those of mainstream political parties, and even their own formal membership.[14] For example, at the time of writing, the British National Party has 159 thousand Facebook likes and UKIP has close to a quarter of a million. Meanwhile, the Conservative party has 250 thousand, the Labour party 180 thousand and the Liberal Democrats 100 thousand.

Similarly, in Italy, Beppe Grillo has 1.6 million likes, while current Prime Minister Renzi has fewer than half that.

Social media is in many ways the ideal medium for populist parties. It is distributed, non-hierarchical and democratic. It is an alternative to the mainstream media, which many supporters of populist parties strongly distrust. It is therefore not controlled by the elites: The content is generated by us – the honest, hard-working, ordinary citizens – exactly those people who the populists are defending. Indeed, populist parties are far less likely to trust mainstream media sources than the typical citizen. While an average of 30 per cent of EU citizens trust mainstream media sources, only 12 per cent of European populists trust them.[15] This is true of the supporters of populist parties on both the left and the right. In Italy, for example, 18 per cent of the right-wing Lega Nord's supporters trust the mainstream media and only 11 per cent of Beppe Grillo supporters tend to trust the press; 4 per cent the TV and 23 per cent the radio.[16] In contrast, a full 40 per cent of Italians more generally trust the TV, 39 per cent the radio and 34 per cent the press.[17] Attitudes towards the Internet are wholly different. 80 per cent of Hungarian left-wing populists trust the Internet, compared to only 40 per cent of Hungarians more generally.[18] 76 per cent of Beppe Grillo supporters trust the Internet, as opposed to 37 per cent of Italians more generally.[19] Where European populists are more cynical about the credibility and dependability of every other media platform, the Internet stands out as a bastion of trustworthiness. It is the only media source populists have more faith in than their compatriots.[20]

The short acerbic nature of populist messages works well too. One of the characteristics of populist movements in general is simplifying complex problems, offering impossibly simple solutions that are unlikely to work in reality. Humour, outspokenness, pithy put downs and catchy slogans: These are the DNA of cyber culture. Beppe Grillo, for example, used social media to a quite devastating effect. He is the most 'followed' and 'liked' politician in Europe by some distance; his messages went viral

and felt more authentic than wooden press releases. Of course, all the while, inside Grillo's Trojan Horse were exhortations for his supporters to form local meet up groups, discuss politics, get out and vote and ask friends to do likewise – confounding many pollsters in the process.

The echo chamber

The consumption of media – essentially how we understand much of what is happening in the world – has also been transformed. Social media is changing the way people get access and digest their information.[21] The last decade has seen a steady rise in Internet penetration across Europe; at the same time, trust in the traditional press has gone down and trust in the Internet and online news consumption has gone up.[22] However, this dramatic transformation does not necessarily herald a more open public space where information flows freely across different groups or sustain an informed public debate. The ability to create and personalize our own media consumption can lead to what Eli Pariser calls the 'the filter bubble', which refers to people surrounding themselves with information that corroborates their own world view and reduce their exposure to conflicting information.[23] Sustained exposure to a selective output can harden viewpoints and create a false body of evidence, based upon which an individual makes flawed judgments about the wider world. This problem is made worse by the fact that too many Internet users do not critically evaluate the credibility of the information they digest online. [24]

Misinformation, inaccuracies and propaganda often live quite easily alongside accurate information online and can even flourish. Metapedia is an online encyclopedia aesthetically very similar to Wikipedia, ostensibly concerned with 'culture, art, science, philosophy and politics'.[25] The entry for 'Immigration' reveals a series of conspiratorial avowals presented as fact, including the assertion that 'most people don't realize that Jews are the driving force behind mass immigration and demographic genocide.'[26] Further scrutiny reveals that the website

is run by far-right activists. In the context of a dialogue such as that concerning immigration, already characterized by political polarization and emotive, sometimes poorly evidenced opinion, these specific problems can have a particularly corrosive influence. On a collective level, there is some evidence that this might increase political polarization and radicalize perspectives.[27] In the UK, we already have what is called a 'reality–perception gap'. For example, in a 2011 survey, 62 per cent of respondents thought of 'asylum seekers' when asked what they associate with immigrants. In fact, asylum seekers are only four per cent of the immigrant population. Perceptions and reality part company and social media can make this worse. More broadly, social media also allows and facilitates the creation of social groups composed of people holding similar opinions, sharing stories that confirm existing views. This is sometimes called the 'echo chamber'. [28]

Understanding the populist voice

As well as providing the opportunity for this kind of misinformation and political polarization, social media represents an often very positive new public space for popular political and social discourse. That also makes it a novel way to gain insight into the motivations of members of these groups on a scale that was previously extremely difficult.

In a recent survey of supporters of fifteen European populist political parties from left and right, conducted through Facebook, my research group at Demos targeted respondents who self-identified as online supporters and asked them why they joined.[29] Unsurprisingly, for a full quarter of respondents, disaffection with mainstream parties or frustration with their nation's political elite was the principle reason for their choice. One member of the German Pirate Party stated that 'politicians aren't representing the will of the people anymore', while a member of the Austrian Freedom Party more specifically cited the inability of mainstream politicians to engage the populace.[30]

'...what they [FPO politicians] do talks to young people and they don't circumscribe it as other boring politicians do [...] they make their points a bit »wildly« from time to time, but that's the only way of giving young people a wakeup call.'[31]

The second most important catalyst, at 18 per cent of all the justifications given by members of the (predominantly right-wing) populist parties, was disaffection with immigration policy, multiculturalism and integration. Many of the anti-immigration arguments were detailed. One English Defence League supporter stated that 'mass immigration, which may well benefit the »upper classes« but kicks the working class in the teeth, colonizes whole communities and erodes our culture, puts a strain on public services, increases crime...'. Other statements were more overtly xenophobic. One Dutch Freedom Party follower justified his support for the party with the simple statement 'we need to get rid of all foreigners'.

Feelings of alienation and isolation and perceptions of cultural erosion motivated 15 per cent of respondents. One Bloc Identitaire member explained his support as due to 'the values of our identity' and 'too much anti-white racism in this country'.[32] One respondent joined the Swedish Democrats 'to save my heritage my people and my customs.'[33] 14 per cent focused on a specific party policy or political leader. One English Defence League member stated that 'after hearing Tommy Robinson speak for the first time, I was absolutely 100% sold. All my worries and conerns were comming [sic] straight out of his mouth into waiting cameras and reporters, with 1000 people standing behind him to cheer him on.' One support of Grillo's Five Star Movement listed its policies towards 'water [utilities], citizens participation' and the 'use of the computer for democracy' as their principle motivations.[34]

A threat to democracy?

It is the argument of this chapter that new trends in communication work well for populist parties – and they are taking advantage of the

opportunities they present. Taken together with other trends in society – such as growing voter disenchantment and trust, it is likely that populist movements of all shades will continue to grow in popularity.

However, it is unclear the extent to which a leap in support for populist parties presents a major threat to open, liberal democracy. There is a natural check on the size of populist parties – their radicalism and popularity is usually inversely proportionate to their distance from power. As they become more successful they are held to greater scrutiny and the subsequent self-imposed seriousness makes them appear a little more like the parties they claim to oppose. When in power, such as the governing coalitions of agreements made by the Danish People's Party or Geert Wilder's Freedom Party, their popularity often drifts, as impossible promises are not kept. After all, announcing policies or criticising others is easier than actually delivering meaningful and long-term change.

What's more, 'populism' is malleable, elastic, at once a term of abuse and of pride. Certainly, it can be an important check on politics that gets too far out of synch with those it is meant to represent; a sort of democratic nudge. Concerns about the effect of immigration and segregated communities are in some instances perfectly legitimate, worries, which cannot and should not be pretended away in a liberal democracy. But where populist parties resort to an overly simplistic form of politics that stirs up enraged emotions and channels it unfairly against (usually foreign) scapegoat, it does become a problem.

The challenge therefore lies ultimately with other parties to respond. The more established parties may have to change to survive: they will have to get used to a new type of membership – elastic, less loyal and conditional – which can be mobilized at election time. The future belongs to the party that can respond to concerns that people have in a way that makes sense to them, without tipping into unhealthy populism, and using modern communications and technology to understand, connect, respond and mobilize. This will make for an increase in 'shock' results in the years ahead. Although that might be mitigated somewhat

if the larger parties begin to learn lessons from the way populist parties have been able to find new audiences and channels using social media. The UK Labour Party, for example, has recently hired Matthew McGregor (a former digital adviser to President Obama's 2012 re-election campaign team) to help the party use social media more effectively to fight the 2015 General Election. But whichever way you view it – and it often is a matter of perspective – this will jolt some life into a stuttering democracy, making the whole system more chaotic, but hopefully also more dynamic, diverse, and open.

Notes

1 Postmes, T. and Brunsting, S. (2002) »Collective Action in the Age of the Internet: Mass Communication and Online Mobilization« Social Science Computer Review Vol. 20: pp. 290-301; Castells, M. (2007), »Communication, Power and Counter-power in the Network Society«, International Journal of Communication, Vol. 1: pp. 238-266.

2 Between us : http://www.between-us.nl/662/social-media-csr-opportunities.htm; G2 eCultures EUROPE 2012 Report.

3 Mediascope Europe (2012) »2012 Pan European Launch Presentation Summary«: http://orangeadvertisingnetwork.com/sites/default/files/mediascope_2012_pan-european_summary_launch_presentation.pdf.

4 These data were collected by running a Facebook advert that targeted people who had 'liked' a range of populist parties on Facebook. Facebook was chosen as the most widespread social media site in Western Europe. On clicking the advert, participants were redirected to a digital survey page, which set out the details and purpose of the survey along with an invitation to take part, which asked them a range of demographic and attitudinal questions. Although all selected Facebook groups had over 2000 members, their sizes and the response rates varied. The UK British National Party, for example, only recorded 343 survey responses, whereas the Austrian Freedom Party, a party with similar sized following, had 2,564 responses. Full details about the methodology are available in Bartlett et al (2012) »The New Face of Digital Populism« Demos.

5 A May 2014 Public Issue poll (on behalf of Skai tv and Kathimerini newspaper)

had 28% Syriza, 27.5% ND; a 15 May Marc/Alpha poll had ND 21.6%, Syriza 20.7% - but noted that 46.4% of respondents preferred ND leader for prime minister, compared to 37.8% for Syriza leader; a 26 April VPRC poll for leftist radio show had ND 27%, Syriza 29.5%; a 21 April Metron Analysis poll for newspaper Eleftherotypia's Sunday edition had ND 27%, Syriza 26.2%.

6 See http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/mar/04/keep-off-ukip-territory-europe-tories#ixzz2UgqKxQ00.

7 Bartlett, J., Miller, C. and Wibberley, S. (2014) »European Digital Voice« Demos.

8 Bartlett, J. et al. (2012) »Populism in Europe: Hungary« Demos pp. 44; Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: New Opposition Movements in Hungary« Demos pp. 54.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid; Bartlett, J. et al. (2012) »Populism in Europe: Hungary« Demos pp. 44.

11 Ibid; Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: New Opposition Movements in Hungary« Demos pp. 54.

12 All of these figures from Standard Note: SN/SG/1467, by Aliyah Dar, from the House of Commons Library, p.7.

13 Creasey, S (2011) LSE: Polis.

14 Bartlett, J., Birdwell, J. and Littler, M. (2011) »The New Face of Digital Populism« Demos p.15.

15 Ibid., p. 74.

16 Ibid.

17 Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: Beppe Grillo and the M5S« Demos pp.40.

18 Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: New Opposition Movements in Hungary« Demos p. 54.

19 Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: Beppe Grillo and the M5S« Demos p.40-41.

20 Bartlett, J. et al. (2013) »New Political Actors in Europe: New Opposition Movements in Hungary« Demos p. 54.

21 Ibid.

22 Bartlett, J., Birdwell, J. and Littler, M. (2011) 'The New Face of Digital Populism' Demos .

23 Pariser, E. (2011) »The Filter Bubble: How the New Personalized Web is Changing What We Read and How We Think«. New York: Penguin Press.

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27 Bartlett, J. and Miller, C. (2010) 'The power of unreason conspiracy theories, extremism and counter-terrorism'. London: Demos.

28 Ibid.

29 The sample size was 250. Where multiple reasons were stated, the first issue mentioned was recorded as the principle justification for joining their party.

30 »Bürgerinteressen werden nicht mehr durch Politiker vertreten.«

31 »Weil es spricht Junge Menschen an. Und Sie umschreiben es nicht wie manch langweiliger Politiker. Mit strategie und eifer bringen Sie es zwar oft zu 'WILD' auf den Punkt aber nur so werden die Leute wach gerüttelt.«

32 »les valeurs de notre identitee,ma tristesse qui m'a decide a quitter le sud de la france ou j'ai grandis,trop de racisme anti blanc dans ce pays que je respect,la liste est longue...«

33 »för att rädda mitt arv mitt folk och våra seder.«

34 Specifiche campagne: acqua, patecipazione dei cittadini, utilizzo del computer per democrazia.

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Chapter 6

The Danish People's Party in Nørrebro

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»For us who grew up in Copenhagen *in the 50s and 60s Nørrebro is something special* [...] *there was room to do what you wanted and lots of tolerance. Today Nørrebro is totally changed* [...] *the tolerance is gone. A main reason for this is that Nørrebro has become a Muslim enclave. And where Islam comes in, tolerance goes out.«* – Pia Kjærsgaard, member and former leader of the DPP.[1]

»There is a certain spirit to Nørrebro. When you say: 'What is Nørrebro?' The answer is love. [...] *It is about humanism and taking care of the weak* [...] *There are many cultural and political groups in Nørrebro* [...] *They work from keywords such as love, tolerance, free spiritedness, curiosity and youthfulness.«* – Thorsten Dam, local journalist from Nørrebro.

Nørrebro is a district of Copenhagen and as shown above, depending on who you talk to, it is described and experienced very differently. Some see it as a place filled with love and tolerance of diversity while others see it as an un-Danish part of Copenhagen »ruled« by Muslims. Nørrebro is an example of an area where a nationwide, popular anti-immigration party experiences very little voter support. This chapter seeks to describe the central actors, debates and public action in this specific area in order to come up with an explanation for the otherwise popular party's unpopularity. This will include a description of the party's only successful election in the area in 2001.

This case study explores reasons for why the Danish People's Party (DPP) experiences low voter support in Nørrebro. It is argued that the demographic composition of Nørrebro provides one explanation: as the area is mainly populated by groups, such as young people and ethnic minorities, who are statistically unlikely to vote for the DPP. Moreover, other parties and civil organizations have been successful in creating an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of cultural, religious and ethnic diversity in Nørrebro.

The Danish People's Party – a right-wing party with success

A poll from July 11 2014 indicates that the DPP would get 21.5 per cent of the votes in a general election, which would make it the second largest party in Denmark.[2] The following section will focus on the rise of the DPP: how it was founded and how it has become one of the most influential parties in Danish politics.

The DPP was founded in 1995 by a splinter group from the Progress Party (PP). The PP's main policy was to erode all income tax and to minimize state regulations and welfare. In the 1980's they started promoting anti-immigration and especially anti-Muslim politics.[3] In 1995 Pia Kjærsgaard and Kristian Thulesen Dahl, among others, decided to form their own right-wing party that could join in coalition with other parties and appear respectable, something the PP has struggled with.[4] This party became the DPP.[5]

The PP was, however, not the only foundation of the DPP. The Danish Association (DA), which was founded in 1987, and had around 3.000 members, created a political space for right-wing, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim views and arguments. The ties between the DA and the DPP have been strong; Pia Kjærsgaard often adopted the populist rhetoric of the DA in the DPP's early years.[6]

With ties to the DA it can be argued that the DPP represents the first real anti-immigration party in Denmark, since its inception it has been involved in nationalist and anti-immigration politics.[7] This element has strengthened over the years. The DPP has gradually shifted from a party rooted in a neoliberal approach to tax and welfare spending to a nationalistic and anti-immigration party, which is both sceptical of the EU and supports the welfare state.[8] The election in 2001 marked a turning point for the DPP.[9] In 1998 the DPP got 7.4 per cent of the vote, however, in the 2001 election they received 12.0 per cent - making them the third largest party in Denmark.[10] In order to form a majority government, the Liberal Party and the Conservatives formed a coalition with the DPP. With a significant share of the vote they appeared as an obvious choice. [11]

Since the election in 2001 the DPP has been one of the most influential parties in Danish politics, in regards to its electoral size, policies and media attention. They have gradually moved to the centre of the political spectrum and now compete with the Social Democrats over working class voters.[12] In the election in 2005 they received 13.3 per cent of the vote and in in 2007 they received 13.9 per cent. The DPP was the only party to gain votes at each election from 1998–2007. The election in 2011 was the first time that the DPP lost votes when they received 12.3 per cent. However, as stated earlier, according to recent polls the DPP might become the second largest party in the next election.

Nørrebro

The success of the DPP is nationwide but there are areas in Denmark where the DPP struggles to find support. One of these places is Nørrebro, which is part of the Copenhagen Municipality. The reason for focusing on Nørrebro is that support for the DPP has decreased in nearly every election, compared to the region as a whole. It is also one of lowest percentages of support for the DPP in Denmark. The focus on Nørrebro is also based on an interest in the specific character of the area, as it represents one of the most multicultural and »politically active« areas in Denmark.

Nørrebro has historically been a place of political activity, namely through anti-establishment protests and riots. Throughout the 1970s, 80s and 90s there were many clashes between residents of Nørrebro and the police, all of which have been politically motivated. The most violent incident was the riot after the EU referendum on 18th May, 1993. Containers were set on fire and rocks thrown at the police who responded with gunfire. Another violent demonstration occurred when the police evicted the Youth House (Ungdomshuset) in 2007, which functioned as a meeting place for extreme left-wing groups and anarchists. The following year ethnic minority youths set fire to cars and containers as a reaction to what they called brutal and racist behaviour from the police.[13] These events have

helped present an image of Nørrebro as a dangerous and unsafe place.

In 1998 Pia Kjærsgaard was attacked during a visit to Nørrebro. Individuals from extreme left-wing groups threw rocks after Kjærsgaard. She ended up seeking cover inside a bank from where she called the police who escorted her out of Nørrebro. The incident made headline news and once again added to the image of Nørrebro as a violent and politically extreme part of Denmark. In 2003 Pia Kjærsgaard wrote an article with the title »Give Us Nørrebro Back«. She argued that Nørrebro has become a Muslim enclave and that the tolerance that characterized Nørrebro in the 50s and 60s has been replaced by Islam. In other words, she framed Nørrebro as an »un-Danish« area.

Nørrebro is one of the most multicultural areas in Denmark. In January 2013 26.7 per cent of Nørrebro's population were either immigrants or descendants of immigrants, and 19.2 per cent of the population were from non-western countries. Another demographic factor to consider is that 71 per cent of the 76,563 people living in Nørrebro in January 2013 are under 40 years old.[14] In contrast to an image of violent unrest, Nørrebro's young population has created an image of the place as a centre of »urban cool«.[15]

Marie Krarup, MP from the DPP, makes the claim that people who vote for the DPP often come from multicultural areas where they have experienced the »clashes of cultures« first hand.[16] The case of Nørrebro contradicts this account. In the election for parliament in 2011 only 4.7 per cent of the voters in Nørrebro voted for the DPP compared to 12.3 per cent in Denmark as a whole, and 8.4 per cent in Copenhagen. In each election since the 2001 the DPP has decreased its share of the vote in the district of Nørrebro; a direct contrast with the parties rise in popularity at the national level.

The specific political atmosphere in Nørrebro as described above means that some of the debates and actions found in Nørrebro are more explicit and radical than similar debates and actions found in other areas. As an outcome of this, this case study reveals how debates and actions are

carried out in an environment where the political frontiers are sharpened; this is significant for how politicians and activists engage in Nørrebro and how the district is represented and debated more widely.

Reasons for the DPP's low voter support in Nørrebro

The study draws on interviews with politicians that are active or have been active in Nørrebro within the last 15 years or so. Political representatives with a connection to Nørrebro from the following parties have been interviewed: The DPP, the Liberal Party, the Social Liberal Party, the Red-Green Alliance, The Social Democrats and the Socialist's People's Party. In total nine politicians have been interviewed. The case study also draws on seven interviews with MP's from the DPP, which I have gathered in relation to the EU-funded *Rage-Project*.[17] Furthermore, the case study includes an interview with a local journalist and relies on an analysis of newspaper articles.

The discussion below will look at Nørrebro's demography, followed by an analysis of the 2001 election, in which the DPP did well. It will then take a closer look at debates in immigration in Nørrebro. This will focus on how different versions of the »story« of multiculturalism have been told in the area and how this might explain DPP's low voter support.

Demographic factors

The table below shows the distribution of votes in Nørrebro in each election for parliament from 1998-2011 for selected parties.[18]

The general voting pattern in Nørrebro shows that left-wing and centre-left parties - the Red-Green Alliance, the Socialists People's Party, the Social Democrats and the Social Liberal Party - are popular among voters; they have collectively shared over 65 per cent of votes since 1998. The centre-right and right-wing parties – the Liberal Party, the Conservative People's Party and the DPP – have not surpassed 30 per cent of the

Table 1.

	Red-Green Alliance	The Socialist People's Party	The Social Democrats	The Social Liberal Party	The Liberal Party	The Conservative People's Party	The Danish People's Party
1998	11,4	16,4	32,4	8,2	11,8	6,7	6,4
2001	9,3	15,0	25,7	15,3	15,8	6,1	8,1
2005	9,6	11,9	20,9	24,0	11,7	6,8	7,5
2007	12,3	27,3	22,7	11,0	8,6	6,5	7,0
2011	27,6	15,2	16,2	20,0	8,4	3,1	4,7

vote since 1998. The election in 2001, however, showed a slight turn to the right with both the Liberal Party's and the DPP's successful in this election (this will be discussed with later on).

Some of the interviewed politicians see age as an explanation for the DPP's unpopularity in Nørrebro. They imply that young people tend to vote for parties on the left-wing or centre-left, or at least tend not to vote for the DPP. As mentioned above the population in Nørrebro is young with 71 per cent of the population under the age of 40. A national survey conducted by the Danish Election Project shows that in the election for parliament in 2011, 19 per cent of the voters over 67 years old voted for the DPP. Among the voters between 52 and 66 years old 15 per cent voted for the DPP. The younger the voters are, the less they tend to vote for the DPP. Left-wing and centre-left parties are the most popular among the youngest age group with 54 per cent of the votes. The two largest parties in Denmark, the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party, are, however, still the most popular among the 18–36 year olds with 18 and 24 per cent of the votes in 2011 respectively, but both are less popular in this age group compared to the oldest category of voters.[19] Thus the young population in Nørrebro can serve as part of the explanation for the popularity of left-wing parties and the low support for DPP.[20]

Apart from being an area with many young people, Nørrebro is, as mentioned above, one of the most multicultural areas in Denmark. This may also explain why left-wing and centre-left parties are more

popular in Nørrebro. According to national survey statistics from the Danish research institute Catinét, only 4.2 per cent of the immigrants and descendants of immigrants participating in the survey would vote for the Liberal Party, the Conservatives and the DPP in total if there was an election the following day. The DPP would only get 0.6 per cent of the votes. The Red-Green Alliance, the Socialists People's Party, the Social Democrats and the Social Liberals would get 65 per cent of the votes.[21] The Social Democrats alone would get 44 per cent of the votes. Although these figures are on a national scale and produced from surveys conducted from 2002-2005, it seems fair to suggest little significant change in these statistics and that it also would apply for a place like Nørrebro.

These – young people and ethnic minorities – are two main demographic groups in Nørrebro, which to a large extent can explain why the DPP struggles in Nørrebro. Furthermore, young people and people from ethnic minorities also have an influence on the specific political atmosphere in Nørrebro.

In 1999, the Social Democrat Danish Prime Minister, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, said that the DPP in his eyes never would be »house trained« – implying that the views of the DPP would always be too extreme for them to be considered a legitimate party.[22] Many years have passed since then and with the popularity of the DPP and its political influence it seems that the DPP is generally perceived as a more legitimate party today. However, according to those within the DPP this is not always the case, especially with young people and people with an immigrant background in Nørrebro. Referring to people from ethnic minorities, former member of Nørrebro Local Council and resident of Nørrebro, and now spokesman on immigration and integration for the DPP, Martin Henriksen, describes Nørrebro as the only place where people will stop their cars and yell at him on the street: »In that way Nørrebro is a special place when you come from the DPP,« as he says. According to Henriksen there are areas in Nørrebro that you, as a member of the DPP, have to think twice before visiting, for example, areas with a predominantly Muslim

population like Mjølnerparken.[23] Henriksen explains that his election posters never get to stay up for long, though he insists on campaigning in the area. Benny Hygum, member of the DPP and Nørrebro Local Council, states that it is not only people with a Muslim background that can be said to still view the DPP as not »house trained«. According to Hygum, anarchist groups have been successful in creating an environment that predominantly attracts the ethnic Danish youth.[24] The DPP is their number one enemy. In this way, both young ethnic Danish residents of Nørrebro and residents with ethnic minority backgrounds of all ages contribute to a specific political atmosphere in Nørrebro, where the DPP are considered unwelcome and unacceptable.

Other demographic groups in Nørrebro also contribute to this atmosphere and it is not only the DPP who are considered unwelcome. Leslie Arentoft from the Liberal Party describes it as a political condition in Nørrebro that you, as a liberal politician, will be abused by certain residents of Nørrebro. He has had his ladder kicked away from under him while setting up election posters, been spat in the face and has been punched in a bar for being a member of the Liberal Party. Hygum calls these people who attack members of the DPP and liberal politicians »soldiers«. According to him, these are people who, at almost any cost, want to keep Nørrebro a place run by left-wing and centre-left parties and dominated by residents with these political values.

The next section will focus on 2001 to seek an explanation for why the DPP gained votes in that year's election – specifically on how actions of the extreme left-wing groups might have contributed to the DPP's successful election results.

The 2001-election

In the election in 1998 the DPP received 6.4 per cent of the votes in Nørrebro and in 2001 they received 8.1 per cent. However, the general election in 2001 revealed a move to the right in Nørrebro.[25] This section will

seek an explanation for this: why did the DPP gain votes in this election but have lost votes in Nørrebro ever since?

The attack on Danishness

In 1998, three years prior to the election, one of the most famous political incidents happened in Nørrebro – the attack on Pia Kjærsgaard by groups from the extreme left-wing. Three days after the attack a known left-wing political writer, Rune Engelbreth Larsen, wrote an article entitled *Apologies and Congratulation to Pia Kjærsgaard*.[26] In this article he apologized to Kjærsgaard on behalf of the left-wing for the attack on her. He also went on to congratulate Kjærsgaard and the right-wing for having stronger grounding from which to promote their tougher stance on criminal punishment. Søren Krarup, who at the time was a priest and member of the Danish Association and later became an MP for the DPP in 2001, followed some days later with an article entitled *A Stalwart Girl*.[27] He painted a picture of Pia Kjærsgaard as a brave woman who, whilst in enemy territory, stood up for her beliefs. Krarup turned the debate away from the extreme left-wing groups and to the immigrants groups; he depicted the attack on Kjærsgaard as an example of the consequences of immigration and multiculturalism. This was an environment in which a woman, such as Kjærsgaard, who stood firm on her right to be Danish and for Danish values, would be hunted down and thrown out of Nørrebro. This episode took place three years prior to the election, so to directly link the episode to the successful election for the DPP is probably a little tenuous, but Pia Kjærsgaard and the DPP might have benefited from the episode. Significantly, it enhanced the image of Kjærsgaard and the DPP as fighters for »true« Danishness and, equally, it represented Nørrebro as a part of Denmark ruled by »outlaws« and Islamic groups. Those politicians interviewed for this case study, including Martin Henriksen from the DPP, almost all agree that the attack ended up having a positive effect for the DPP and that it gained sympathy for Kjærsgaard. The attack might also have contributed to the image of Nørrebro as an

unsafe place. The Social Democrat chairman for the Local Council in Nørrebro, Kim Christensen, has lived in Nørrebro since the beginning of the 1980s. He suggests that the general unrest and demonstrations among the extreme left-wing groups in this period, for example in the events connected to the Youth House, also lead to residents of Nørrebro voting for the DPP because the party promised to put more police on the streets of Nørrebro and to reinstate a sense of security.

Another explanation for an increase in votes for DPP is that the 2001 election was regarded as an »immigrant-election«. One of the nationally most debated topics in the months up to the election was immigration. Significantly, the election was held only a few months after the September 11th terrorist attacks.[28] The DPP was the party with the strictest policy towards immigration and could capitalize on the global aftermath of the attacks. Immigration was also a main topic in Nørrebro before the election. Much of the debate in the media was directed towards the Muslim movement Hizb ut-Tahrir.[29] The movement held a meeting in Nørrebro where they allegedly called jihad a legitimate action and encouraged Muslims in Denmark not to vote. Kjærsgaard stated that the movement should be made illegal and other members from the DPP used the Hizb ut-Tharir meeting as an example of the radicalization among immigrants in Nørrebro.[30] Nørrebro was being associated with »the problems of immigration« by the DPP. Kim Christensen suggests that some residents of Nørrebro might have felt worried that many »strangers« were moving into their neighbourhood. They subsequently, voted for a party that promised to deal with their concerns. As immigration was one of the most debated themes in the 2001-election this might have been a key factor for the DPP's successful election, both on a national scale and in Nørrebro.

Framing the problems

The interviewees from other parties all tended to agree that the DPP has been a co-creator of a popular image of Nørrebro as an »un-Danish« place; overrun by Muslims and extreme left-wing groups. The media has

also contributed to this image. Many interviewees talk about how their relatives from other parts of Denmark express fear when they visit them in Nørrebro: they are afraid of walking on the streets at night and have questioned the interviewee on why they have chosen to live in such an »unsafe« area of Copenhagen. In recent years the debate on Nørrebro has focused on »gangs« who fight each other for the drug market. There have been shootings on the streets, which have been widely reported and contribute to the violent image of Nørrebro.

This is a contrast to the experience of the interviewees' everyday life in Nørrebro, who all express how safe they feel and say it is a nice place to live (although they all viewed the shootings as unacceptable). A main theme among the interviews was how the DPP has framed the gang related crime as a consequence of the problems with immigration and failed integration. Since 2001, Nørrebro has become more multicultural and as such it is an area that could be characterized by tensions between different ethnic groups – which would make the DPP's understanding of the gang related crime a plausible explanation. The election in 2001 also showed that anti-immigration views do exist among the residents of Nørrebro, so one could imagine that the DPP's views could gain further ground among the residents. This has, however, not been the case. A reason for this might be that most interviewees' tended to frame crime, such as gang related violence, as having its root causes in social conditions – and not a consequence of immigration and integration. This represents different stories of, or different ways of framing, multiculturalism which has consequences for how the specific problem of gang related crime should be handled.

The story of multiculturalism and everyday life in Nørrebro

A main theme in all interviews has been that the reality of the everyday life in the multicultural Nørrebro does not fit with the way the DPP

frames multiculturalism and their immigration policies. The official immigration policy of the DPP is »firm and fair«. Their focus is to limit immigration, especially from Muslim countries, and to assimilate the people with immigrant-backgrounds who already live in Denmark legally.[31]

The DPP want immigrants to assimilate to the Danish way of life, because they believe that people of different cultures cannot live peacefully together. This especially goes for Christians and Muslims. Marie Krarup from the DPP: »I do not believe that Christians and Muslims [...] can live peacefully together [...] because it is two fundamentally different ways to see the world, which cannot be reconciled.«[32] The DPP-rhetoric has constructed an »us vs. them«. The »them« is Islam, Muslim culture and Muslims who are seen as male chauvinists, against democracy and the Muslim culture as tyrannical and discriminatory. This image is in opposition to the image of »us«, represented by Danish and Christian values, freedom of speech and democracy.

The representation of »us vs. them« is what the DPP's version of the story of multiculturalism consists of. According to the DPP, Denmark can only integrate a limited number of immigrants, and areas with larger concentrations of people from ethnic minorities will be examples of the failures of multiculturalism. According to the DPP, Nørrebro is such an example. Martin Henriksen from the DPP explains that the left-wing and centre-left parties are wrong in claiming that Nørrebro is an example of how people of different cultures can live peacefully side by side and interact with each other – a version of the story of multiculturalism I will get back to. He points to the fact that Nørrebro in general is divided. One block or neighbourhood is populated by immigrants with Muslim backgrounds and other blocks are populated by ethnic Danes. According to him, people stick to their »own kind«, which reinforces parallel communities. Henriksen explains that the few ethnic Danes living in neighbourhoods populated by immigrants feel unsafe: »I have

visited some of the Danes that live in areas with many immigrants and they feel that there is a smear campaign towards them and they are verbally assaulted because they are Danish.« Referring to Kjærsgaard's article, »Give Us Back Nørrebro«, Henriksen says that it is fair to demand Nørrebro back from people who come from very different cultures and who he feels have »occupied« certain areas of Nørrebro. He emphasizes the division between ethnic Danes and immigrants in Nørrebro and suggests that when they do interact it often ends in conflicts and tensions. In this way, the »us vs. them« image that characterizes the DPP's story of multiculturalism on a national scale also fits into the DPP's version of the story of multiculturalism in Nørrebro.

However, it is important to note that there are differences between how the local representative of the DPP in Nørrebro, Benny Hygum, interprets multiculturalism and the official party policy. An example of this is whether or not mosques should be built in Denmark – a much debated topic. The official party policy is that there should not be any grand mosques in Denmark, but Hygum thinks that it is unacceptable to forbid mosques in Denmark as long as they follow existing building codes. This reflects what he calls a pragmatist attitude towards politics. He explains that he is not guided by ideology and, contrary to what many people think, the issue of immigration is not his main political agenda. He also explains that he enjoys disproving many of the negative assumptions people in Nørrebro have about the DPP, namely as a party obsessed with the politics of immigration. Whether intention or not, it seems that the DPP has a local politician in Nørrebro who is less strict and less ideologically oriented than many DPP politicians at the national level. Hygum's more pragmatic attitude might enable him to better manoeuvre in Nørrebro's left-wing and centre-left dominated political landscape. The pragmatic approach might also be an attempt to appeal more to voters in Nørrebro, in light of the specific demographic factors mentioned above. However, given that the DPP is losing votes in the area, this attempt appears unsuccessful.

The other story of multiculturalism

Even though Hygum does not have immigration on top of his political agenda, it is still one of the most debated issues in Nørrebro. The debate is often characterized by the DPP's version of the story of multiculturalism on the one side; and the Social Liberal Party's version on the other. According to Klaus Bondam, Social Liberal and former Mayor for the Employment and Integrations administration in 2010, the »us vs. them« rhetoric of the DPP does not fit the reality of Nørrebro. This loses them votes. People live in the middle of a multicultural area, and they make it work. According to him the vast majority of people from ethnic minorities are good and active citizens. Bondam talks about people in Copenhagen and in Nørrebro having an intercultural understanding that comes from living in an area where people of different cultures interact with each other.[33] This is for him the main reason for the DPP's low voter support in Nørrebro.

According to Bondam, and other interviewees, the DPP has, in an attempt to speak directly to potential voters, focused on the symbolic differences that are supposed to come from different cultures living together. For example, pool times for Muslim women, wearing a veil in the swimming pool and whether or not to serve halal-meat in institutions such as hospitals and kindergartens. Bondam's strategy on the other hand was to portray a different image of the multicultural society in Nørrebro and Copenhagen in general. Bondam was one of the main politicians behind the official integration policy from 2011-2014 in Copenhagen Municipality called »Get involved in the city« (Bland dig i byen). The policy brochure includes pictures of people from ethnic minorities in different situations that all tell a positive story:

> *In the brochure you can find a picture of a girl wearing a veil with her bicycle* [...] *we have a male child caretaker with an ethnic minority background, some young Somali boys with their high school graduation hats* [*studenterhuer*]*, an ethnic minority woman sitting at a bus stop. It was important for us to send those signals.*

Bondam explains that communication was very important to him. The brochure was a direct attempt to paint a positive image of the multicultural city and send certain signals, which oppose the DPP's story of multiculturalism. A central point of the official integration policy is that people in Copenhagen should interact with people who are different from them and that politicians should be active in the demolition and deconstruction of »hostile images«. This could be seen as an attempt to go against the »us vs. them« rhetoric of the DPP.

The Social Liberal Party's focus on the positives of the multicultural society and the great value of interaction across cultures has been criticized for neglecting the problems that might be caused by a large concentration of immigrants in specific areas. Bondam, who is no longer a member of the party or engaged in politics, acknowledges that there are problems with, for example, criminality and radicalization in areas such as Mjølnerparken in Nørrebro, but that these are not a direct consequence of having a »different« culture.[34] But he adds that he would not want the Social Liberal Party to be the only party making decisions in Denmark, because they sometimes can forget concrete problems and focus too much on an idealistic vision of how they want society to be. This mirrors the criticisms from the DPP candidate Hygum and from the Liberal Party's Leslie Arentoft. Arentoft criticizes the Social Liberals and other centre-left and left-wing parties for not being willing to take a stance against radical Muslim groups, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir, when they protest against the democratic political system. He is sure that had it been ethnic Danish neo-Nazis protesting, the left-wing would be more critical, but in order to preserve a positive image of the multicultural society they do not confront Hizb ut-Tahrir. Hygum criticizes the current Mayor for the Employment and Integrations administration, Anna Mee Allerslev from the Social Liberal Party, for neglecting the problems with criminality in Nørrebro. He suggests that she ignores gang related crime, and only focuses on portraying the multicultural Nørrebro in a positive image that fits the ideology of the Social Liberal Party. Hygum ironically states that

Allerslev is so proud of living in Nørrebro that she intentionally neglects that she lives in an area where people are shot in the head and stabbed.[35]

A Combination of Both?

The Social Liberal Party's story of multiculturalism is a version that focuses on the positive aspects of living in a diverse society. By doing this they create a counter image to that portrayed by the DPP.[36] Interviewees from other parties reveal this positive image whilst also showing an awareness of those who criticize this position for »neglecting reality«. A good example of this is Ninna Thomsen from the Socialist People's Party. Thomsen states that problems are not solved by constructing a »them vs. us« but by saying that everyone has a place in the community. By this she distances herself from the DPP, but according to her it is one of the main tasks of the political left-wing and centre-left to speak about the problems that exist and to deal with them. This is according to her the only way that these parties can overturn the success of the DPP on a national scale, and it is also how the parties on the left of the centre can show that they have an understanding of the worries that some of the residents in Nørrebro might feel. Ninna Thomsen lives in Nørrebro herself and has written an article in the newspaper *Politiken*, where she described her own experience of living in Nørrebro.[37] It is her strategy to show that she is a part of the same reality as everyone else in Nørrebro. In the interview with her she explains: »*The cliché about the left-wing that we have all the right opinions, but we live in some sort of a tower far away from reality where we don't relate to the problems that might exist in people's everyday life, this is important to go against.*« Thomsen's article's argues that gangs and related crime have too much influence on the everyday life of normal residents of Nørrebro and that this has to be dealt with.

Taking command of the story

Gang related crime in Nørrebro has been one of the most debated issues in the media and by politicians. The debate itself and how the

issue should be dealt with also function as a good example of how the DPP frames the story of multiculturalism and how it differs from the way other parties frame the story. This initially focuses on an event that made both national headlines and attracted the international media (such as the BBC).[38] In August 2012, a local café-owner in Nørrebro, Jane Pedersen, was confronted by men who demanded that she paid them »protection money« because her cafe was in »their area«. Jane refused to pay and hours later her windows were smashed by the same men. Jane became a local hero and was later voted Copenhagener of the Year by the newspaper *Politiken*.[39]

After the incident many politicians wanted to visit Jane at her café called Café Viking. Among the visitors were representatives from the Social Democrats, the Socialist People's Party and the Red-Green Alliance. Pia Kjærsgaard from the DPP also wanted to visit »Mama Jane«, as the locals' call her, but Jane refused to let Kjærsgaard visit her café. Jane's reason was that Kjærsgaard was a racist and that this was not a race related problem.[40] According to Kim Christensen from the Social Democrats and chairman of the Local Council in Nørrebro, the immediate response from the DPP after the attack on Café Viking was that this was a problem caused by the immigrants from Mjølnerparken. According to Christensen, the reason why Mama Jane did not want the DPP to visit her café, was that she had a more nuanced perspective of the gang related problems in Nørrebro and that she knew it was not an problem of immigration. Christensen emphasizes that gangs do not just consist of »blacks« but also of »whites«; therefore it is incorrect to reduce gang violence to an issue of race or culture.

Christensen and interviewees from the Social People's Party and the Red-Green Alliance all share the view that problems in Nørrebro, for example with gangs, are not caused by the fact that Nørrebro is multicultural and that people of different skin colours, religions and cultures live side by side. Instead, this relates to social conditions such as levels of education, unemployment and housing issues. The Liberal Party and

the Conservatives do in many ways agree with this. In an article in *Politiken* Leslie Arentoft explains that he believes that all integration projects in Nørrebro have failed in reducing gang related problems and should be shut down. He is backed up by Jacob Næsager from the Conservative People's Party who says that a reason for why the integration projects have not been successful in reducing gang related problems is that these problems are not solely caused by people from ethnic minorities but also ethnic Danes. The Liberal Party suggests saving money on integration projects and spending them on employment projects instead.[41] Even though the Social Democrats and the Social Liberals do not agree with cutting down on integration projects, the way of framing the gang related problems in Nørrebro, as something other than solely integration related, is similar for the left-wing, centre-left and centre-right parties.

Signe Færch from the Red-Green Alliance says that a main reason for the DPP's low voter support in Nørrebro compared to other places in Denmark is that they do not get to set the agendas that they are successful in doing elsewhere. She mentions that, elsewhere, the gang related problems in Nørrebro might have been framed by a »racist agenda«, but that the DPP are not successful in doing this in Nørrebro because residents know from living amongst each other that culture or race are not the reason behind the problems.

A general comment from the politicians interviewed is that the DPP are rather invisible in the political debate and negotiations in Nørrebro and insignificant in Copenhagen in general. This is of course a reflection of the voter support, which has minimized the DPP's political influence. It might however also reflect a political climate in Nørrebro that to some extent might be exclusionary of the DPP and other parties. According to Martin Henriksen from the DPP representatives from other parties who had argued against him in official political discussions sometimes would come over after the discussion and say they actually agreed with him on the issue discussed – implying that off the record other politicians would be less hostile towards the DPP. Leslie Arentoft from the Liberal

Party has also felt excluded in Nørrebro and described an episode where a local politician from the Socialists People's Party was shocked to see him, a liberal politician, at a panel discussion. Arentoft describes the attitude of some left-wing and centre-left politicians as if they have an ownership of Nørrebro. This provides some evidence that politicians from popular parties in Nørrebro exclude representatives from more unpopular parties. Popular parties, perhaps unsurprisingly, challenge this perspective. Instead, the relevant interviewees explained that their strategy has not been to exclude the DPP from the political debate, but rather to include them.

Whether or not the politicians in the debate exclude the DPP, the people living in the multicultural reality of Nørrebro seem to have excluded the DPP from the debate by not voting for them. The DPP's version of the story of multiculturalism seems to have been contrasted by the experienced reality of the different people of Nørrebro. According to the local journalist Thorsten Dam, different organizations and associations based in Nørrebro have a big influence on this positive image of multiculturalism. He says that these associations promote keywords such as »love«, »tolerance« and »curiousness« to create a positive atmosphere and image of the different cultures and people in Nørrebro. Dam gives the example of the association Antiracist Youth (Antiracistisk Ungdom) who reacted to a media debate about halal-meat causing tensions between Danish and Muslim communities by arranging a football tournament. At the event they served meat and food prepared according to all religious customs as a way to bring people together across cultures and religions.[42] Politicians from Nørrebro have also been part of bridging gaps between people of different cultures. Diversity Parties (Mangfoldighedsfest) have been arranged in Nørrebro, foremost by the Copenhagen Municipality with Klaus Bondam and Anna Mee Allerslev from the Social Liberal Party as central figures, along with a long list of civil associations. These events celebrate diversity between cultures and include different food stalls, music and other cultural arrangements.[43]

The fact that the Diversity Parties are arranged by the municipality indicates that Copenhagen Municipality politically accepts the multicultural character of the city. Civil associations and politicians actively work to facilitate a positive attitude towards the multicultural reality – which might be part of the explanation for why the DPP's version does not appeal to the voters in Nørrebro.

Concluding remarks

Since the DPP's first election in 1998, the party has only become more popular among the voters in Denmark. Recent polls show that the DPP might become the second largest party in Denmark in the next general election. This case study has explored reasons for why the DPP experiences low voter support in Nørrebro compared to the success the party experiences on the national level. Nørrebro is a part of Copenhagen that has a history of political activism. Extreme left-wing groups and anarchists have since the 1970s demonstrated against the »establishment« and been in several confrontations with the police. Nørrebro is also characterized by its ethnic minority population. It is one of the most multicultural areas in Denmark. Ethnic minorities as a large demographic group in Nørrebro, combined with the fact that Nørrebro is inhabited by many young people, serve as an explanation for why the DPP experiences very little voter support in Nørrebro, as statistically these groups tend not to vote for the DPP. The case study has also showed how both people from ethnic minorities and young ethnic Danes contribute to a political atmosphere where the DPP and liberal politicians are considered unwelcome and are attacked both verbally and physically. Pia Kjærsgaard was the victim of one of these attacks in 1998. This chapter has shown that this attack might have resulted in increased sympathy towards her and that this might have had an influence on the election in 2001, which was the only successful election for the DPP in Nørrebro. This election was, however, also characterized by the focus

on immigration on the national level. The interviewees suggested that this could also be an explanation for the DPP's successful 2001-election in Nørrebro, as people might have been worried about the »strangers« moving in to the area and therefore voted for the party with the strictest policy on immigration.

The attack on Kjærsgaard by extreme left-wing groups and young ethnic minorities had contributed to an image of Nørrebro to the general public as an unsafe place ruled by Muslims. This case study has shown how different images and different versions of the story of multiculturalism can contribute to the explanation of the DPP's unpopularity in Nørrebro. On the one hand, there is the DPP's version of the story of multiculturalism, which is characterized by the idea that people of different cultures cannot live peacefully side by side. This is especially the case for Muslims and Christians, who the DPP portray as a »them vs. us«-image. According to the interviewees from the DPP, Nørrebro is an example of all the negatives of multiculturalism, where Muslims and Christians live in different parallel communities and almost never interact. This is contrasted by the left-wing and centre-left politicians, who deliberately have told a positive story of multiculturalism. A strategy from these politicians has been to portray a positive image of the multicultural everyday life in Nørrebro and to encourage people of different cultures to interact with each other. They believe that this version of the story of multiculturalism resembles the experienced reality by the people of Nørrebro and that the problems in Nørrebro are not caused by people of different cultures living in the same area, but by social problems such as housing issues, education and unemployment.

Thus, an important strategy by the left-wing and centre-left politicians in Nørrebro, which might also be applicable in other areas, seems to be to combine the positive version of the story of multiculturalism with a clear agenda to solve the gang related problems in Nørrebro rather than neglecting them. This has been the critique of the left-wing and centre-left by the centre-right and right-wing parties. In other areas the

DPP might have been successful in framing issues of gang related crime as an immigration issue, as a left-wing interviewee says, but in Nørrebro they have not been able to do this. This chapter has shown that this can both be a result of other politicians not willing to collaborate with DPP-politicians, and of a political acceptance and celebration of the multicultural character of Nørrebro, illustrated by the Diversity Parties arranged by Copenhagen Municipality and different civil organizations who all help in facilitating a positive version of the story of multiculturalism.

In this way Nørrebro is an example of an area where the positive version of the story of multiculturalism has won over the negative version, which seems to be winning on the national level. On the national level, Nørrebro is often seen as an unsafe place marred by issues with immigration, but the problems in Nørrebro are dealt with as social issues rather than cultural ones. The different ways of framing crime-related issues are something to be learnt from the case of Nørrebro, as it is arguably one of the main reasons for the DPP's unpopularity. The politicians from the left-wing and centre-left, together with civil organizations, have actively created and communicated the advantages of living in an area with many people of different cultures, while still focusing on dealing with the concrete problems in the area. This strategy seems to be working.

Notes

1 My translation of Kjærsgaard's article »Give Us Nørrebro Back« published on DPP's website in 2003 (Giv os Nørrebro tilbage…): www.danskfolkeparti.dk (Visited August 5 2014).

2 The poll can be found on this website: http://www.b.dk/berlingskebarometer (Visited July 11 2014).

3 Andersen, J. G. and Bjørklund, T. (2000) 'Radical right-wing populism in Scandinavia: from tax revolt to neo-liberalism and xenophobia', in Paul Hainsworth (ed.) The Politics of the Extreme Right – From the margins to the mainstream. Printer. London; Brusgaard, A. (1996) Fremskridtspartiets histo-

rie – Folketingsgruppen 1973-1996. Fremskridtspartiet. København; Andersen, J. G. (2004) 'Danmark: Fremskridtspartiet och Dansk Folkeparti', in Jens Rydgren & Anders Widfeldt (eds.) Från Le Pen till Pim Fortuyn – Populism och parlamentarisk högerextremism i dagens Europa. Liber. Malmø.

4 Andersen and Bjørklund (2000).

5 This case study will use the following terms in placing the parties in question on a political left to right spectrum: The left-wing is the Red-Green Alliance. The centre-left parties are the Socialists People's Party, the Social Democrats and the Social Liberal Party. The centre-right parties are the Liberal Party and the Conservative People's Party. The right-wing is the DPP. The extreme left-wing and right-wing will be used as descriptions of political activists on each side of the spectrum.

6 Karpantschof, R. (2003) 'Højreradikalismen i Danmark – en politik model på historisk-sociologisk grund', Dansk Sociologi Vol. 14(3).

7 Art, D. (2006) The European Radical Right in Comparative-Historical Perspective. American Political Science Association, Philadelphia, August 31-September 3.

8 Andersen (2004).

9 See Karpantschof (2003); Andersen (2004).

10 All election statistics used in this case study is gathered from the Ministry of Economic and the Interior and Danish Statistic (Danmarks Statistik).

11 Andersen (2004).

12 Meret, S. (2010) The Danish People's Party, the Italian Northern League and the Austrian Freedom Party in a Comparative Perspective: Party Ideology and Electoral Support, SPIRIT Ph.D series, Aalborg: Aalborg University.

13 Schmidt, G. (2012) '»Grounded« politics: Manifesting Muslim identity as a political factor and localized identity in Copenhagen', Ethnicities 12: 603-622; Schmidt, G. (2012) 'Nørrebro and »Muslimness«: A Neighborhood Caught Between National Mythscape and Local Engagement' in Jørgen S. Nielsen (ed.) Islam in Denmark. Lexington Books. Maryland.

14 Statistics from Copenhagen Municipality. 18.2 per cent of the population under 40 years old are immigrants or descendants of immigrants. 12.6 per cent are from non-western countries.

15 Steensgaard, P. (2002) København – folk og kvarterer. Gyldendal: København

16 Interview conducted in relation to another project: http://www.rage-project.eu/.

17 Siim, B., Larsen, J.F. and Meret, S. (2013) Danish Populism: Hate Speech

and Populist Othering, Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University.

18 The parties are selected from the criteria that they have received a certain amount of votes over the years in Nørrebro and that they have run for each election since 1998.

19 Stubager, R. and Hansen, K. M. (2013) 'Social baggrund og partivalg', in Rune Stubager, Kasper Møller Hansen and Jørgen Goul Andersen (eds.) Krisevalg – Økonomien og folketingsvalget 2011. Jurist- og Økonomiforbundets Forlag: København.

20 The question of why young people are less inclined to vote for the DPP is not the focus of this study and therefore there is not scope to come with a qualified answer to this otherwise important question.

21 The figures are an average of three survey periods in January-June 2002, July-December 2004 and January-June 2005. The participants were from the following countries: Former Yugoslavia, Turkey, Pakistan, Somalia, Iran, Iraq and Palestine/Lebanon. See Mikkelsen, F. (2011) 'Denmark', in Karen Bird, Thomas Saalfeld and Andreas M. Wüst (eds.) The Political Representation of Immigrants and Minorities – Voters, parties and parliaments in liberal democracies. Routledge: Oxon.

22 Trads, D. (2002) Danskerne først! En historie om Dansk Folkeparti. Gyldendal: København K.

23 Mjølnerparken is a housing project in Nørrebro. In 2007 93 per cent of the 2124 residents in Mjølnerparken were immigrants or descendants of immigrants (Statistics from Copenhagen Municipality).

24 The relation between youths and the political atmosphere should be seen as lying in the fact that Nørrebro's population in general is characterized by many young people. Some of these might join anarchist groups while others might show their political values/preferences through more legitimate political means such as joining political parties or civil organizations, which will be dealt with below. It is also important to note that the youth in Nørrebro consists of both ethnic Danes and young people with an immigrant background. Although the majority of the youths are ethnic Danish this does not mean that the youths with immigrant background do not play a role in the demographic group that is young people in Nørrebro, as well as they play a role in the demographic groups that consists of people with an ethnic minority background.

25 Article from the newspaper Berlingske Tidende November 22, 2001: A move

to the right in Nørrebro. Found on www.infomedia.dk.

26 Article from the newspaper Information March 27th 1998: http://www.information.dk/18003 (Visited September 21 2014).

27 Article from the newspaper Jyllandsposten April 4th 1998. Found on www.infomedia.dk.

28 Trads, D. (2002); Andersen, J. G. (2002) Valgkampen 2001: Vælgernes politiske dagsorden. Arbejdspapir no. 12 from Det danske valgprojekt. Institut for Økonomi, Politik og Forvaltning, Aalborg Universitet.

29 Hizb ut-Tahrir was formed in 1953 in Jerusalem. In Denmark, according to their Scandinavian website, they work to protect the identity of the Muslims by informing and cultivating Muslims with Islamic thoughts. http://www.hizb-ut-tahrir.dk/content.php?contentid=459 (Visited August 5 2014).

30 Article examples of this debate: MP from the DPP, Per Dalgaard, in Jyllands-posten, November 1st 2001. Pia Kjærsgaard in Ritzaus Bureau, October 25th 2001.

31 Siim, Larsen and Meret (2013).

32 Siim, Larsen and Meret (2013).

33 In Nørrebro there are different civil organizations that focus on facilitating cross cultural interaction. This will be dealt with below.

34 Bondam quit Danish politics in the end of 2010 to become director at The Danish Cultural Institute in Brussels. In the campaign for the municipal election in 2009 Bondam proclaimed that he would do what was in his power to keep the DPP from getting a mayoral position in Copenhagen. He became mayor for the Employment and Integrations administration, but did so because he formed a coalition with the DPP and the Liberal Party. This meant that the DPP got some central committee posts, but no positions as mayor. In this way he kept his promise, but also helped the DPP to political influence. Many other members of the Social Liberal Party saw this as a misleading of Social Liberal voters. In the interview with Bondam he states that this in the end cost him his political career.

35 It has not been possible to interview Anna Mee Allerslev for this case study.

36 It is important to point out that Anna Mee Allerslev together with Ninna Thomsen from the Socialist People's Party have presented different solutions to combat the gang related problems in Nørrebro, under the headline Let's take back Nørrebro! Article from March 13 2013 http://blogs.jp.dk/forandring-framidten/2013/03/13/lad-os-tage-n%C3%B8rrebro-tilbage/ (Visited August 5 2014).

37 The article is from April 13 2013. http://politiken.dk/debat/debatindlaeg/ECE1943704/borgmester-banderne-styrer-min-bydel/ (Visited August 5 2014).
38 BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19776420 (Visited August 5 2014).
39 2200N http://2200n.dk/2013/05/03/jane-pedersen-kaaret-til-arets-kobenhavner/ (Visited August 5 2014).
40 2200N http://2200n.dk/2012/08/24/pia-kjarsgaard-afvist-fra-cafe-viking/ (Visited August 5 2014).
41 Politiken http://politiken.dk/indland/politik/ECE1925310/venstre-om-bandeproblemet-nedlaeg-alle-integrationsprojekter-paa-noerrebro/ (Visited August 5 2014).
42 2200N http://2200n.dk/2013/08/15/antiracistisk-dag-byder-paa-bade-halal-og-svine-hotdogs/ (Visited August 5 2014).
43 Københavns Kommune http://www.kk.dk/da/brugbyen/find-arrangement/mangfoldighedsfest (Visited August 5 2014).

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Andersen, J. G. (2002) »Valgkampen 2001: Vælgernes politiske dagsorden.« Arbejdspapir no. 12 from Det danske valgprojekt. Institut for Økonomi, Politik og Forvaltning, Aalborg Universitet

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Schmidt, G. (2012) »Nørrebro and 'Muslimness': A Neighborhood Caught Between National Mythscape and Local Engagement«, in Jørgen S. Nielsen (ed.) Islam in Denmark. Lexington Books. Maryland

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Chapter 7

The Swedish Exception and the Case of Landskrona

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Introduction

Whilst populist anti-immigration parties were gaining electoral support in a wide range of European countries from the 1980s and onwards, Sweden was looking remarkably resilient against this new party family. Apart from the short-lived New Democracy, no anti-immigration party managed to gain enough support to get any seats in parliament. As a result, Sweden has been described as the exception to the trend of increasing support for anti-immigration parties.

However, the election of 2010 broke the spell and saw the entrance of the populist, anti-immigration party the Sweden Democrats (SD) on the parliamentary political scene. SD gained 5.7 per cent of the votes, which gave them 20 seats in the Swedish parliament *Riksdagen*. They came fifth in the European Parliament elections in May 2014 with 9.7 per cent of the votes and in the September 2014 general election, they more than doubled their share of the votes to 12.9 per cent, 49 seats, and became the third largest party.

SD is gaining popularity amongst Swedish voters overall, but their support base has traditionally been located in the south. In Landskrona, a post-industrial harbour city, SD got their highest share of votes in the local elections in 2006; 22 per cent, which gave them 12 council seats. In the following election, however, SD saw their biggest electoral loss in Landskrona, gaining 16 per cent of the vote and losing 3 of their seats. It was in fact the only of three municipalities where SD lost votes in the 2010 election. In 2014, they increased again, taking two additional seats, though they did not get up to their 2006 levels of support.

This case study focuses on Landskrona and the elections of 2006 and 2010. It asks how immigration was debated during and in between these two elections and whether this can explain part of the fading support for SD. It consists of an interview study of key political actors in Landskrona and draws on their experiences of talking about

immigration in the context of a strong presence of a populist anti-immigration party. I will argue that the key differences between the elections 2006 and 2010, and the main reasons why SD lost support in the latter election, are that voters were satisfied with the incumbents in 2010 and that issues of criminality and social deprivation were not primarily framed as an immigration issue in 2010, which it was in 2006.

The Sweden Democrats

The Sweden Democrats were formed in 1988 from the neo-Nazi organisation Keep Sweden Swedish (BSS). In 1996, the party banned the wearing of uniforms and in 1999 it denounced Nazism. In 2005, Jimmie Åkesson, the current party leader of SD, was elected.

SD won their first seats in two municipalities in 1991. Thereafter, they steadily increased their presence in local politics in Sweden, from 2 council seats in 1991, to 609 in 2010 and 1324 in 2014. SD has actively sought to build their political leverage from a strong local presence, partly inspired by the strategy of French Front National, and has been particularly focused on the south of Sweden.

Their main agenda has been to oppose immigration. While it is often described as a far-right party, it in fact places to the left of all the centre-right government coalition parties on an economic left-right scale.[1] However, on social issues, it is the most conservative amongst parliamentary Swedish parties.

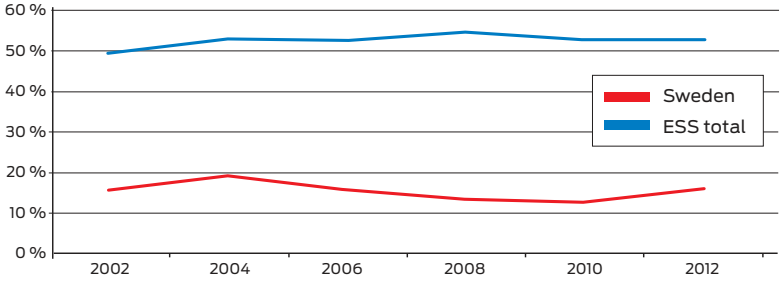
Despite having worked extensively on ridding itself of its racist past, the party still ran the 2010 election campaign with highly xenophobic policies, rhetoric and advertisement. Since being elected, the party has also been marred with several scandals involving leading figures of the party expressing both racism and violent behaviour. Nonetheless, they have proved remarkably resilient in the face of such scandals and have continued to grow.

Why has Sweden been, and why is it no longer, the exception?

Up until the election in 2010, Sweden had not experienced the establishment of an anti-immigration party apart from the brief period between 1991 and 1994 when neo-liberal, populist New Democracy was elected to *Riksdagen*. Sweden's Scandinavian neighbours Norway and Denmark had seen anti-immigration parties play an increasingly central role in national politics since the 1970s and 1990s, respectively. Yet, Swedish voters did not seem interested in allowing a party strongly opposed to immigration to enter the legislature. Why was this the case?

One explanation may be that Swedish people express far more positive attitudes towards immigration than elsewhere in Europe (Figure 1). Attitudes have also become more positive over the last couple of decades (albeit with a slight increase in negative attitudes since 2012).[2] These comparatively positive attitudes to immigration held by the Swedish population could explain the absence of an anti-immigration party. However, negative attitudes to immigration are still strong in public opinion, with 45 per cent wanting a reduction of refugees to Sweden in 2012.[3] Swedish attitudes are positive in a comparative perspective, but this is to some extent due to the overwhelmingly negative views held by people in other European countries, not to the overtly positive attitudes held by Swedes. So a demand for a party with anti-immigration policies has always existed, but that is not enough for an anti-immigration party to be successful.[4]

Figure 1. Allow none or a few immigrants from poorer countries



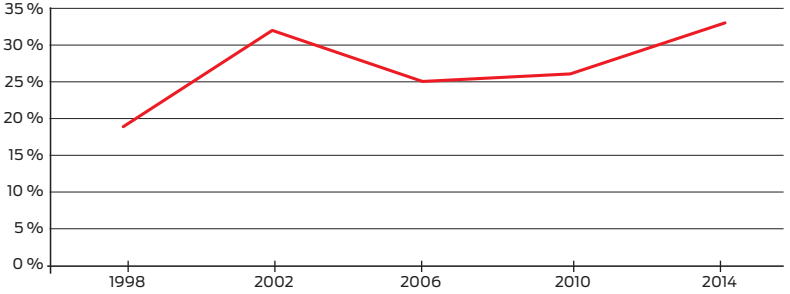
Data source: ESS1-2002 ed. 6.3, ESS2-2004, ed.3.3, ESS3-2006, ed.3.4, ESS4-2008, ed.4.2, ESS5-2010, ed.3.1, ESS6-2012, ed.2.0

Another explanation for the Swedish »exceptionalism« is the stability of socio-economic issues on the political agenda.[5] Immigration has not determined how Swedes cast their votes. Moreover, despite being in decline, class voting remains high in Sweden.[6] Similarly, union membership is comparatively high, underlining the continued importance of class voting patterns in Sweden, albeit this is also in decline. Jens Rydgren consequently maintains that immigration issues have not been politicized in Sweden, compared to for example neighbouring Denmark.[7]

Immigration was mainly politicized, or made politically salient, in three elections: in 1991, when New Democracy was elected, in 2002, when the Liberal Party (FP) proposed the introduction of a language test for citizenship, and in 2010, when SD entered *Riksdagen*. Yet, immigration was not a dominant issue in any of these elections. Furthermore, it is unclear whether recent politicisation of immigration issues in Sweden is an explanation of the rise of SD, or in itself an effect of the success of SD.[8] In addition, immigration was not a prominent issue in the 2006 election, where SD nonetheless did well compared to their previous results.[9]

However, in 2014, when SD made their largest gains to date in a national election, immigration was yet again high on the political agenda. According to the exit poll Valu, immigration was slightly more important to voters in 2014 than it was in 2002 (Figure 2). However, it is only amongst SD voters immigration is the number one issue. All others rank it far lower. Voters of the Feminist Initiative come closest, their voters rank immigration as the sixth most important issue, but that is based on a distinctly pro-immigration agenda. On the other hand, 17 per cent of voters think SD has the best immigration policies, indicating their potential, but also highlighting that some who are attracted by SD's immigration policies nonetheless base their decision of who to vote for on other issues. Thus increased salience of immigration issues on the political agenda plays a role in boosting support for SD and the

Figure 2. Refugees/immigration very important issue in the election



Data source: Valu (2014), p. 9.

fact that immigration has not been, and still is not, that important to Swedish voters help explain why they have not gained even more electoral support.

Generally there has been consensus on immigration issues in Sweden, at least between the two main parties the Social Democrats (S) and the liberal-conservative Moderates (M). This may have helped keeping the issue of immigration outside of the main political discourse and in this way prevented any mobilisation around immigration. Following the liberalisations of labour migration policy introduced by the centre-right coalition government (2006-2014) with the support of the Green party, the consensus appears to have been broken.[10]

Nevertheless, even given the chance, a populist anti-immigration party that is seen as illegitimate will probably not be able to credibly politicize (increase the salience of) immigration issues. Therefore, immigration as to be politicized and legitimised by established parties, which a party like SD can proliferate from. Timo Lochocki has argued that, in the case of Sweden, it was the Liberal Party (FP) that increased the salience of immigration related issues on the political agenda in 2002 and 2012.[11] Lochocki argues that it was FP's more conservative policy suggestion of introducing a language test for citizenship that created the opportunity for SD to mobilise around immigration issues, notwithstanding that in the subsequent years FP went back to promoting a mainly liberal and pro-immigration agenda.[12] In fact, he claims that it

was precisely the fact that once politics had been opened to a more conservative immigration agenda, none of the established parties actually offered such position, leaving the field open for SD.[13]

Furthermore, the effect of the previous consensus was probably strengthened by the *cordon sanitaire* that prevailed before the election in 2010, meaning that none of the established parties were engaging with SD.[14] This proved an effective strategy so long as immigration issues were not politicised, but has clearly reached its limit. One influential argument is that the demand for an anti-immigration party has not been filled simply because there has been a lack of supply – there has not existed a credible political party to take advantage of the sentiments amongst voters. As outlined above, SD is a party that sprung from the extreme right and national-socialist movements. As opposed to New Democracy, which was mainly a populist party, SD has a much more troubled past and, to some extent, present. There was long a stigma attached to SD, probably maintained partly because of the dismissive strategy of the established parties. The supply-side argument is also strengthened by studies arguing that SD's success in municipalities can be explained by whether they were present with a local organisation (which they measure by whether they stood with a formal ballot or not).[15]

It may therefore be argued that SD simply is a more credible party at present, with a greater ability to mobilise voters. Under new leader Jimmie Åkesson, the party has tried to rid itself of its racist past and made efforts to build a more stable political organisation. As they become normalized, and the stigma around them disappear, it is possible that a dismissive strategy spurs their anti-establishment and »martyr« positioning. Another popular explanation for the Swedish »exceptionalism« was the comparatively high satisfaction with democracy in Sweden.[16] While there have not been any major changes in this regard and trust in political parties may even have increased, de facto trust in politicians is still low.[17] SD can play on these sentiments by portraying themselves

as the outsider and this may be exacerbated by the established parties' unwillingness to engage with them.

Lastly, have the relatively high levels of immigration to Sweden since the 1970s contributed to the rise of SD? Given that immigration to Sweden has increased over four decades and we have only recently witnessed the success of an anti-immigration party, this does not seem to be the case. Generally, levels of immigration cannot explain the rise of populist parties.[18] We might want to consider that the change in numbers contribute to increasing the salience of issues related to immigration. This seems to have been the case in the UK.[19] Three studies have looked at factors that may explain support for SD at the local level.[20] Though the results of these studies vary slightly, generally it seems that support for SD is stronger in municipalities where the presence of non-Nordic migrants is higher. Hence, while relatively high levels of immigration do not determine support for an anti-immigration party like SD, we cannot completely disintegrate the question of immigration levels and popular demand for an anti-immigration party, or at least the opportunity for an anti-immigration party to mobilize around immigration issues. As this case study will point out, this seems to some extent to be the case in Landskrona, which has both some of the highest levels of immigration and the strongest support for SD in the country.

To sum up, Sweden has long been seen as the exceptional case to a trend of growing support for populist anti-immigration parties (growing at least up until the 2000s). This may have been due to a number of factors, such as a clear focus on socio-economic issues, continued relevance of class-based voting, high satisfaction with how democracy works, a dismissive strategy of the Sweden Democrats and a consensus on immigration issues amongst the main mainstream political parties. The rise of SD may consequently be explained by the politicisation of immigration, decreasing consensus on immigration issues, low trust in politicians and the same dismissive strategy working within a new context of higher political salience of immigration.

Next, I turn to the specific case of Landskrona and the elections of 2006 and 2010. This part is based partly on qualitative interviews with key political actors in Landskrona from all the main political parties. Six interviews were conducted: Cecilia Lindell (M), Niklas Karlsson (S), Stefan Olsson (SD), Henning Süssner Rubin (V), Torkild Strandberg (FP) and Mikael Brandt, journalist at Helsingbords Dagblad, editor of the Landskrona section (previously Landskrona Posten, LP).[21]

Landskrona

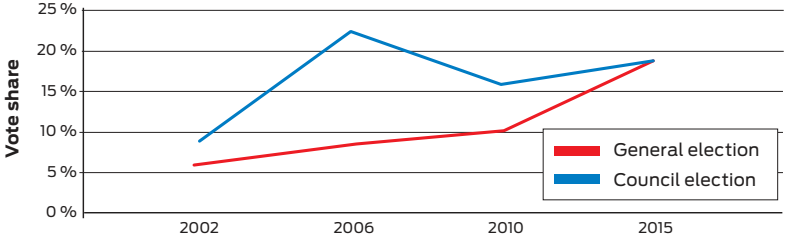
The south of Sweden, the region of Skåne, has traditionally had several smaller so called protest parties present in local councils. Locally SD has been feeding off the support base of these parties.

Landskrona is traditionally a stronghold for the Social Democratic party (S), but was governed by the »trefoil«, consisting of the Liberal Party (FP), the Moderates (M) and the Green Party (MP) up until the 2014 election. The Liberal Party has found in Landskrona its strongest local support base in the country. In 2002, SD took their first seats in Landskrona 2006 and saw a landslide increase of their support, giving them 12 seats, equal to FP and only second to the biggest party, (S). While

Table 1. Council Seats Allocation Landskrona

	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014
V	4	4	2	2	2
S	22	20	17	19	18
MP	2	1	1	2	2
FP	3	8	12	15	14
C					
KD		2			
M	13	10	7	5	4
SD		4	12	9	11
FrP	4				
SPI	3	2			

Figure 3. SD election result in Landskrona



Data source: Valmyndigheten.

they lost three seats in the following election, a rarity in their otherwise steady increasing presence in Swedish politics, they nonetheless remain one of the main political players in Landskrona and regained another two seats in 2014. Landskrona voters also keep supporting them in general elections, as shown in Figure 3. Thus while this is a story of a municipality that witnessed the rise and fall of SD, the fall is not in fact so much of a fall as a slight cooling off from exceptionally high levels of support.

A return to business as usual?

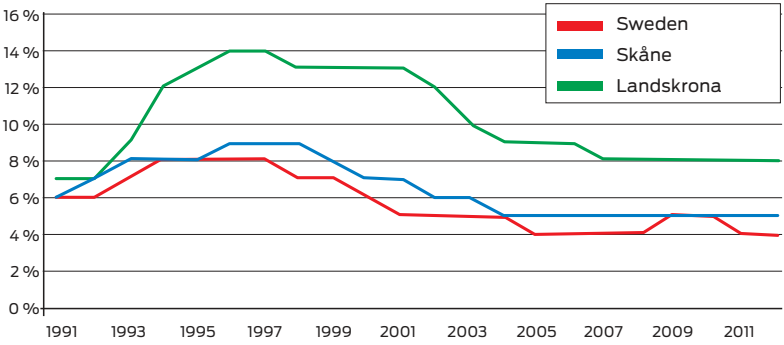
The drop in support for SD in 2010 should be seen to some extent as a natural return from an extraordinary result in 2006. As several of the interviewees point out, the 2006 election was very much an election against the ruling Social Democrats. Past electoral support for SD at the municipality level tends to increase support for the party in subsequent elections,[22] but the election in Landskrona in 2006 should to some extent be seen as an anomaly. Similarly, SD generally did worse in municipalities where the left parties had had more support in the previous election.[23] Again, this was not the case in Landskrona, which should be seen against the backdrop of the dissatisfaction with the incumbent Social Democrats. Niklas Karlsson, former head of the council for S, makes this comment about SD voters in 2006: »They weren't racist. Or fascist. They were dissatisfied. They saw a society that was changing, that they couldn't recognise. It was a cry for help.«

Demographics

There are some key demographics that undoubtedly contribute to SD's popularity in the municipality. Generally, the level of education in a municipality is a very strong predictor of support for SD.[24] In Landskrona, the level of education amongst the population is low compared to the national average. Moreover, SD is stronger in municipalities with higher unemployment rates and lower Gross Regional Product (GRP) per capita.[25] Again, these are features that characterise Landskrona. Not only is unemployment higher compared to the national average, it is also higher than in most other municipalities in Skåne and has been so for several years. Unemployment amongst the foreign born is also higher than the national average, at 16.1 per cent, against 13.2 per cent in Skåne and 11.4 per cent in the country as a whole in June 2014.[26] Youth unemployment is also higher than average, though youth unemployment amongst the foreign born is actually lower than the national average. Income levels, on the other hand, do not seem to matter in terms of support for SD.[27]

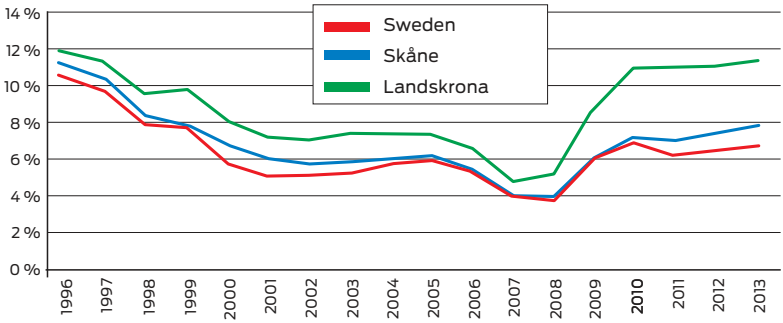
However, it is worth emphasising that demographics cannot account for why SD lost votes in 2010. There has not been any notable change or improvement of socio-economic factors between 2006 and 2010, so the voter base for SD was the same in 2010. In fact, a study by Jens Rydgren and Patrick Ruth shows that these variables become more pronounced

Figure 4. Share of population on welfare benefits



Data source: Socialstyrelsens statistikdatabas 2014-06-01.

Figure 5. Share of unemployed, 16–64 years



Data source: Arbetsförmedlingen statistikdatabas 2014-06-01.

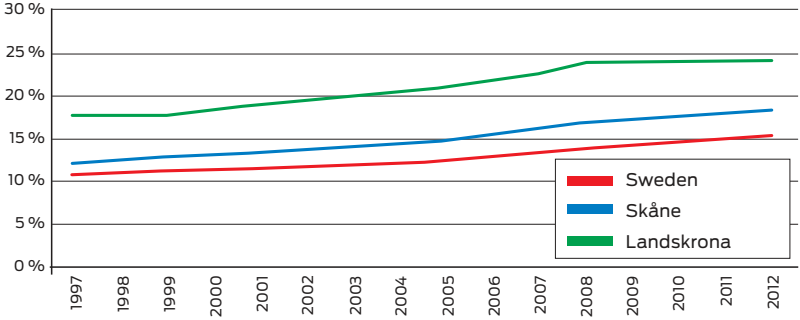
in the 2010 election compared to 2006, so if anything support for SD should have increased in Landskrona if these variables were the main explanatory factor.[28] In addition, these factors were not significantly »worse« in 2006 compared to previous years, as shown by Figures 4 and 5 – if anything they were seemingly better during the years when SD was most successful.

Immigration to Landskrona

In terms of the presence of people with a non-Swedish background, as discussed above, a study by Carl Dahlström and Anders Sundell shows that, at the local level, more non-Nordic immigrants is correlated with higher support for SD.[29] Rydgren and Ruth also found that presence of immigrants from EU/EFTA increased the support for SD.[30] In 2006, 28.4 per cent of those living in Landskrona had a background in a country outside of Sweden, most of who had a background in, and were themselves born, in countries outside of Scandinavia. Landskrona is amongst the municipalities in Sweden with the highest share of immigrants of the population and the share is much higher than for the country as a whole, as shown in Figure 6.

Immigrants in Sweden have in the last three decades generally had difficulties on the labour market. The employment gap between the

Figure 6. Share of foreign born of population



Data source: SCB statistikdatabas 2014-06-01.

native and the foreign born is bigger in Sweden than in many comparable countries. This gap is even bigger in Landskrona. Among the politicians, many emphasize that the historic openness of Landskrona was characterized by the demand for labour in the shipyard industry, which closed down in the early 80s. In the 1950s–70s, there was relatively high immigration to Landskrona from Finland and to some extent from former Yugoslavia.[31] Nordic and West European immigration was subsequently replaced by refugees from countries from former Yugoslavia. While in 1990, 7.5 per cent of the population was born in Scandinavia and West Europe and 4.9 per cent in Eastern Europe, in 2006 the Scandinavian and Western Europe born share of the population had decreased to 6.8 per cent and the Eastern European share increased to 14.8 per cent. Torkild Strandberg argues that support for SD may be rooted in concerns about the lack of integration of immigrants in Landskrona, following the relatively rapid change in the composition of the population:

> *»Landskrona's roots are to be an open an a working city. Landskrona has been a strong and very successful industrial city, where during long periods this has been built with a very open attitude to immigration when it comes to labour migration. We have lost the ability, together with the diminishing of the size of the industry, to a working integration. It looks completely different now compared to*

30, 40 years ago, but the volumes, the number of people who arrive from outside and move in are still on very high levels. Yet integration, and it really mirrors what it looks like in many places in the country, works really poorly. Of course, this breed questions, an irritation and a frustration. It's a bit too simple to say that people are hostile to immigration, however everyone can agree that the politics of integration that we have in Sweden is working a lot worse than you should expect.«

Another feature of immigration in Landskrona is that, whereas in most cities deprived and ethnically segregated areas tend to be located in suburbs, in Landskrona they are right in the centre of town. Cecilia Lindell:

»You experience a strong presence of people with a different skin colour, a different language, nothing proper to do during the days, and this is in the middle of town. It becomes very obvious for the old schools, those who have worked at the shipyard and always done their duty, and then those people mooch about and look strange. [...] *There are almost as many immigrants in Helsingborg, but there they are not in the middle of town.«*

Ethnic segregation has increased sharply in Landskrona the last couple of decades. Tapio Salonen has measured ethnic segregation in Landskrona 1990 – 2006 and concludes that it increased with over 80 per cent during the time period, which is higher than Malmö, Skåne and Sweden as a whole.[32] Moreover, while segregation has stabilized in other parts of Sweden, it kept increasing in Landskrona. »A quarter of the population in Landskrona in 2006 thus lived in a poor, immigrant dense area compared to a tenth of the population at the beginning of the 1990s«.[33]

Attitudes to immigrants tend to be more positive when people have

contact with immigrants. However, these contacts also need to be meaningful, which does not seem to be the case in Landskrona. A local survey shows that attitudes to immigration is by far more negative in Landskrona than in other parts of Sweden, and even in other comparable (for example, in terms of share of immigrants) local municipalities.[34] It may therefore be the case that the social issues that have become more concentrated amongst immigrants in Sweden in general, have been much more visible in Landskrona than elsewhere, and this image rather than any meaningful interactions have coloured the image of immigration, breeding hostility. In one part of Landskrona, Sandvången, SD had its strongest electoral support in 2006 with 40 per cent of the votes. Sandvången is not one of the more immigrant dense areas, though income levels are generally low.[35] This confirms the picture that perhaps those most hostile to immigration are those in near proximity, but who have few meaningful inter-ethnic contacts themselves.

In addition, as I discuss below, the general consensus on immigration prevalent amongst the established parties in Landskrona is primarily of a restrictive kind. Therefore, it may be argued that no one has offered a countering, more positive, image of immigration, than the one connecting immigration with social problems. This may not have offered particularly favourable conditions for SD, as there was no pro-immigration established position to challenge, though it may have legitimized an anti-immigration agenda as such.

Criminality, the Media and Immigration

Although the evidence is not conclusive, higher crime rates seem to increase the support for SD.[36] Crime rates are on average higher in Landskrona than in other parts of Sweden.[37] Crime rates in Landskrona have, however, been falling during the 2000's and were already falling in most respects (notably, violent crime was not decreasing) before the 2006 election. The key to understanding the 2006 election, as well as

the 2010 one, is however how much the debate came to revolve around questions about criminality. And even when it was not made explicit, these questions were closely associated with immigration.

Many have blamed the success of SD in 2006 on the local newspaper Landskrona Posten (LP). Several months before the election, they initiated a series of articles on youth criminality. While the paper did not make an explicit connection between immigration and crime, such association was already there, meaning that the focus on crime rates during the election very likely was experienced as a focus on immigration. For example, in 2003 the police in Landskrona published a list of the 50 most criminal youths in Landskrona. 49 of the youths on the list had a foreign background, most Albanians from Kosovo.[38] In 2006, the paper had an article interviewing a group of Albanian youths with a criminal record. The much criticised heading consisted of a quote from one of the youths, saying »Violence is in our blood.«[39]

Niklas Karlsson explains how important the debate about criminality became in the 2006 election:

> *»I once went to a meeting with 100 pensioners and I expressed myself a bit foolishly. I said that all criminality in Landskrona is decreasing, and then I couldn't continue. I said it three times and finally I said that you have to calm down, let me finish. All criminality in Landskrona is decreasing, apart from violent crime. Obviously I should have said it the other way around: violent crime hasn't decreased and that's a problem. But it illustrates what the atmosphere was like. And in this the Liberal Party and the Sweden Democrats grew.«*

Karlsson is careful to point out that the Liberal Party did not make the connections between crime and immigration. Gathering from the interviews, it seems like neither did SD, or at least they were not that present in the debate. Looking at some of the responses from the read-

ers of LP shows clearly that they did not need to, the connection was already there. These are but a few examples of the readers' reactions:[40]

> *You can't help but to get angry when you hear about how these cowardice boys glorify their sick violent behaviour. Society needs to send the signal that the idolisation of violence they've brought with them to Sweden isn't accepted here. If you're not interested in behaving and fitting in your new country that has welcomed you as a refugee, then you might as well carry on somewhere else.* ***»Angry citizen«***

> *I think we should have a new law which says that the person in question gets one chance, thereafter they will immediately be sent back with their whole family to their home country.* ***»Angry«***

> *I feel sorry for those who behave well and get a bad reputation. There are plenty of Kosovo-Albanians who don't like these youth either, they destroy so much for us. To Jesper, Anders and Erik who have been affected by the gangs I want to say: we are many who believe in you and I hope that you are strong enough to report to the police.* ***»Upset Kosovo-Albanian«***

> *I have thought many times that perhaps it would be better to deport people with an immigrant background who on repeated time commit crimes. Not just to get rid of the problem, but also to protect those immigrants who live a decent life in Sweden. I don't think it will be many years before a xenophobic party is knocking on the door to Riksdagen, horrid thought.* ***»Peter«***

The Liberal Party and their front man, Torkild Strandberg, have been mostly associated with a strong, conservative, stance on crime. FP was also the party that not only gained in 2006, but also in 2010 and

then at the expense of SD. A local opinion poll from 2010 confirms that on average criminality was still the main issue of concern for voters in Landskrona.[41] However, this was only the case for those who voted for either SD or FP. Criminality was thus a high priority even in the 2010 election, but there seems to be two main differences that help explain why SD went back in 2010.

Firstly, while focus was on crime in both elections, the connection between criminality and immigration was less pronounced in 2010. Several of those interviewed confirm this – from Henning Süssner Rubin, from the Left party (V) to Stefan Olsson, from SD.

Secondly, the newly elected council leadership, headed by Strandberg, used a strong rhetoric and implemented policies aimed at reducing crime, seemingly appreciated by voters. Strandberg has become known as pragmatic politician who »gets things done« and who is not afraid to speak frankly. Even though crime rates had not actually decreased in 2010 (and recall that they were already decreasing in 2006), there was a perception that things were happening in Landskrona to deal with the problems and that FP was part of that solution. Thus as opposed to the 2006 election, there was no dissatisfaction with the incumbents on core political issues. Because focus was less on immigration, there was also less reason to vote for SD if one cared about crime, which voters for both parties did.

In addition, as already discussed, no party in Landskrona, apart from possibly the Left party, has a pro-immigration agenda. In fact, there is quite a lot of consensus on these issues amongst the main parties and some, like FP, may come across as more restrictive than their party on a national level, though ultimately immigration is not a question that is determined in local councils. A voter that is against immigration and concerned with crime, may therefore not have to worry about a pro-immigration agenda if they cast their vote on FP, which at the end of the day is still a more socially accepted party to vote for.[42] Henning Süssner Rubin puts forward this argument:

»Torkild Strandberg doesn't talk as a Sweden Democrat. He would never in his life think about saying something bad about immigrants. People are fully aware of why they support what he is doing, but that's a different matter.«

Stefan Olsson himself admits that FP is SD's main rival: »It is difficult to compete with FP. They push for similar issues; to develop Landskrona, get Landskrona going. They increased three seats and we went back three.«

In conclusion, the main difference between 2006 and 2010 was that, while both elections had crime rates as a key focus, the debate in 2006 was far more aggravated and with a much clearer connection to immigration. Cecilia Lindell describes some of the headlines in 2006 as »war headlines«, painting a picture of everything being disastrous. Torkild Strandberg makes a similar observation: »Landskrona was a very angry city in 2006. An angry population who very strongly wanted change. Landskrona was a more harmonious city with a more harmonious population in 2010 and I think that expressed itself in the election results.« Moreover, even though it is impossible to evaluate the actual policies that the »trefoil« implemented (mostly with the support of SD), voters seem to see Strandberg as a credible politicians to meet their concerns about crime. Focusing on issues that are the concern of SD voters, but avoiding talking about immigration as such, therefore seems like a way to win over their voters, in particular in a political climate where there is already a consensus on restrictive immigration policies.

The Sweden Democrats in Landskrona

The Sweden Democrats have become increasingly accepted in Landskrona and are mainly not treated differently by the other main parties. Hence, there is no case of isolation, as discussed above as a potential contributing factor to the success of SD in Sweden in recent years.

Moreover, the media picture has changed as well. Cotal San Martin, who has analysed two local and one national newspaper during the 2002 and 2006 elections in Landskrona, note that while in 2002 SD was often described as »the xenophobic Sweden Democrats«, in 2006 they were simply labelled as »the Sweden Democrats«.[43] However, as on the national level, SD seems to have made an effort to move away from its racist past and reputation. Most agree that they do not push a strong anti-immigration agenda in Landskrona, short of wanting halal meat banned in schools. Not only are SD in Landskrona, in particular since they got their new leader Stefan Olsson in 2006, careful not to express anything that may be interpreted as racist, but they also do not put issues specifically related to immigration on the agenda. Questions regarding culture generally do not seem to be very prominent in Landskrona, but immigration is more related to issues of social deprivation. In theory, this should not work to SD's advantage, as they rely on the politicisation of immigration.

SD's lack of proliferation of immigration issues may be due both to the fact that immigration policies are mainly decided on the national level, but also that there is more or less consensus in Landskrona on immigration policy. While on the national level there is also such consensus, but in favour of relatively open immigration policies, in Landskrona the consensus is around a restrictive approach. This is manifested, for example, in opposition to the settlement of unaccompanied migrant children in the municipality. Due to a national policy change, this issue was recently on the agenda, as Cecilia Lindell explains:

> *»Us from the trefoil have said all the way that we don't want an agreement [of settlement], because we have such big immigration and we are stretch to the maximum to make sure that those who arrive get a good reception. There are plenty of other municipalities that can take responsibility, where the children will have it better than they would at ours who are already overloaded. So we've been*

against an agreement all the time. But due to the new law from the end of last year, we understood that regardless of whether we signed an agreement, children would be settled here, but if we signed we'd get paid. Well. Well good negotiation, I think we'll sign! When we had this up in the council that we would sign, the SD went against it quite strongly. That's really the only ideological immigration issue they have pushed, other than that it's other things.«

And as Lindell points out, SD probably did not gain very much from opposing the settlement agreement, since it was primarily an issue of getting paid or not getting paid for something they would have to do anyway. Hence, they did not challenge the established parties on immigration on a principled level. The presence generally of more restrictive immigration attitudes, both from the population and from established politicians, may be driven in part by a seemingly rapid influx of immigrants that has been accompanied with an equally rapid convergence of social deprivation and ethnicity following the decline of the shipyard industry. Nonetheless, if immigration issues as such are not politicized, SD may stand to lose from a situation where they cannot be seen to fundamentally challenge the established position. The Liberal Party, due to their association with liberal immigration policies and their past »ownership« of the immigration question, may be particularly well-placed to contribute to the legitimisation of anti-immigration attitudes, but equally to attract voters who do not feel at ease voting for a party like SD, yet have concerns about immigration. While FP in Landskrona does not focus on questions regarding immigration, neither do they endorse a liberal, pro-immigration position associated with the party on a national level.

For a party to win over the immigration sceptics they need to be perceived as credible – otherwise chances are all they will do is legitimize immigration fears and open the doors for SD. In this respect, as mentioned, FP in Landskrona, headed by Strandberg, has been very successful.

Not, importantly, because they have pursued »anti-immigration« policies, but because they have addressed the concerns perceived as related to immigration with a frank and socially conservative message, which seemingly attracts those who would also consider voting for SD. SD has also been disadvantaged, or was in 2010, by the fact that it is social issues that dominate political debate, notable crime rates and welfare dependency, rather than any cultural concerns related to immigration.

According to Mikael Brandt, SD has become milder towards immigrants, but other parties, especially the Social Democrats (S), have also become milder towards SD. These things may of course be related. If SD had pushed immigration issues more, in particular with a xenophobic message, other parties may have reacted differently towards them. When they first entered the council in 2002, S was very critical, using terms such as fascists to describe SD. Such rhetoric is not present now.

In addition to immigration as such not being on the agenda, SD is thus not being treated in a particularly hostile way by the other parties. On the contrary, the governing parties are dependent on SD to get their policies through and though they have no formal cooperation, they need to secure their support at an early stage in the decision-making process. Even though this entails that SD has considerable political influence (to be expected from one of the biggest parties), they may not gain further support this way. Once a vote for a particular proposal is underway in the council, it mostly already has SD's support, yet it does not have their name on it. So they have influence, but struggle to take credit for it.

Most of the politicians interviewed also agree that the way SD is treated in Landskrona marks a general difference between Skåne and the rest of Sweden, the former having a long term experience of these kinds of parties. Henning Süssner Rubin maintains that it is perhaps a better strategy to not make immigration a key issue, at least on SD's terms, and to not make SD the political victim:

»The left in general, parliamentary or not, has a tendency to be quite reactive. When SD gains the left becomes anti-racists. They stress immigration as positive, sometimes it's exaggerated, in order to react against SD, but we do not set the agenda. It's difficult with SD, so you can arrange a multicultural festival and then multicultural becomes a stand against the other. It's a bit like that here, we don't really talk about immigration when we don't have to. We've actually tried in Landskrona to not do that, but to talk about social politics, class politics, whatever, to also signal something. It shouldn't matter where your parents are from, but what your class background is. It's interesting because in 2010 there was a big discussion about what to do when SD holds public meetings. In Malmö there was no discussion, people there stood up and screamed to shut them out, but we've tried to avoid that here. To be honest, in this city they have got 22 per cent of the votes. You can't pretend they're not here. They probably gain from that and we lose.«

In sum, SD has not, post-2006, actively tried to or at least not managed to place immigration high on the political agenda. Instead, it has been questions relating to crime rates and social deprivation that have dominated the political debate. Because SD does not diverge hugely from FP or M on these issues, they are not in a very strong position to compete for their voters. Moreover, SD is not being given a »victim« role by the other political actors, who prefer to focus on the issues as such rather than who the sender is. To some extent this may contribute to the acceptance of SD, making the line to cross in order to vote for them less controversial. But, as Henning Süssner Rubin points out, this line has already been crossed and further demonisation may do more harm than good.

Lastly, I will turn to the issue that was on the agenda in the lead up to the 2014 election, namely housing and welfare dependency.

Welfare and the Housing Policy

While crime rates were top priority in the 2006 and 2010 elections, the election in 2014 appears to have revolved more around the issue of welfare dependency and housing. In Landskrona a large proportion of the population is dependent on social benefits and this has long been the case. In order to address this issue, the governing trefoil has implemented a new housing policy, aimed at preventing further inward migration of people dependent on benefits. The housing policy, in short, consists of an agreement with local landlords not to rent to those whose main source of income is welfare payments. Many southern municipalities have in fact tried to detract those on benefits from moving in, but the rhetoric from Strandberg, who has been pushing the issue strongly, has been clearer and more frank than elsewhere. As he said to the local newspaper: »It would be a lie to say that there is any other aim but to stop people on benefits from moving in.«[44]

The policy has been criticized for being very harsh, especially since it may force people to move from Landskrona, rather than just stopping them from moving in.[45] As with criminality, there is also a clear implicit connection between welfare dependency and immigration, which is not made explicit by the main parties but which is there nonetheless. »Class and ethnicity has during the last decades come to coincide to such an extent in Landskrona that many find it difficult to separate newcomers' worse socio-economic situation from the way they look and their social and cultural distinctiveness«.[46]

However, it may have been difficult for SD to gain from such connection, given that the policies pursued by the governing parties are already perceived as forceful, unless the immigration connection became more politicized. In the lead up to the election, all parties, including SD, seemed reluctant to make this the case. Therefore, the housing debate looked more like the crime debate did in 2010, than the crime debate in 2006, which should have been to SD's disadvantage so long as there was no widespread dissatisfaction with the incumbent trefoil. Seeing

the election result of 2014, in which SD gained one seat from FP and M respectively, it seems like there was indeed such dissatisfaction present. Moreover, the increased importance of immigration on a national level probably affected the debate in Landskrona as well, making more people aware of the connection between social deprivation and immigration pursued by SD nationally. Such connection has always been present in Landskrona, albeit to varying degrees. The 2014 election result in Landskrona may thus been seen partly as a reflection of the national election, where both M and FP went back, SD moved forward – and immigration was high on the political agenda.

Conclusion

This chapter started by noting that Sweden has long been the exception in Europe, with no populist, anti-immigration party present in national politics. When in 2010 the Sweden Democrats gained 5.7 per cent of the popular vote, and 20 seats in *Riksdagen*, this was no longer the case. Since the 2014 election, SD is Sweden's third largest party. However, in the south of Sweden, SD had been growing for some years and had a remarkably successful election in Landskrona in 2006, managing to attract 22 per cent of voters' support. In this chapter, I have asked why this happened and why they subsequently lost some of this support in 2010.

The success of SD in 2006 should be understood against the background of widespread dissatisfaction with the incumbent Social Democratic party. Because it was in this sense a »protest vote«, SD naturally went back in 2010. Nonetheless, there are other differences in Landskronian politics 2006 and 2010 that help explain the rise and »fall« of SD.

Firstly, there has been much focus in the political debates in Landskrona on issues regarding crime rates, social deprivation and welfare dependency. These issues are intertwined with immigration in Landskrona, due partly to the social and demographic reality, but it has also been emphasised by the press coverage in the local media as well as by the presence of

SD. When this connection is made prominent, as in the 2006 election, SD benefits. When focus is instead on the issues as such, and when the solutions offered are similar to those offered by SD, they lose out.

Hence, SD's voters may primarily not be concerned with immigration as such, but with social deprivation in their city. When politicians from mainstream parties offer solutions with a conservative touch, SD struggles to compete. Because these politicians are also careful not to make the immigration connection explicit, SD cannot proliferate on an anti-immigration agenda as such. This is strengthened by the fact that SD themselves have not pushed a strongly xenophobic agenda. This emphasises the general point that when socio-economic issues are at the centre of the debate, rather than cultural or value issues, parties like SD struggle. Furthermore, there is no dismissive strategy amongst the other parties towards SD; on the contrary they are to a large extent dependent on them. This has prevented them from being portrayed as victims, or as particularly anti-establishment, at a stage where they are de facto a key player in the politics of Landskrona.

Lastly, while a consensus amongst the established parties on immigration issues may in general work to the advantage of an anti-immigration party, in Landskrona this consensus does consist of a restrictive approach to immigration amongst most of the mainstream parties. This consensus may have contributed to the success of SD, by legitimising their position, but in times when immigration as such is not the top priority for voters the consensus also entails that SD loses their main point of attraction. Therefore, it is of course worth asking what would happen if one of the mainstream parties seriously challenged the more negative views on immigration prevalent amongst the public in Landskrona; whether this would challenge SD's position or simply contribute to politicise immigration in a relatively hostile environment. Holding the Sweden Democrats back, on the one hand, and promoting a pro-immigration agenda, on the other hand, may be two conflicting aims, at least in this local example.

Notes

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2 Sandberg, L. and Demker, M. (2013), 'Ökat motstånd mot flyktingar men starkt stöd för skäl till uppehållstillstånd' in Weibull, L., Oscarsson, H. and Bergström, A. (eds.) Vägskäl, Göteborgs universitet: SOM-institutet, p. 193.

3 Sandberg and Demker (2013), p. 193.

4 Van der Brug, W., Fennema, M. and Tillie, J. (2005), 'Why Some Anti-Immigration Parties Fail and Others Succeed: A Two-Step Model of Aggregate Electoral Support', Comparative Political Studies Vol. 38(5).

5 Odmalm, P. (2011), 'Political Parties and 'the Immigration Issue': Issue Ownership in Swedish Parliamentary Elections 1991–2010', West European Politics Vol. 34(5), p. 1076; Demker, M. (2014), Sverige åt svenskarna: Motstånd och mobilisering mot invandring och invandrare i Sverige, Atlas Akademi, pp. 146-7; Rydgren, J. (2010), 'Radical Right-wing Populism in Denmark and Sweden: Explaining Party System Change and Stability', SAIS Review of International Affairs Vol. 30(1): pp. 61-62.

6 Rydgren (2010), p. 61; Odmalm (2011), p. 1073.

7 Rydgren (2010), p. 59.

8 Rydgren (2010), p. 67; Dahlstrom, C. and Esaiasson, P. (2013), 'The immigration issue and anti-immigrant party success in Sweden1970-2006: A deviant case analysis', Party Politics Vol. 19(2): p. 353.

9 Green-Pedersen, C. and Odmalm, O. (2008), 'Going different ways? Right-wing parties and the immigrant issue in Denmark and Sweden', Journal of European Public Policy Vol. 15(3): p. 376.

10 Green-Pedersen and Odmalm (2008), p. 378.

11 Lochocki, T. (2013), 'Hard Times in the Lands of Plenty: Why right populist anti-multiculturalism parties can seize their electoral niche in the immigration-societies of the Netherlands, Sweden and (West-)Germany', Doctoral Dissertation, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, pp. 136-7.

12 Lochocki (2013), p. 147. A language test is not necessarily anti-immigration, though is gives the appearance of being »tough« on immigration. In 2012, FP increased focus on immigration yet again by put forward several immigration policies, for example that immigrants who turn down jobs should have their benefits cut, but also that irregular migrants should have rights to health care.

13 The ability of one party to shape the political agenda should not be overstated. Indeed, another study shows that a tough stance on immigration by one mainstream party does not legitimise the anti-immigrant party, but a tough stance on immigration across the board has a legitimising effect (Dahlstrom, C. and Sundell, A. (2012), 'A losing gamble. How mainstream parties facilitate anti-immigrant party success', Electoral Studies Vol. 31: p. 360.) However, the role of FP in this regard does seem plausible given their tradition of enjoying high trust on immigration from voters (Odmalm 2011, pp. 1079 and 1082).
14 Rydgren (2010), p. 58; Dahlstrom and Esaisson (2013), p. 359.
15 Erlingsson, G. Ó., Loxbo, K. and Öhrvall, R. (2012), 'Anti-Immigrant Parties, Local Presence and Electoral Success', Local Government Studies Vol. 38(6).
16 Rydgren (2010); (2002), 'Radical Right Populism in Sweden: Still a Failure, But for How Long?', Scandinavian Political Studies Vol. 25(1). Though trust in the political parties has steadily increased, albeit from a very low starting point.
17 Holmberg, S. and Weibull, L. (2013), 'Det viktiga institutionsförtroendet' in Weibull, L., Oscarsson, H. and Bergström, A. (eds.) Vägskäl, Göteborgs universitet: SOM-institutet, p. 234.
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Chapter 8

Responding to the Populist Radical Right: The Dutch Case

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Introduction

In the early 1980s, the radical right party *Centrumpartij* (CP) entered the Dutch parliament. This represented a significant shift in Dutch political history. Since the end of the Second World War radical right-wing parties had failed to gain a presence in parliament.[2] However, despite their electoral success, the CP quickly fell apart due to internal quarrels. In 1984, prominent members of the CP, including party leader Hans Janmaat, formed a new splinter party: the *Centrumdemocraten* (CD). The CD's right-wing policies were continuously de-legitimized by the Dutch media and political establishment; the party was even prosecuted for hate speech and practices of discrimination. During the general election of 1998, the party lost the 2 per cent of the vote it had gained before, and never found its way back into parliament.[3] While radical right parties in other Western European countries, such as France, Austria, and Belgium, were successful in this period, the Dutch political establishment appeared to fend off the radical right through a process of de-legitimation and prosecution.

In 2002, the political establishment was staggered by the electoral success of *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF). While the LPF was a relatively new party, it won 17.3 per cent of the vote in the general election. Former university lecturer, Pim Fortuyn, founded the party. Fortuyn was an eccentric politician compared to Dutch parliamentary standards. He was a flamboyant homosexual, who skilfully used populist rhetoric to win over the electorate. Established politicians had great difficulties debating Fortuyn. Due to his strict views on immigration and integration he was frequently accused of being a radical right demagogue. Significantly, and in contrast to the legacy of CP/CD, popular support for the LPF remained durable and Fortuyn quickly became a media darling. Shockingly, Fortuyn was shot in 2002 by an animal rights activist. Quickly after the murder, the LPF withered and faded, largely due to internal strife.

In 2006, the establishment was again taken by surprise by a radical

right-wing newcomer. This time, the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV) entered Dutch parliament after it had gained about 6 per cent of the vote.[4] The party leader Geert Wilders became famous for his provocative and controversial statements, notably in his views towards Islam, and his anti-establishment attitude. Although the PVV experienced some electoral ups and downs, the party gradually grew stronger and began to seriously compete with established parties. Wilders competently portrayed the establishment as a class of unqualified and blameworthy rulers. In addition, he portrayed his party as the true representative of the »Dutch people«, protecting the electorate against »outsider« threats, such as immigration. Thus, just like the LPF, the PVV has used populist rhetoric to attract its voters, and, once again, the establishment had trouble striking the right tone in its response. Moreover, to date, the establishment's reactions appear to have benefitted the PVV, instead of damaging it.[5]

Thus, while the political establishment and media seemed successful in diminishing the CP/CD, it was unable to ward off the LPF and PVV. The sudden death of Fortuyn and the organisational beheading of the LPF, most likely caused the party's decline -rather than the reactions of the political establishment. Furthermore, the PVV has been a prominent member of Dutch parliament for almost eight years now. This raises the important question of why established parties have been unable to (fully) re-strengthen their position throughout this period and combat this new right-wing movement effectively.

The main objective of this chapter is to ascertain how, and to what effect, Dutch parties and media have responded to the populist radical right rhetoric of the PVV: How have established parties tried to (re)take command of the debate on immigration and integration, and to what extent have they succeeded? What are the effects of excluding radical parties, and, equally, what are the effects of political collaboration? Furthermore, what role has the media played in this process? Some commentators have argued that, in contrast to the treatment of the

CP/CD, the media have favoured the PVV by giving the party too much attention.[6] To address the central questions of this article, we draw upon evidence from multiple interviews which the authors conducted with (ex-)politicians, pundits, journalists and spin-doctors.

This chapter is organized as follows: Firstly, we discuss the emergence of Wilders and the PVV in order to understand how the PVV became the party it is today. These sections provide the contextual background for the interviews. Secondly, we present the results from our interviews. Seven respondents were interviewed to shed their light on various aspects of party competition between the PVV and the political establishment. Thirdly, we consider the role of the media. In our concluding section we briefly summarize our findings and elaborate upon their implications.

Wilders and the PVV

Wilders started his political career working for the liberal-conservative party *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* VVD. From 1990 to 1998 he served as a political assistant to the parliamentary frontman, Frits Bolkestein, who was the first mainstream politician to raise concern about the integration of minorities in Dutch society.[7] Although some party members thought Bolkestein should moderate his tone, the VVD blossomed electorally under his leadership.

In 1998 Wilders became a member of parliament for the VVD. As a parliamentarian, Wilders repeatedly addressed the issue of Islamic fundamentalism, which he described as one of the biggest threats of the decade. According to Wilders, the VVD had simply followed its coalition partners, D66 and PvdA, and not set out its own agenda. Not only did this position sit in opposition to Wilders views, but he feared it made the VVD vulnerable to electoral competition on the right.[8]

Wilders' fear was validated in 2002 when Pim Fortuyn, and his party the LPF, entered the Dutch political scene. Fortuyn stated that the West

was caught in a struggle between »modernity and a backward and reprehensible culture«, i.e. Islam[9], and that the political establishment had miserably failed to mobilize society against this threat. Quickly, it was estimated that the LPF would receive about 17 per cent of the vote. Wilders had to stand by and watch the LPF fill the political space the VVD had made available.[10]

On May 6th 2002, just a few days before the general elections took place; Fortuyn was shot and killed in a parking lot after he exited a Dutch radio show. He was killed by an environmentalist and animal rights activist, who in his trail stated that he sought to protect the weaker members of Dutch society from Fortuyn. Despite the murder of its party leader, the LPF won 17.3 per cent of the vote at the general elections. The PvdA and D66 were the biggest losers, but the VVD also lost votes – from 24.7 per cent to 15.5 per cent. A government coalition was formed between the Christian-Democratic party CDA, the LPF and VVD. However, as a political newcomer with its party leader and main ideologist just assassinated, the LPF was unable to take its government responsibilities. The party was plagued by internal rift and public scandals and just 87 days after the cabinet had been installed, the government fell. New elections were held in early 2003, whereby the established parties recovered somewhat and the LPF fell back to 5.6 per cent of the vote. The VVD gained considerably and took part in the new government that consisted of CDA, VVD and D66.

With the LPF diminished in size, theoretically the established parties were able to regain political control. However, this proved very difficult. Fortuyn had successfully framed the political establishment as an incompetent class of morally corrupt elitists. His message (as well as his populist style of communication) had appealed to a large group of voters and the established parties, including the VVD, had difficulties safeguarding their political credibility. This inability fed Wilders' growing dissatisfaction with the course of the VVD. In February 2004 Wilders was interviewed by Dutch opinion weekly *HP/De Tijd*.[11] In this interview he

proposed a ban on headscarves for civil servants. Speculating upon the resistance to this proposal, he stated: »Let the headscarves protest, I'll eat them raw«.[12] This yielded him a reproach from his fellow party faction members.[13]

The final breaking point between the VVD and Wilders was a dispute over the possible admittance of Turkey to the EU. Wilders had formulated an uncompromising 10 point plan with the intention to heat up the internal discussion about the desired course of the party, but nonetheless he leaked it to the national newspaper *De Telegraaf* before it had been discussed. In reaction, his superiors demanded that Wilders officially withdrew the 10 point plan, or at least publicly acknowledged that it went too far. Wilders disobeyed and let the conflict increasingly come to a head. His position became untenable, and in September 2004 he left the VVD.[14]

The founding of the PVV

After having left the VVD, Wilders kept his parliamentary seat and registered under the name *Groep Wilders*. On September 23rd, Wilders held his first speech as an independent parliamentarian. He concluded that the integration of non-Western immigrants had failed completely. Two weeks after Wilders left the VVD, he polled at around 8 per cent of the vote (see figure 1). However, Wilders' fierce criticism of Islam and multicultural society also invoked death threats and hate mail against him. The brutal murder of Dutch filmmaker and Islam critic, Theo van Gogh, by an Islamic extremist on November 2nd 2004, illustrated the gravity of these threats, and sent a shockwave through Dutch society. Wilders quickly became one of the most heavily guarded Dutch citizens.

However, Wilders did not moderate his tone. On the contrary, hyperbolic statements increasingly characterized his political style. His general narrative described the Dutch political elite was incompetent, reprehensible and morally corrupt. In his view, the PvdA, in particular,

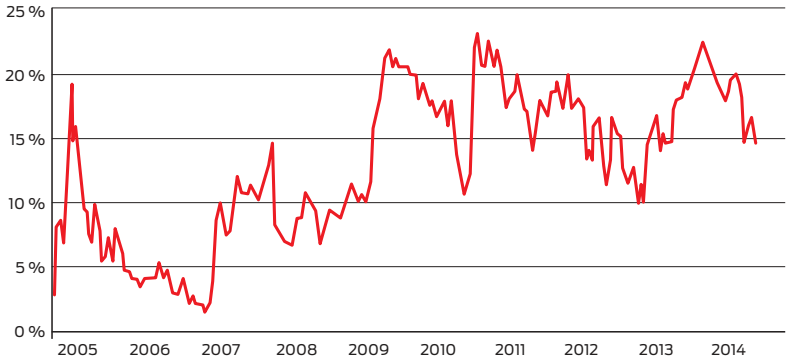
had dramatically failed on immigration and integration issues. He also argued that the Dutch establishment had taken society hostage with political correctness. By this stage, Wilders had fully adopted the populist discourse of Fortuyn. He also admitted that he learned a great deal from Bolkestein, who taught him that you should always stand by your argument, no matter how much opposition you receive.[15]

On February 22nd 2006, a few months before the general elections, Wilders officially registered the PVV. But despite calling the PVV a party, it was still not organized democratically (in contrast to all other Dutch parliamentary parties). The PVV has two official members: Geert Wilders and the foundation *Groep Wilders* (which allowed the PVV to receive donations from supporters). It still remains impossible to become a member of the PVV, and therefore adherents have no influence over party decisions.

At the general elections in November 2006, the PVV gained about 6 per cent of the vote. This result surprised friend and foe alike. Clearly, the messages of the PVV had resonated well with many voters. Leading up to the elections, the PVV had urged for a halt on migrants from non-Western countries and a five-year ban on the construction of mosques and Islamic schools.

The established parties, especially the PvdA and VVD, lost a signifi-

Figure 1. Per cent of the vote for the PVV between 2004 and 2014



Data source: www.peil.nl

cant proportion of the vote. The electoral gain of the PVV indicated that the VVD had lost many votes to the right. This was an indirect cause for former VVD Minister of Immigration and Integration, Rita Verdonk, to establish *Trots Op Nederland* (TON) - an outspoken conservative right-wing populist movement, which became a direct competitor of the PVV.

Throughout 2007 Wilders bolstered his attacks on Islam. In February 2007, he stated that Dutch borders must be closed in order to keep away Islamists. He also urged to deport many Muslims and denaturalise Islamic criminals.[16] Later that year Wilders sent a letter to a national newspaper, *de Volkskrant*, in which he advocated for a ban on the *Quran*. Wilders compared the *Quran* to Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and stated that the book entailed a fascist ideology.[17] Later on, he called the then Minister of Integration and Housing Ella Vogelaar (PvdA) 'completely bonkers' ('*knettergek*') based on her remark that the Netherlands would be characterized by a Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition in the future.[18] In November 2007, Wilders announced a film project called *Fitna* to illustrate the danger of Islam for Western civilisation. Since no Dutch television network was willing to broadcast *Fitna*, the film premiered on the Internet. The film portrayed Islam as a highly violent and imperialistic ideology.[19]

For a while, TON proved a serious competitor for the PVV, however, in January 2009 the curtain fell for TON (largely due to organisational problems and internal rift). Subsequently, the PVV climbed back up in the polls.[20] Wilders had free rein again and his radical attacks on Islam proceeded undiminished. In late 2009, he made headlines by proposing a tax on 'head rags' (headscarves).[21]

In 2009, Wilders was prosecuted for hate speech based on several of his controversial statements. The trial started in October 2010 and became a media spectacle. Eventually, Wilders was acquitted of all charges in June 2011. Wilders stated that his acquittal was first and foremost a victory for freedom of speech. Later on, it appeared that the decision to prosecute Wilders did not only gain a lot of media attention (natio-

nal and international) for the PVV, but that this decision also caused an increase in the parties popularity which could transfer into votes.[22]

Leading up to the general elections of 2010, the PvdA appointed the prominent party member, and former mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen as its party leader. Cohen had a lot of experience with immigration and integration politics. The plan was to juxtapose Cohen's 'political decency' with the impertinence of Wilders. Unfortunately for the PVV and PvdA, the general elections largely revolved around the financial crisis which began in 2008. As the VVD had a strong lead on economic and financial issues, they won the general elections in 2010. It became the largest party with a little more than 20 per cent of the vote. The PVV became the third largest party; receiving 15.5 per cent of the vote. For some time the mainstream parties tried to establish a government that excluded the PVV, but in the end this appeared impossible. VVD and PVV saw no other option than to cooperate. In September 2010, a minority government was formed between VVD and CDA, with the PVV as its official support partner. It was the first time the PVV took government responsibilities, although the party did not control any executive offices. For a substantial time the coalition seemed workable, despite the fact that Wilders didn't moderate his tone and there were several problems with party candidates appeared. Nonetheless, in April 2012, the PVV pulled the plug on their support of the government because the party would not go along with the budget proposals of the VVD and CDA. New elections were held in September 2012. The VVD was again the largest party (26.6 per cent). It appeared that the voters had pun ished the PVV for the failure of the last cabinet: the party fell back to 10.1 per cent of the vote (from 15.4 per cent). The VVD and the PvdA formed a new government and the PVV was back in opposition.

After the election, the PVV gradually regained its support. While the attention on the economic crisis decreased a little, the PVV tried to bring immigration and integration back on the agenda. At the municipal elections in March 2014, the PVV participated in only two municipali-

ties, but still managed to attract a lot of media attention. For example, in early 2013, the PVV initiated a parliamentary debate about the »Moroccan problem«. At a party rally in The Hague, Wilders asked his supporters whether they wanted »more or fewer« Moroccans.[23] The PVV adherents ended up cheering »fewer, fewer« to all the questions. In response Wilders said: »Good, then we're going to arrange that«. The event raised outrage and a heated discussion. Several people compared Wilders' comments to Adolf Hitler's views on Jews in Nazi Germany. It also caused friction in the PVV itself. Several parliamentary members, contributors and municipal politicians decided to leave the party, or officially distanced themselves from these remarks. The party also lost some electoral support in the polls the following week. However, despite all the outrage and disapproval, the PVV was estimated at obtaining around 14 per cent of the vote during the most recent polling outcome currently available (August 17th, 2014), making it the largest Dutch party together with D66.[24]

Interviews

In this section we present the results of our interviews. All the interviews were conducted in the spring of 2014. The respondents were asked about their views on how Dutch parties and the media have responded to the populist radical right rhetoric of the PVV, and what consequences this has had. For example, have established parties been able to (re)take command of the debate about immigration and integration? What are the effects of political collaboration and/or political exclusion? What is the role of the media in this process?

Respondents

- **Hero Brinkman** is a former PVV parliamentarian. In 2006 he entered the Second Chamber, coming in fourth on the candidate list. In March 2012, Brinkman left the party due to

on-going disputes over the preferred agenda and organization of the party.

- **Erik van Bruggen** is a former assistant to the then PvdA chairman Felix Rottenberg. Currently he is director of campaign bureau BKB[25] that develops campaigns for governments, private companies and public organizations. He was a strategist for the PvdA campaign in 2006.
- **Jan Driessen** has been a reporter for over twenty years and worked for several media outlets. Driessen has also been a political strategist of the VVD and advisor to Prime Minster Mark Rutte. After working as head of communication for AEGON, he now runs his own strategic communication bureau Q&A.
- **Johan Driessen** is a former staff member of Wilders (2007-2010) and parliamentarian (2010-2012) of the PVV. He is currently policy advisor to Louis Bontes (also a former PVV parliamentarian) of the political fraction *Groep Bontes/Van Klaveren*.
- **Kay van de Linde** is a professional spin-doctor and party strategist, who worked for both LN and TON. He has also worked in the United States and was part of the campaign teams of Ed Koch and Rudi Giuliani when they ran for mayor of New York City.
- **Anonymous** is a political reporter.
- **Ella Vogelaar** is a former Minister of Integration and Housing for the PvdA who took office in 2007. However, in 2008 Vogelaar resigned after the party leadership removed its confidence because of her alleged poor media performances.
- **Max van Weezel** is a political journalist who predominantly writes for the Dutch quality opinion weekly *Vrij Nederland*. Between 2007 and 2011 he was the chairman of

> the political press centre *Nieuwspoort*, which is closely situated to many important Dutch political institutes, such as the Second Chamber. *Nieuwspoort*, a member's only club, is the place where the Dutch parliamentary press, politicians, spokespeople and lobbyists informally meet each other.

The previous sections of the chapter illustrate how established parties were taken by surprise with the success of the LPF and the PVV – parties which have successfully managed to obtain »issue ownership« of immigration and integration. Basically, »issue ownership« entails that voters associate certain issues with certain parties. Clearly, established parties have continuously underestimated the degree of discontent about these issues among voters. »Issue ownership« is considered an important political strength, because parties win votes most easily on the issues they »own«.[26] Jan Driessen confirms the idea that the establishment did not effectively lock down these issues:

> *Bolkestein was the first to publicly notice that certain aspects of immigration and integration needed to be addressed, but he was maligned for this. At that point the establishment missed an opportunity. We have been very naive about multicultural society, not only in the Netherlands, but also in many other parts of Western Europe. Collectively we have made the wrong assessment. Bolkestein said it, but nobody listened.*

According to Ella Vogelaar the issues of immigration and integration have traumatised the PvdA since early 2000. She argues that after Fortuyn (LPF) the perception within the party was that it had idealized multicultural society too much, and that the PvdA had not sufficiently realised that multicultural society also had its downsides. She concludes that, until today, it seems like established parties never really regained control over these issues.

Engage or disengage?

In general, the establishment has been able to choose between two main strategic responses to populist radical right parties: engage or disengage.[27] Examples of engagement strategies are the formation of governing coalitions or the adaptation of successful (and collaborative) policy positions. The hope of such strategies is by including populist radical right parties in government, their electoral threat is neutralized. Either, the populist radical right party becomes more mainstream through co-operating with more moderate partners, or the party suffers from its government responsibilities. This relies on the assumption that populist radical right parties are often not as well organized and capable as established parties. Alternatively, by adopting the policy positions of populist radical right parties, established parties seek to win back votes. That is, by becoming stricter on the issues of immigration and integration, established parties make the populist radical right party largely redundant. Examples of disengagement strategies are: raising institutional barriers, outlawing the party, and/or the formation of blocking coalitions. These kinds of strategies aim to deprive the populist radical right party of its legitimacy, or it seeks to deny them any platform at all.

According to Vogelaar, the strategy of adopting Wilders' frame merely backfired for the PvdA. In reaction to the realisation that the party had underestimated the unease with multicultural society, the party started to excessively emphasise the negative aspects of immigration and integration. She argues that »the [PvdA] was unable to remain balanced about this, and once you approach these issues in such a one-sided manner, you quickly step into the frame of Wilders [...] I mostly blame my own party for this, but other parties such as the CDA and VVD act in similar ways. [...] Now the tragedy of the PvdA is that next to losing the traditional voters, they have also lost voters with a non-Western background.« Indeed, the latest municipal elections indicated that at least in Amsterdam, non-Western immigrants increasingly voted for other parties, at the cost of the PvdA.

Jan Driessen also refutes the idea of adopting Wilders' populist style and/or his party's policy positions. He argues that the VVD should not seek to become a PVV-light: »We should not copy the PVV and scream that Moroccans have to leave the country. That is not the way, and it will never be the way. It is impossible to scream louder than Wilders does. [...] You will always be a bad imitation. You should operate in a civil and intellectual way, and not copy the language of the street. Clearly, you should point out unacceptable behaviour, but you can never top Wilders. Therefore, you should offer a different perspective that invokes pride [instead of distrust and pessimism].«

Kay van de Linde argues that it is undesirable to pursue a reactive campaign:

> *Once you react, the competitive party has the lead. Most voters, also the voters who don't support the PVV, perceive Wilders most credible when it concerns immigration or anti-Islam policies.* [...] *What parties should do is create an environment in which they influence the public opinion in such a way that the issue they own becomes important. If you wish to battle the PVV, you have to make sure that immigration and integration are not the main topics of the election.* [...] *In the case of the PVV you should create a sense of urgency about a theme that PVV does not control as much, for example education.*

Academic studies have shown how election results can be explained by the salience of particular issues preceding the election.[28] By increasing the salience of each of their issues, parties can gain electoral support. This is the reason for continuously emphasizing 'their' topics during campaigns.[29] For example, before the financial crisis, the issues of immigration and integration were very high on the public and political agenda. The PVV managed to attract a lot of attention for these issues by making controversial statements that resonated widely in the media. Because the electorate perceives an issue as more important when

this gains media attention,[30] this further may amplify the PVV's »issue ownership« and strengthen the party's electoral appeal. However, the financial crisis complicated the PVV's position, since it shifted the emphasis to economic issues, providing better opportunities for the political establishment to profile itself.[31]

Johan Driessen argues that during the elections of 2010, the PVV deliberately found ways to bring immigration and integration back on the agenda. As a member of the campaign team, he noticed that the PVV was trailing in the polls because the election focussed on the major contest between Rutte (VVD) and Cohen (PvdA). In addition, the electoral debates emphasised the economic crisis. Johan Driessen states that it was pre-planned that during a televised debate, Wilders would ask Cohen why he (Wilders) needed to wear a bulletproof vest. Wilders would then answer the question himself stating that this was because he had criticized Islam. The plan was the statement would revive the old narrative that Cohen underestimated the violent nature of Islam and had failed to deal with the problems of multicultural society. According to Johan Driessen the plan worked. The next day immigration was a topic of debate again and the PVV gained seats in the polls. Johan Driessen further discloses that Wilders also tried to relate economic issues to immigration, by putting forward the question of how much immigration had cost the Dutch tax-payer. Subsequently, Wilders maintained that it is impossible for the Netherlands to be a welfare state and an immigration country at the same time.

Vogelaar argues that issue framing in electoral politics is a problem of spin-doctors and party strategists. She is not a strong believer of »slick talk« during elections. Media appearances are very important but there should also be carefully considered policy behind it. Vogelaar states:

> *Something tangible should happen in the neighbourhoods where problems arise. If that doesn't happen, the people who have lost trust in politics will never regain their trust. I truly believe that had*

> *we been able to execute the neighbourhood plans like we drafted in 2006, this presented golden opportunities. If we had been able to make changes, that certainly would have made a difference.*

Thus, according to Vogelaar parties like the PvdA but also others such as the VVD and CDA, have wrongfully adopted the harsh rhetoric of Wilders in an attempt to win back voters. Instead, she argues that they should make policies that tackle the electorates concerns with immigration and integration. Hero Brinkman shares this idea:

> *Certain groups like homosexuals are harassed by Moroccans when they bike through Amsterdam.* [...] *Therefore you have to do what Samsom (party leader PvdA) did two years ago: stating that some groups in society have an ethnic monopoly on criminal behaviour. To be fair, he made this remark in a broader context, but at least he pointed out a huge societal problem.* [...]. *The issues of immigration and integration will lose their urgency, once you remove the soil of the societal unrest.*

Jan Driessen is sceptical. He argues that you should clearly deal with existing problems, but that you should not forget that many PVV voters live in cities or areas where problems with multicultural society are minimal or even non-existent. He states that Dutch politicians and journalists have drawn these voters into a spiral of pessimism and distrust. What is lacking is a positive perspective. By dealing with problem areas, the problem is not solved. Therefore, Jan Driessen feels it is essential that politicians offer the electorate a new perspective.

In 2010, the PVV became the official support partner of the Dutch minority government. At the time commentators argued that the PVV would lose support because it was now unable to portray itself as thoroughly anti-establishment. Furthermore, it was argued that the PVV would self-destruct since its organization was weak and its poli-

ticians incompetent. Brinkman confirms that Wilders did not want to govern after the elections of 2010:

> *Those 24 electoral seats in parliament imposed a huge problem for Geert, because some of these people were critical about the course of the party, like me, and others were new and enthusiastic about making a change and therefore willing to make compromises.* [...] *Geert thought we were not ready for taking governmental responsibilities. Finally, I succeeded in establishing a 13–11 majority* [*within the parliamentary faction, ed.*] *to start negotiations with CDA and VVD.*

When asked about possible strategic motives behind appointing the PVV as an official support partner, Jan Driessen denies that such considerations ever played a role. He points out that prominent members of the VVD did have great difficulty with the political compromise. But, as he states:

> *At that time, the PvdA refused to take its responsibilities. Thus taking away the opportunity of a stable majority government, at least not without extensive and complicated deliberation about alternative formations. At that point, the VVD and the CDA took their responsibilities and acted pragmatically: the country needed to be governed and then it just had to be like this* [*with the support of the PVV, ed.*]. *Perhaps that the government collapse had an impact on voters, but the electorate has an unimpressive memory: next election many of them will have forgotten and vote for the PVV again.*

According to Fennema and Van der Brug,[32] the failure of the CD and its leader Hans Janmaat was largely due to the continuous de-legitimation of the party by Dutch establishment and media. This was enhanced by several criminal prosecutions that also led to three convictions.

Contrary to this, a recent study suggests, that the decision to prosecute Wilders actually increased party support for the PVV.[33] Van Bruggen also argues that the prosecution worked in favour of the PVV, even when Wilders would have been convicted instead of acquitted. Jan Driessen concurs: »[..] the more noise, the more press, the better a protest party performs. A trial or prosecution would damage a 'normal' politician, but these rules don't apply to Wilders«. Brinkman agrees: »we laughed about it. People underestimate Wilders. People think he just yells something. But, believe me, he doesn't. He is a control freak and those people never say a word by accident. That his statements led to accusations and prosecution was only to his advantage.«

However, Johan Driessen disagrees with the extent of Brinkman's analysis. With his legal background, he assisted Wilders during the trial. He argues: »[Wilders] thought the trial was dreadful. He absolutely did not want to be prosecuted. [...] Many people claimed Wilders loved it because he gained a lot of media attention with his trial, but he didn't love it at all. The trial was very time and money consuming and Wilders was sincerely afraid of conviction.« Johan Driessen thinks that conviction would have harmed the PVV: »Voters dislike convictions, at that point you no longer belong to the category Bolkestein or Fortuyn, but to Janmaat and Glimmerveen [a Dutch politician with neo-Nazi sympathies, ed.].«

Media

Leaving aside overwhelming events, such as 9/11 or the financial crisis, political parties generally have substantial influence on which issues the media cover during election campaigns. By seeking and creating discursive opportunities, party strategists try to influence media coverage. Multiple studies indicate that parties are indeed able to affect the media agenda, which in turn, may also influence voting behaviour.[34]

Brants and Van Praag point out that the role of the media has transformed over time. Until the 1960s Dutch media was characterized by its

partisanship.[35] In this time of »partisan logic«, most written and spoken media sources exclusively represented the view of the party or ideology/religion they were tied to. From the 1960s onwards, the media became much more independent. In this time of »public logic«, journalists were no longer the »pet dogs« of political parties; instead they increasingly became a »watchdog«. The media served the interest of the public rather than the interest of politicians. However, right-wing parties still complained about a media bias. Public logic gradually disappeared with the arrival of commercial television broadcasts in 1989; this was followed by a time of »media logic«. In contrast to public logic, media logic is primarily driven by demand. The increasingly competitive market led to coverage that is meant to attract the most viewers/readers. Instead of primarily informing the public, most media outlets increasingly want to entertain the public. The role of watchdog is largely confined to the act of publicising hypes, scoops and scandals.[36]

Vogelaar confirms the principle of media logic: »[…] The big problem with the media nowadays is that they are extremely confined to the coverage of incidents. Due to the strong competition between different media outlets, the urge to score, the hunt for a scoop, has become immense.« Jan Driessen argues that the current media culture advantages the PVV: »Wilders' principal way to handle the media is sending one-liners via Twitter. Subsequently the media report these one-liners one on one, without much criticism. This way, Wilders determines the news and he does so brilliantly. But, isn't it bizarre that journalists are acting like this?« Kay van de Linde also confirms that when one provides journalists with irresistible quotes or one-liners, they almost never refuse. He used similar tactics when campaigning for LN and TON and »it surely helps«.

Johan Driessen extends this argument by suggesting that the image of the established media as the chief enemy of the PVV is artificial. Instead, the media are Wilders' best friend, because without their massive attention, the PVV would never have been this big. Often Geert said to

me: »Did you see? *Pauw & Witteman* [Dutch late night talk show, ed.] discussed the PVV all night and we weren't even there. They are such dumb journalists«. According to Van Weezel, Kay van de Linde introduced this strategy in the Netherlands:

> *When he* [*Van de Linde, ed.*] *was campaign manager of LN, he had just come back from the US. He had seen how politicians make a huge career out of thin air, using attacks on the establishment and leftists/mainstream media to win votes. He advised Fortuyn to do the same, and Fortuyn did* [*to much success, ed.*]. *After that, it became a well-known trick of populist parties.* [...] *Another strategy of Wilders is not to participate in parliamentary debates on a substantial level, but to make sure that he delivers a one-liner. This one-liner must be so catching and/or shocking that it dominates the news the following days.*

Dutch journalists, Anonymous and Max van Weezel, acknowledge that Geert Wilders and the PVV boost media sales. Van Weezel states that: »Sex and Wilders sell best, and even more so in combination«. Asked about the responsibility of the parliamentary press to assess political statements critically, Van Weezel appears somewhat sceptical. He tells us that he thinks the parliamentary press is too de-compartmentalized. During the compartmentalisation of Dutch media, there was discussion about; 'What are our principles? What do we stand for? And how should we perceive and report reality? This discussion has almost disappeared. Nowadays it is more about the issues of the day, and the idea that you should always be the first to report these issues, before the competition beats you to it. Van Weezel states: »As chairman of *Nieuwspoort*, I continuously tried to invoke discussion about the functioning of the parliamentary press, especially given the rise of populist parties, but hardly any journalists showed for these events.« Anonymous also acknowledges that the media culture has changed. There is less time for

fact checking, and journalist are increasingly focused on being the first to bring in the news. The on-going popularity of online news coverage has also changed the rules-of-the-game. Media outlets now strive for the most 'clicks' on the Internet. The first media outlet to report a news story is likely to have more 'clicks' than others. Eager for clicks, some media outlets instantly copy an article that appears on another website without checking the reliability of the report.

Van Weezel further states that the parliamentary press have the tendency to »lick up and kick down«. He stresses that this is true for populist radical right parties, but also for other parties. When a politician is winning, the press facilitates and supports this winning streak. For example, such politicians are elected »politician of the year«.[37] However, when a politician is in trouble, the press instantly »smells blood« and will attack relentlessly. Van Weezel emphasizes that the press has praised Wilders for a very long time; a time in which the PVV grew from 9 to 24 electoral seats (out of 150). During this period, everybody wanted him in front of the camera. However, Van Weezel points out that if a politician overplays his hand, or when a party has internal struggles, the press will come for them. Indeed, recently the majority of the Dutch press turned on Wilders, following his 'fewer, fewer, fewer' comments. This even included the usually supportive right-wing leaning tabloid newspaper *De Telegraaf*. Van Weezel cannot explain why the media suddenly turned on the PVV, because Wilders had made similarly shocking and indecent remarks before. Other respondents find this question difficult to answer. In that respect, having the favour of the press appears more or less arbitrary.

External and internal threats

Brinkman states that Wilders fears very few of his political competitors. Johan Driessen affirms this; he argues that the continuous criticism voiced by Pechtold (D66) did not damage the PVV. On the contrary, it seemed profitable, not only for the PVV, but also for D66. Assuming

that most left-wing leaning voters are fierce opponents of the PVV, left-wing parties can present themselves as the best 'remedy' against the PVV. This way, they can both attract left wing voters who fear or dislike the success of the PVV and they also gain media attention and disperse their party views even further. In that respect, it seems lucrative to be one of the two main opposing political parties; it allows you to draw the most votes from your side of the spectrum. Campaign strategist Kay van de Linde also maintains that you need a »proper enemy« to grow big. Van de Linde nonetheless thinks that established parties want to get rid of the PVV. In this respect, he feels that established parties have not made full use of the options available to them. For example, Van de Linde points out that in the United States political parties make use of so-called Super Political Action Committees (Super PACS). These are independent expenditure committees that are not allowed to make donations to parties directly, but may engage in endless political spending. In contrast to traditional PACs they may accept contributions from individuals, corporations, unions and other groups without any legal limit. According to Van de Linde, the formation of Super PACs is also possible in the Netherlands, and it could definitely damage Wilders. In this respect, Van de Linde feels that Wilders has been lucky that until now only amateurs have challenged him.

Johan Driessen perceives »a decent alternative« for the PVV as potential competition. In this respect, he tells us that Wilders is currently afraid of Joost Eerdmans, a successful regional LN politician. Eerdmans holds a middle position between the conservative liberal VVD and the populist radical right PVV. Thus, Eerdmans is firm on immigration and integration issues, while he is not considered too extreme or out of control. At the same time, he is a credible anti-establishment politician and therefore also able to attract protest voters. Erik van Bruggen also imagines that Eerdmans may become serious competition for the PVV. He thinks a new party that moves more to the middle than to the right, would provide the biggest threat. In that respect, Eerdmans would be a

suitable candidate, especially when he remains successful in Rotterdam where he recently became an alderman. But, Van Bruggen further ads that it is currently extremely hard to win votes from Wilders.

Brinkman recalls that Wilders had also been very worried about Verdonk (TON). Johan Driessen confirms: »At one point TON held 30 electoral seats in the polls, while the PVV was polled at 6. This led to panic within the PVV.« Brinkman, currently busy with establishing his own party, states that Wilders was so worried about TON that 'unsound' things have happened in order to stop her: »Geert assigned several PVV adherents and bloggers to investigate the past of TON notables to see if something dirty would come up.« Martin Bosma, who worked for the US Republican Party in the past and incorporated their negative campaign tactics in the PVV, heavily influenced the PVV in this respect. Brinkman states that since two years he is also victim of these tactics: »I know that two people have been paid to conduct a smear campaign against me.«

Kay van de Linde, who experienced the start-up of a new populist party twice at first hand, warns how hard it is to establish a new party. He states that it is very impressive that Wilders managed to keep his party together, despite several internal rifts. For example, internal friction previously led to the collapse of the LPF and also TON. Asked about how Wilders manages his party, Van de Linde decidedly answers »with fear«. The PVV is »one big paranoid club, led by a strategy of divide and conquer«. Anonymous explained to us that Wilders often rewarded rebellious or unsatisfied politicians to keep them within the party. For example, when Joram van Klaveren was plotting to leave the PVV, Wilders publicly suggested that Van Klaveren should become the mayor of the city of Almere, a PVV stronghold. Although this strategy may have worked to keep potential dissidents in place, at the same time it bred discontent among loyal PVV adherents who felt betrayed. Brinkman points out that the strict hierarchical regime is also a way to keep control over the party. According to Brinkman, Wilders does not want other PVV politicians to become too powerful or too popular, because

he would then lose control. For this reason, Wilders tries to avoid other PVV politicians taking up executive offices. For example, when the PVV gained many electoral seats at the municipal elections in 2010, Wilders immediately made some shocking remarks, forcing other parties to refuse to form a coalition with the local PVV. According to Johan Driessen, Wilders is indeed extremely afraid that other PVV politicians will become his rivals. He therefore surrounds himself with young or incompetent people, who he easily rules over. Brinkman always heavily opposed the undemocratic organization of the PVV and pleaded for a move towards party membership. He states that Wilders should not be allowed to obtain democratic power, with an undemocratic party. Brinkman suggests that it should be obligatory for a party to become democratic within a few years and once it is elected to parliament. He also adds that a process of democratization would mean the political end of Geert Wilders.

What next?

Recently, the divide and conquer tactics of Wilders, as well as his strict hierarchical organization, appear somewhat exhausted. The PVV have suffered some moderate electoral loss at both the municipal and European elections. Nonetheless, the party still polls at around 13 per cent of the vote. This amazes Jan Driessen, who hopes that people will finally start to see that the PVV's populist rhetoric has led to nothing substantial: »Wilders has not been able to build a sustainable environment within his own party. It is a protest party that refuses to take political responsibility«.

Complaints about the PVV's modest political track record in terms of accomplishments have indeed increased. After the fall of the minority government in 2012, D66 party leader, Pechtold, repeatedly asked Wilders about his achievements as a support partner of the minority government. He argued that Wilders had polarized a lot but had achieved little.[38] Anonymous argues that room for populist rhetoric diminis-

hes when competence is emphasized in debates. A stronger emphasis on political accomplishments implies that the capability/quality of a politician is largely derived from his/her past achievements. Brinkman states that established parties only minimally combat Wilders on competence and content: »Ever since Wilders emerged, established parties have tried to portray him as dangerous or nuts. However, he is certainly not nuts. [...] Wilders discusses problems that are actually part of society and because of this people are willing to accept that sometimes he goes overboard. [...] Established parties should start taking Wilders seriously, and challenge him on content, because his content is poor.« However, it remains the question how much PVV voters care about the implementation of policy. As Van de Linde puts it: »they just want to be heard.«

Summary

This chapter was set up to describe how Dutch established parties and Dutch media have responded to the emergence of the PVV and to what effect. Established parties were taken by surprise by the success of the PVV in 2006. Whilst the political establishment experienced a similar electoral threat a few years before (from the LPF), it was unable to prevent the emergence of a new populist radical right party. Furthermore, the continuous electoral success of Wilders and the PVV suggest that many voters are still unsatisfied with how mainstream parties have dealt with, and continue to tackle, issues such as integration and immigration.

All respondents confirm that established parties have trouble striking the right tone when competing with the populist radical right. Most respondents agree that established parties do not win back voters by copying populist radical right rhetoric. It is also perceived as dragging down the tone of the political debate in general. It is not considered credible or effective. Populist radical right rhetoric fits the nature of a

protest party such as the PVV, but it does not suit established parties. According to most respondents parroting 'street language' from populist radical right parties, makes established parties look weak. This seems illustrated by the strenuous efforts of the PvdA to 'toughen up' their position on immigration and integration.

Respondents are divided over the question of whether or not established parties should try to win back the issues of immigration and integration. Van de Linde states that this is a hopeless effort: the PVV reigns on these issues and it is impossible to compete with the party in this respect. Attention to the issues of integration and immigration only seems to benefit the PVV. According to Van de Linde, established parties should emphasize their own strengths instead of the strengths of others. Vogelaar, on the other hand, believes that the right policies can take away the reasons why people vote for populist radical right parties. Finally, Jan Driessen advocates that politicians should offer the electorate a new perspective on Dutch (multicultural) society. None of the respondents believe that incorporating a populist radical right party in government would damage this party electorally. Most respondents believe that prosecution of populist radical right politicians favours the party, because of the media attention this draws. Nonetheless, respondents are divided about whether prosecution remains advantageous in case of a conviction.

All respondents agree about the fact that media attention is crucial to the success of any political party. Most agree that the PVV is extremely skilful in attracting media attention. The PVV distinguishes itself from other parties through it's interaction with the press. The party boycotts some mainstream media, especially those that are considered left-wing. Some interviewees argued, that because of this behaviour the party is often discussed in the aforementioned media. Also, more than other politicians, Wilders communicates in a one-way fashion. For example, he often uses Twitter to bring about his message. Jan Driessen points out that the press simply report Wilders' tweets without much critique.

Several respondents suggest that the increasing commercialisation of the media facilitates this kind of communication. Media are increasingly eager to report one-liners, scoops and scandals, and in this respect Wilders' way of communicating fits perfectly. However, Van Weezel emphasises that the media do not intentionally favour Wilders, rather the PVV simply gains by how the media function nowadays.

Concluding reflections

Clearly, it is a difficult task for established parties to re-strengthen their position on the issues of immigration or integration and respond to populist rhetoric. Populist radical right parties will emphasize every negative aspect of multicultural society to illustrate their point, and this puts established parties automatically on the defence. Once established parties begin to stress the negative aspects of immigration or integration, their statements are most likely considered artificial (by voters who are drawn to the right) or unwelcome (by voters who are not drawn to the right). It seems that if established parties wish to respond, they should do so by questioning the competence and achievements of the populist radical right. That is, what have these parties actually done to improve the situation? It is also possible to indirectly respond, by creating a new and more positive discourse on immigration and integration. This suggests that established parties consequently frame immigration and integration on their own terms, instead of stepping into the frame offered by the populist radical right party. A long-term possibility is to take away the aspects that cause social unrest by means of policy implementation, either with or without inclusion of the populist radical right party. Besides, established parties have to make sure that the message they wish to spread, gets picked up by the media, while provocative statements seem to resonate better than duly considered ones. This suggests that established politicians have to walk a fine line between framing their messages attractive to the media, and losing their credibility.

Paradoxically, the biggest threat to a populist radical right party seems to be the party itself. In general, populist radical right parties have tremendous trouble finding suitable and reliable political candidates. Often, populist radical right parties strive on their loudmouth rhetoric and provocative (mostly unfeasibly) policy proposals. That is to say, populist radical right parties are far from nuanced. While this kind of behaviour attracts voters, it hinders the employment of 'regular' politicians. The lack of willingness to work for a populist radical right party is further strengthened by the fact that it is hard to find another job after you have been publicly affiliated to such a party. Populist radical right parties often attract opportunists with little political experience, or shady people with criminal track records and/or extreme right sympathies. Subsequently, the survival of radical right parties is often threatened by management problems and internal struggles. In that respect, their political strength, being the provocative political »outsider«, is also their weakness. The PVV certainly seems exemplary of this populist radical right party paradox.

Appendix. Name of the party, party family and parliamentary seat average

Party name	Party Family	Seat average*
CDA	Christian-democratic	25.0
CU	Christian -democratic	5.3
D66	Social-liberal	8.3
Groenlinks	Ecologic (green)	7.0
PvdA	Social-democratic	33.6
PvdD	Ecologic (green)	2.0
PVV	Radical right	16.0
SGP	Christian-orthodox	2.3
SP	Socialist	18.3
50Plus	Elderly Welfare	2.0
VVD	Liberal-conservative	31.3

Note: Christian-orthodox and Christian-democratic parties are considered one party family.
* Average of parliamentary seats (out of 150) during the elections between 2006-2012. 50Plus entered parliament for the first time in 2012.

Notes

1 Contact the authors through S.C.vanheerden@uva.nl and B.Creusen@uva.nl.

2 In this chapter we speak of radical right parties, based on a principal divide between radical right and extreme right anti-immigration parties. In contrast to extreme right parties, radical right parties accept the main rules of parliamentary democracy. Radical right parties are in many ways 'normal parties' with 'normal voters', located at the far right side of the political spectrum. Moreover, we consider both types of parties anti-immigration parties. For a further elaboration upon different types of anti-immigration parties, see the chapter by Van der Brug et al.

3 The Netherlands is a bicameral parliamentary democracy characterized by proportional representation. This means that political parties enter parliament by getting enough votes for at least one seat, regardless of where in the country the votes were cast. As opposed to, for instance Germany, the Dutch political system has a low political threshold (0.66 per cent), which allows new parties a fair chance of entering parliament. The Second Chamber (or House of Representatives) consists of 150 seats; the First Chamber (or Senate) consists of 75 seats.

4 Since the emergence of the PVV, 10 other parties have been seated in Dutch parliament. General elections were held in 2006, 2010, and 2012. Together these parties can be classified as members of 8 different party families (see Appendix I). The Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA), Christen-Democratisch Appèl (CDA) and Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD) are considered 'the big three' Dutch mainstream parties. At least two of these parties participated in every government coalition after the Second World War.

5 For example see: Van Spanje, J. and De Vreese, C.H. (forthcoming) 'The good, the bad and the voter; The impact of hate speech prosecution of a politician on electoral support for his party, Party Politics DOI: 10.1177/1354068812472553 Also see: http://www.joop.nl/opinies/detail/artikel/26485_waarom_wilders_wint/ (visited May 23th , 2014).

6 For example see: http://www.joop.nl/leven/detail/artikel/14610_step_vaessen_in_arondeuslezing/ (visited May 23th , 2014).

7 De Rooy, P. (2013) in: Aerts, Remieg e.a., »Land van Kleine gebaren. Een politieke geschiedenis van Nederland, 1780-2012« Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Boom.

8 Fennema, M. (2010) »Geert Wilders Tovenaarsleerling« Amsterdam: Prometheus.

9 De Rooy (2013).
10 Fennema (2010).
11 February 6th, 2004.
12 The quote in Dutch was: »En laat daarna de hoofddoekjes maar wapperen op het Malieveld. Ik lust ze rauw«.
13 Fennema (2010).
14 Fennema (2010).
15 See 'Onafhankelijkheidsverklaring' (Wilders' declaration of independence): http://www.pvv.nl/index.php/component/content/article.html?id=684:onafhankelijkheidsverklaring (visited May 8th, 2004); also see Fennema (2010).
16 De Pers, February 13th, 2007. Also see Fennema (2010).
17 De Volkskrant, August 8th, 2007. See: http://www.volkskrant.nl/vk/nl/2686/Binnenland/article/detail/870782/2007/08/08/Wilders-verbied-de-Koran-ook-in-moskee.dhtml (visited May 8th, 2014).
18 See http://www.elsevier.nl/Politiek/nieuws/2007/9/Wilders-Vogelaar-is-knettergek-geworden-ELSEVIER137850W/ (visited May 7th 2014).
19 Fennema (2010).
20 Fennema (2010); also see www.peil.nl.
21 See; http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/1166140/2009/09/16/Wilders-wil-kopvoddentaks.dhtml (visited May 8th).
22 Van Spanje, J. and De Vreese, C.H. (forthcoming),
23 He also asked his supporters whether they wanted 'more or fewer' European Union and 'more or fewer' PvdA.
24 Please see: https://www.noties.nl/peil.nl/ (visited August 18th, 2014)
25 The acronym stands for the name of the three founders.
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Chapter 9

Acting for Immigrants' Rights: Civil Society and Immigration Policies in Italy

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Italy occupies a peculiar position in the international debate on immigration policy. At the socio-legal level, it has been one of the most open countries in Europe: It has granted seven amnesties in 25 years which have given legal residence to more than four million foreigners[1] and integrated more than two million immigrants into the labour market.[2] However, this has not been matched with wide reaching political strategies. Italy has demonstrated strong reluctance to accept its new status as a 'migrant receiving country' and to address the concerns of a multi-ethnic population.[3] For instance, in 1992 the laws governing citizenship were made more restrictive, responding to growing fears that the countries 'ethnic composition' was changing.[4] Moreover, Italy has hosted one of the strongest and longest-lasting anti-immigration parties in Europe, Lega Nord (Northern League). The party formed part of the governing coalition under the Berlusconi governments (1994-1996; 2001-2006; 2008-2011), and held responsibility over Home Affairs in the last one (2008-2011). Under the influence of Lega Nord, Italian centre-right governments have both spread attitudes of anxiety and hostility towards immigrants and asylum seekers, and sought to enforce anti-immigration and exclusory policies at the national and local level.

Subsequent governments since 2011 (headed by Mario Monti, Enrico Letta, and Matteo Renzi) have lacked a clear pro-immigrant majority. Whilst the rhetoric has changed and, in particular, the rescue of asylum seekers in the Mediterranean has been granted, to date they have not modified access to citizenship or altered immigration law. However, the Renzi government did de-criminalize irregular immigration. In other words, despite minor changes, the architecture of Italy's contemporary immigration and citizenship regime has been largely shaped by center-right governments.

By contrast, civil society actors have played an important role in contesting anti-immigration sentiment and restrictive policies. They often provide social services to immigrants (e.g. information and support

with bureaucratic procedures, health care for irregular sojourners, Italian language classes), but also protest against anti-immigrant policies, pursue legal claims in court and campaign to influence public opinion on matters like citizenship and voting rights.[5]

This chapter begins by describing Italy's rapid change from an emigration to an immigration country. It then analyzes Italian immigration policies at the national level, highlighting the restrictive attitudes that prevailed in the decade 2002–2011. I underline the apparent contradiction between tough policy rhetoric, often influenced by Lega Nord[6], and the more lenient application of policies. I argue that the needs of the Italian labour market (firms and families) have pushed a practical acceptance of migrant workers. In this section, I also show how civil society actors have opposed anti-immigration policies and tried to influence the public discourse, which has largely supported the government's position. In the third section, I consider the development of policies of exclusion at the local level, specifically in regions and towns ruled by Lega Nord and its centre-right allies. In section four and five I analyze the reaction of civil society actors to anti-immigration policies with reference to two main events: the struggle against local policies of exclusion and the *L'Italia sono anch'io* (*I am Italy too*) campaign for a new citizenship law. This reflects findings from a series of interviews that took place in Lombardy from 2012 to 2014. Finally, I propose that anti-immigration sentiment has begun to soften in Italy. Whilst it is not possible to suggest that such changes are a direct consequence of civil society's campaigns, the latter have provided a significant challenge to anti-immigration discourse.

Italy as a 'host' country

When analyzing the phenomenon of migration in Italy, what is most striking is how rapidly the country has changed from a place of emigration to one of immigration. Italy and the Southern European countries more

generally have become major destinations for international migration in the past twenty years. This has been due not only to porous borders and proximity to the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, as was initially thought, but also to the specific demands of their economic systems. At present, Italy has between 5.3 and 4.4 million immigrants (between 8.8 per cent and 7.3 per cent of the population). More than 2.2 million regularly work for the Italian economy and represent more than 10 per cent of total employment.[7]

Foreign immigration to Italy is caught between an economic demand that has been highly dynamic, at least until the economic recession that began in 2008, and policies that in principle have sought to block the entry of new immigrants and halt the multi-ethnic transformation of society. Over the last 25 years policy makers have been forced to come to terms with economic demands for manual workers. This led to the introduction of a number of amnesties for both irregular immigrants and their employers, which circumvented standard labour market regulations (see below).[8]

The transition from an emigration to an immigration region was largely unexpected and laxly regulated by those in power. While there was a huge change in the labour market and to local societies, this was only later acknowledged by elites and public opinion and often not reflected in public institutions and legal regulation.

In the 1980s, when it became clear in the public sphere that Italy was becoming a country of immigration, the phenomenon was represented mainly as a social problem by the public and most political actors. The assumption was that a new social problem had impacted upon an already troubled country, plagued by high unemployment and deep regional inequalities.[9]

Meanwhile, in a quiet and fragmented manner, immigrants where already integrating into the Italian Labour market, working for small and medium firms but also in the domestic sector. This 'economic integration' was supported by several social actors (NGOs, trade unions,

churches). The trend was initially informal, but it grew increasingly formalized over time. This use of migrant labour was mainly focused in richer and more developed regions where the gap between labor supply and demand was wider and more evident. The political regulation of this movement came only later. It began with the Martelli Law of 1990, which allowed regular immigrants to participate in the private labor market freely and on equal terms with Italian workers.

However, over the years the gap between market demands and immigration policies has reopened time and again. Not by accident, regularization laws have been the mainstay of Italian immigration policies. Several have been passed – 7 in 25 years, the most recent one being in September 2012. This has been supplemented with a number of hidden regularizations made through the quota system for foreign worker admissions. Four 'amnesties' were implemented between 1986 and 1998, affecting 790,000 irregular migrants, 630,000 regularisations were granted in 2002 alone, about 300,000 in 2009 under the last Berlusconi government, and about 120,000 in 2012 (Monti government). In this regard there has been a surprising continuity in Italian immigration policies towards irregular workers, irrespective of which party has been in power.[10]

Overall, the political governance of immigration in Italy has exhibited contrasting tendencies, which have intensified in recent years. There exists a dichotomy between restrictive policies in principle and de facto tolerance. There is extensive use of irregular immigrants in the underground economy, furthermore regularization measures, such as amnesties and legalising irregular workers, mean that immigrants hold a significant presence in the Italian labour market. The gap between rhetoric and economic demands has been constant features of Italian immigration policies since the 80s.[11]

With time, there has been growing acknowledgement of the economic role of migrants. This has enhanced the political legitimacy of their presence in the country. Even when centre-right governments have

been in power they have been unable to deny the demand for immigrant labour. So they chose to use it as a discriminating criterion for the admission and legal residence of immigrants: in principle, only immigrants holding a job are legally admitted.[12]

Despite these restrictions, this approach still acknowledges the contribution by immigrants to the Italian economy. Furthermore, when migrants have a job this affords access to a range of social rights and it fosters family reunification. What remains problematic is that such a functional integration of immigrants (i.e. in response to the needs of the Italian economy) does not translate into citizenship and full political rights.

Political resistance against 'multiethnic' transformation

Where Italian immigration policies have been less open is in regards to naturalization. Restricting citizenship to immigrants, and granting it generously to Italian emigrants' descendants, remains a legacy of Italy's identity as an 'emigrant nation'. The new citizenship code was almost unanimously approved by Parliament in 1992, at a time when immigration to Italy began to increase on a large scale. This strengthened the linkage of citizenship to birthright, enabling the grandchildren of former Italian emigrants to maintain and to acquire citizenship, while remaining very strict towards non-EU foreigners wanting to acquire full rights. The law requires ten years of residence, the application takes three to four years to process, and the administration's discretionary response is often negative. Children of immigrants can apply for Italian citizenship when they reach adult age if they have been born in Italy and have lived in the country without interruption. Otherwise, they are subject to the requisite ten years of residence. The difficulty of acquiring Italian citizenship also shapes the interaction of immigrants in the labour market as they can only access private sector employment. This is a

consequence of a law enacted during fascist rule (1922–1945), which still restricts public sector work to those with full Italian citizenship.

By contrast, gaining Italian citizenship through marriage is significantly easier than in most other European countries. This is why for many years the most frequent naturalization route was through marriage.[13]

The right to vote has followed more or less the same pattern as naturalization policy. Since the national elections of 2006, a new law has allowed Italian emigrants, often resident abroad for decades, to vote without returning to Italy, and to elect their own representatives in the Italian Parliament: a right very rare across the world. On the contrary, third-country nationals, even if long-term residents, have not yet gained the right to vote in local elections in Italy.

The centre-right parties have resisted any opening on these two issues, and the centre-left parties, when in power, have failed to reach agreement on the matter. In recent years, technical governments and broad coalitions have not demonstrated any strong commitment on the issue, probably anticipating that such a political initiative could risk bringing down the government.

This reluctance has a clear symbolic dimension, in that Italy has struggled to redefine itself as a multi-ethnic nation. It also has social and political consequences. Given that foreign immigrants are unable to access citizenship and voting rights, they face many obstacles in accessing social rights, and sometimes civil rights, such as freedom of worship.[14]

The decade between 2001 and 2011 was particularly marked by a hostile political discourse towards immigrants. This was accentuated in the years between 2008 and 2011 under the third Berlusconi government, when Roberto Maroni of Lega Nord was appointed as Minister of Home Affairs. Comparative to the majority of other European citizens, according to several European surveys, immigration is of particular concern to Italians.[15]

In Italy, as an analysis by the Pavia Observatory (a research institute specialized in the analysis of the mass-media) has shown, news items concerning criminality and violent crimes dominate public and private television broadcasts to an extent unparalleled in the rest of Europe.[16] This type of coverage particularly intensified between 2006 and 2008, and Italians became convinced that they were living in a very dangerous country. This sense of personal insecurity was built on a fear regarding the remission of prison sentences approved by the centre-left government and by growing immigration figures. In particular this fear was focused on so-called »illegal« immigration. These factors dominated news coverage whilst largely ignoring other security issues, such as the Mafia control of certain regions in the south of the country. This vision gradually became hegemonic with major newspapers and many left-wing politicians also adhering to this logic. In such a climate, the story of a woman in Rome who was killed by a Romanian immigrant during an attempted rape provoked political uproar. It brought street demonstrations against immigrants, demands for special laws to protect citizens' security and the expulsion of »illegals« (even migrants from within the European Union).

Issues of security and the struggle against »illegal« immigration dominated the 2008 election campaign. This has contributed to the centre-right's overwhelming victory, as they ran with the promise: »No more clandestine immigrants on our doorstep«. After coming to power, the Berlusconi government, as already mentioned, made Roberto Maroni, a leading member of Lega Nord, minister for Home Affairs (2008–2011). This effectively gave an anti-immigrant party responsibility over domestic security and immigration.

During this period the government enacted a number of provisions, which aimed to fight 'illegal' immigration and did so by treating immigration as a security issue. Between 2008 and 2009 the government introduced a »security package« in which several provisions targeted immigrants. The different security measures included a census of Roma

minorities living in unauthorized camps in the areas surrounding Rome, Milan, and Naples; the deployment of troops on the streets of major cities and in neighbourhoods critical for law-enforcement purposes; the introduction of a clause which meant that »illegal« immigrant status was considered as an aggravating circumstance in trials of immigrants being prosecuted for other crimes; the definition of »unauthorized presence in the country« as a crime; the possible detention of irregular immigrants failing to comply with expulsion orders; the introduction of surveillance by citizens' associations (or »citizen patrols«); and the prohibition of all administrative acts, including marriage, for undocumented immigrants.[17] Furthermore, an agreement was signed with Libya, which helped return immigrants arriving by sea who were defined without exceptions as 'clandestine'. This resulted in the rejection of 900 people in the summer 2009, none of whom were allowed to apply for asylum. Finally, this »security package« included the extension of the period of detention for undocumented immigrants in 2011, first to six months and then to eighteen months. [18] These policies were accompanied by a strong anti-immigrant rhetoric, which was adopted by the Italian government, again treating immigrants as threats. For example, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi argued in January 2010 that »a reduction in [the number of] foreigners in Italy means fewer people to swell the ranks of criminals.«[19] The mainstream media argued that these measures were supported by public opinion. When the first »security package« was approved (2008), the main Italian newspaper, *Il Corriere della Sera*, published the results of an opinion poll under the headline: »Tough Line by the Government. Three Italians out of four agree.«[20]

Whilst taking a tough line on certain aspects of immigration control, it is notable that the government held back on workplace inspections to combat the underground economy. It thus showed a practical tolerance of employers exploiting irregular immigrants. In 2009, the government even announced an amnesty for families employing irregular immigrants as domestic and care workers, with about 300,000 applications

being made. Moreover, expulsions remained at about 14–18,000 each year, a small fraction of the irregular population, which was estimated at between 400,000 and 700,000 people. The severity of declared immigration policies was often contradicted by the practical tolerance of an irregular migrant workforce.

For some time, this approach to immigration has been supported by the Italian electorate. The regional elections in March 2010 mainly rewarded the Lega Nord. Several polls in 2009 also suggested that the majority of Italians approved of tougher immigration laws: they were convinced that they were safer; supported local governments opposing the construction of places of worship for Muslim immigrants; wanted to reserve certain social rights to Italians alone; and they agreed with limiting migrant rights.[21]

More recent elections since 2011 reveal a more complicated picture. Immigration has a strong symbolic meaning in political discourse in Italy as in many other countries. In general terms, center-right parties demand much stricter rules on admission of new immigrants: More restrictive policies against irregular immigrants, a halt on asylum claims and the ending of operations to save migrants crossing the Mediterranean, as well as restrictions on social rights (such as social housing). At the same time, they do not want to change citizenship laws and give third country nationals the right to vote in local elections. In contrast, centre-left parties demand more active policies on new admissions, stress the need to regularize irregular immigrants, and show more commitment to the reception of asylum seekers, even if they demand European solidarity on the issue. The radical left demands the closure of detention centres for irregular immigrants. The centre-left and radical left agree on the reform of the citizenship law intended to facilitate naturalizations, and, more or less, automatic citizenship for children born in Italy. The populist Cinque Stelle (Five Stars) Movement, which rose to surprising success in the 2012 general elections, comprises different opinions and has not expressed an official position on immigration.

However, the movement's leader, Beppe Grillo has adopted an anti-immigration stance. He has also concluded an alliance with Nigel Farage and the right-wing UK Independence Party.

Whilst centre-right parties tended to dominate electoral politics until 2011, the 2011 local elections in major cities such as Milan marked a change in this trend, with the victory of centre-left parties. Equally, the general elections of 2012 showed a decrease in votes for the centre-right and a partial victory of the centre-left. This was balanced with the surprising success of the Five Stars Movement. The local elections of May 2014 also confirmed the decline of the centre-right and the success of the centre-left headed by the new leader Matteo Renzi. There was also a halt in the advance of the Five Stars Movement, although they still took around 20 per cent of the vote. Despite this, Lega Nord still governs the three most important regions of Northern Italy (namely, Lombardy, Veneto and Piedmont until May 2014), as well as several provinces (counties) and towns in those regions. It continues to introduce differential treatment of, and restrictions on, immigrants at regional and urban level.

Despite the relative dominance of anti-immigration sentiment it is important to recognize the work of civil society and professional bodies who challenge the implementation of anti-immigrant policies. The medical treatment of irregular immigrants is an interesting case. In 2008 the Berlusconi government announced a plan to compel medical personnel in public hospitals to report the treatment of irregular immigrants.[22] Several protest campaigns immediately began. They involved not only NGOs, but also the medical associations and boards that regulate the health professions.[23] A prominent role was played by SIMM (the Italian Society of Migration Medicine) and by the Regional Migration and Health Groups (GRIS). The Italian branch of the international NGO Doctors Without Borders (MSF), the main trade unions (CGIL, Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro: Italian General Confederation of Work, and CISL, Confederazione Italiana Sindacati dei Lavoratori:

Italian Confederation of Workers Unions), the Association of Family Doctors, representatives of paramedic professions (IPASVI, the National Federation of Professional Nurses, Health Assistants and Child Minders), and the Association of Catholic Doctors all undertook various initiatives, such as filing appeals, collecting signatures, and staging demonstrations.

The protest culminated with a day of national mobilization on 17 March 2009, when health professionals, social actors and migrant associations demonstrated against the new regulation in a number of Italian cities. Their shared slogan was: »We are doctors and nurses, not spies.«[24] The campaign was successful, and in April 2009 the government was finally forced to drop its controversial plan. Whilst the general public was not heavily involved, two factors made the campaign a success: Firstly, the alliance was formed between pro-immigrant actors and professional bodies in the health sector; secondly, the campaign involved Catholic medical associations who are influential because of their connection with the Catholic electorate – a still influential force in Italian politics.[25] The next section focuses further on the role of civil society in challenging anti-immigration policies, in particular on the local level.

Local policies of exclusion

After 2008, many city governments, especially in northern Italy, introduced several provisions that limited immigrants' rights and access to welfare.[26] The reasons for targeting immigrants responded to three main concerns I have already highlighted: Fears regarding safety, competition for welfare benefits, and the perception of a »threat« to local cultural identity. Although the targeting of migrants was not always explicit, in that they did not mention foreigners directly, the purpose of these policies was very clear: to enact more controls against immigrants, to limit their right to reside, or to restrict their access to local benefits and state resources.[27]

The aim of these provisions was to send out the message that local

governments were protecting the »insiders« against intrusion by »outsiders«. The local governments sought to build consensus at a relatively low cost by presenting themselves as guarantors of security and social order. To do this they labelled immigrants (especially »illegal« migrants) as a menace and undesirable. Local policies thus promoted and institutionalized the boundaries between an »us« and »them« and encouraged separation and tension between majority and minority groups.

A pilot study on 70 cases involving 47 local authorities in the region of Lombardy has shown that migrants were targeted in various ways in measures to protect the »security« of citizens.[28] Controls of this type involved the local authorities and the police. For instance, checks by both ticket inspectors and police on urban transport in Milan specifically targeted irregular migrants without valid tickets. In Adro, a €550 reward was introduced for the successful detainment of an irregular immigrant by the local police. An operation called »White Christmas« was introduced in the small town of Coccaglio. Here official inspections of private homes were allowed in order to identify irregular migrants. Local citizens were also encouraged to get involved in the policing of migrants. There have been examples of citizens mobilizing to form neighbourhood patrols with the aim of identifying and warning off irregular migrants. Local residents were encouraged to report »illegal« migrants: In Cantu a special toll-free report line was introduced; in San Martino all'Argine official notices were published by the local authorities, inviting citizens to report irregular migrants. Significantly, many Roma settlements were the object of numerous evictions and restrictions throughout the region.

Further measures have excluded immigrants from local welfare benefits. For instance, in several towns only Italian citizens could apply for grants for new-born babies. Other examples include opposition to the creation of places of worship for Muslims, or bans on head scarves and face veils. As we shall see in the next section, the discriminatory or exclusionary character of these measures has been challenged.

That is, they have been denounced by civil society actors, and in many cases condemned by legal rulings.

The opposition against policies of exclusion

If local government measures restricting migrants have not been fully implemented, the main reason is the opposition that they have encountered in Italian civil society. Although migrant organizations are still weak in Italy, several Italian actors have mobilized in favour of migrant rights. This has encompassed Catholic institutions to radical social movements. Pro-immigration actors form a minority but they have created a combative advocacy coalition in defence of migrants' rights.

Opposition against local policies therefore has been raised mainly by non-governmental actors. In this section, I shall describe their strategies by using interviews conducted at the local level in Lombardy. This research involved 15 semi-structured qualitative interviews with people from different backgrounds: lawyers, members of trade unions, members of NGOs, members of local political bodies.[29]

The main social actors that opposed the local exclusion policies in Lombardy were the Catholic organization Caritas, the two main Italian trade unions (i.e. CGIL and CISL), some organizations linked to trade unions such as the Associazione nazionale oltre le Frontiere (National Beyond the Borders Association) (ANOLF[30]), the Catholic association ACLI (Associazioni Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani: Italian Christian Workers Associations), the leftist ARCI (Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana: Italian Recreational and Cultural Association), the Associazione Avvocati per Niente (Association of Pro-Bono Lawyers) and the Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration (Associazione per gli Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione, ASGI).

Immigrant associations hardly intervened due to their institutional weakness.[31] They tend to lack power, funds and representation and are

mostly cultural, social or religious associations. As one of our interviewees, a member of the nonprofit Italian association Arci, said: »In Milan there are many groups, many small associations which are not well organized or officially recognized.« As a consequence, these organizations have little power to act and rely on »Italian« non-profit associations like Arci. These associations act as the link between immigrants and government institutions.

Social actors such as Arci have stressed the discriminatory nature of local regulations in Lombardy (and other regions). The new local provisions were invariably described as »xenophobic initiatives«, »racist acts«, »pure racism«, »apartheid climax« and the mayors were described as »mayor sheriffs«.[32]

An important issue cited in the interviews was the creation of boundaries between »us« and »them«. The radicalisation of this division can lead to conflict, as one interviewee suggested:

> *Faced with something no one knows, after all...faced with an attitude of suspicion which is constantly spreading, and which creates social alarm and mistrust in others, even neighbours, and not necessarily foreigners...not only foreigners...and the fact that security issues are constantly raised, but from a virtual point of view to make people think it is an actual imminent problem, creates a sort of alarmism against everything that might cause problems... this means that, instead of educating people to live together and to negotiate possible conflict, it stirs up opposition, radicalizes fears, leads to actual social conflict* (*BM, member of CGIL Brescia and of a NGO, advocacy coalition*).

The media have often reported the conflicting views between the local authorities and civil society groups. Local authorities tend to affirm the priority of (Italian) citizens' rights, and the need to provide security against »dangerous«, »illegal« immigrants (often focusing

on Roma minorities). Trade unions, Catholic organizations, and other civil-society actors have stressed a concern for human rights against xenophobic or racist discrimination.

This conflicting viewpoint was represented by our interviewees. To those opposing restrictive measures the aim of local authorities was to obtain political support from the public by discriminating against immigrants. As a member of the trade union CISL said:

> *During the electoral campaigns they play on this fear. Mistrust, fear of others, painting a black picture of them* [*immigrants*] *, just to bring out those instincts that are probably natural, which are inside all of us, which are about mistrust of those who arrive from another country. And they go against them with electoral posters, like »No gypsy cities«. They rely on that for electoral gain* (*MC, member of CISL Milan, Department of Immigration Policies*).

The opinion that the aim is only to obtain political support is confirmed by the fact that many of these local regulations are inapplicable:

> *My evaluation was quite disheartening. I saw a repressive attitude in those by-laws. From the technical point of view they were very badly written, cut and pasted one from another, with only political propaganda purposes, to obtain electoral support, because…in that period the most debated issue was urban security* [.....]. *But some of them were also inapplicable…for example that by-law about begging: if someone begs, he/she has to pay a 500 euro fine…where does he/she find 500 euro? It was demagogy. They did not realize that these measures were inapplicable, even in a concrete sense* (*PI, member of Caritas, Immigration Office, Milan*).

Even if this advocacy coalition promoted different forms of protest, the main tool used to fight exclusion policies has been legal recourse on

grounds of discrimination. Lawyers working pro bono have been a key resource in the battles against local governments. As a first step, social actors usually try to involve public authorities, mainly UNAR, Ufficio Nazionale Anti Discriminazione Razziale (National Office Against Racial Discrimination) and the prefects, local representatives of the national government.[33]

After verifying that a local policy was indeed discriminatory, trade unions, in collaboration with the Associazione Avvocati per Niente, sent a warning to the municipality, and also to UNAR and to the local Prefect in order to ask for their opinions. However, these initial routes have had limited success. The autonomy of regional and urban governments is greater in Italy than in many other countries. The Home Affairs Minister, and the prefects, rarely interfere in the decisions of local authorities. The Security Packages of 2008/2009 gave local authorities more powers on issues of urban security, and many mayors interpreted them broadly, for instance by prohibiting face veils. In compliance with European Union rules against discrimination, the Italian government has founded UNAR; but this body can only put forward opinions and does not pursue legal cases of discrimination. Its power is hampered because it is not an independent body from government.

Further to this, civil society opposition has not been deeply supported by political actors. In many interviewees' opinion, the local political opposition (in general, centre-left parties) has not strongly opposed the proposals because urban security and immigration are extremely sensitive issues for the electorate. The opposition does not challenge these policies for fear of losing votes.

What has been more successful has been the persecution of cases against municipalities by lawyers.[34] The attempt to exclude immigrants from certain rights was opposed by experts in law and also by the courts, which passed judgments against local exclusory policies. The civil society actors and lawyers involved in the trials justified their accusations by citing the violation of fundamental rights. Many local policies

have been found to violate human rights, such as the freedom of religion or personal freedom, the right to education, the right to move, or health rights.[35] This was the argument used in the courts, where the Associazione Avvocati per Niente, usually in collaboration with the trade unions, has fought against the local exclusion of immigrants. Importantly, this same argument has been used by judges who have ruled against local municipalities. In almost all the judgments the reason for banning local policies was the infringement of immigrants' human rights.

The Association Avvocati per Niente was founded in 2004, and holds the aim of guaranteeing justice for the vulnerable people with the pro bono legal support. It is promoted by Caritas and supported by a number of civil society organizations (Trade Unions, ACLI – the Christian Associations of Italian Workers). The association has won several important legal battles: against the municipality of Milan for its exclusion of the children of irregular immigrants from nursery schools; against the municipality of Brescia for its exclusion of new-born babies of foreign citizens from financial benefits; against various town councils for their bans on wearing a veil; and against ATM of Milan (the Municipal Public Transport Company) for excluding a foreign citizen on the basis that only Italian citizens can work for the state.

The Association, moreover, offers legal advice to organizations working with the most vulnerable individuals and provides training for other lawyers on topics relating to discrimination. As well as providing free legal support, the Association's regulations require that »each member give the Association the proceeds from pro bono work for at least two cases per year, and from any costs that the other party is ordered to reimburse.«[36]

In conclusion, civil society actors have tried to oppose local exclusion policies by claiming the defence of human rights, such as personal freedom or the freedom of worship. Moreover, the role of civil society actors has proved particularly effective in a historical context in which traditional political parties have weakened. The popularity of parties

and politicians is now very low in Italy, and their role is often occupied by non-traditional actors. The success of Lega Nord and then the Five Stars Movement is a clear sign of this trend: Beppe Grillo always denies that his formation is a party. In this landscape, civil society acts in several cases as a bridge between public opinion and political institutions, pursuing rights claims, raising awareness of social issues and fostering political debates.

The L'Italia sono anch'io campaign

The preceding section described the role of civil-society actors in opposing local policies of exclusion.[37] This section explores the role played by civil society at the national level by examining the example of the launch of the *L'Italia sono anch'io* (*I am Italy too*) political campaign in 2011, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Italy's unification. The campaign pressed for reform of the citizenship code and introduction of the right of immigrants to vote in local elections. In accordance with Italian law, the campaign sought to collect the 50,000 signatures necessary for the tabling in parliament of two 'popular initiative' bills: one regarding the right to citizenship and one regarding the right to vote in local elections.

I mentioned earlier that since 1992 the rules governing citizenship acquisition in Italy have tightened. In this context, the first bill called for a reduction of the required duration of legal residency before naturalisation: from ten to five years. For minors born in Italy, or who entered the country before the age of ten, the bill calls for the granting of citizenship upon application within two years of reaching majority age. This proposed opportunity is also extended to the children of irregular residents. Furthermore, it suggests that citizenship could be granted to minors who have achieved a qualification in the Italian school system (on application of their parents). The second proposed bill aimed to grant voting rights in municipal and regional elections to all third-country nationals who have been resident in Italy for at least five years.

The campaign was promoted by 22 civil society organizations, with the support of the well-known publisher Carlo Feltrinelli. It selected the mayor and president of the ANCI (Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani: National Association of Italian Municipalities), Graziano del Rio, as chairman of the national promotion committee. The list of the participating organizations is also interesting because it mirrors the advocacy coalition for immigrants in its various forms. In fact, it again comprises two trade union federations (CGIL and UIL: Unione Italiana del Lavoro, Italian Union of Work) but also an autonomous union politically close to the centre-right (UGL: Unione Generale del Lavoro, General Union of Work). A list of Catholic organizations are also involved, notably Caritas and the Fondazione Migrantes of the Italian Episcopal Conference, together with the federation of evangelical churches in Italy. Also on the list are federations or consortia of bodies and associations active in promoting solidarity, peace, and anti-mafia action, and two anti-racism organizations. However, there are only two migrant organisations involved.

Although immigrants have been involved in the campaign, also in important roles – for example within the trade unions – once again the battles for immigrants' rights have been mainly fought by »Italian« organizations. This is both a strength and a weakness. It is a strength because these are organizations with deep roots in Italian society, sometimes with several millions of members and sympathisers. It is a weakness because it confirms the fragility of immigrant associations, and the need to compensate for it with the commitment of Italian civil society. Nevertheless, whilst underrepresented migrant organizations still form a presence in the campaign.

The campaign has seen the involvement of numerous local institutions and leading figures in the arts and entertainment world. Campaign groups have mobilized in more than a hundred towns and promotion committees have been created at local and regional level. The national promotion committee has organized six national »D-Days« to collect

signatures, during which the stands of local committees have been set up in numerous streets and town squares.[38] Each local committee and its members also organized events and conferences, disseminating the campaign through its local centres and initiatives.

A representative of the CGIL trade union, a promoter of the campaign, stressed the large involvement of activists and volunteers. He described:

> *An effort at organization and social participation, which has involved thousands of volunteers and young people of all nationalities in the campaign's stands and initiatives. The campaign has culminated in delivery of the signatures to parliament and with full support expressed by president Giorgio Napolitano for rapid solution for this severe shortcoming in the law. The activity of collecting signatures showed that public opinion is much more mature than the reactionary stance adopted by numerous xenophobic political movements. In fact, several signatories believed that those legal provisions – especially the one on the Italian citizenship of children born here – were already in force* (*FP, head of the immigration office, CGIL Milano*).

At the local level, other associations have often joined the campaign or assisted with its promotion in various ways. The politically independent trade union CISL has not joined the campaign at national level, but in Milan it has supported its proposals. The head of the immigration office stated:

> *The Milan CISL has promoted and won a series of test cases, obtaining a favorable ruling, for example, on the possibility for second-generation youth to do community service. Moreover, because we are convinced that legal actions must always be accompanied by patient and constant work of cultural promotion* (...) *we have*

> *decided to participate actively in the collection of signatures for the L'Italia sono anch'io campaign, in the certainty that, even if it has somewhat radical overtones that will hopefully be tempered by parliament, the time has come to introduce into our legislation the »ius soli« principle, on the basis of which anyone born and grown up in our country is Italian* (*MB, head of the immigration office, CISL Milano*).

Caritas Ambrosiana, has provided further support of with numerous initiatives to promote the campaign at its local branches. As the head of the Caritas Ambrosiana office for foreigners explained:

> *This is done by talking about the campaign, distributing the relative material, and on occasions when a significant number of people are present – for instance presentation of the statistical dossier on immigration – by directly promoting the signature collection, which in any case can be done at our centre* (*LB, Caritas Ambrosiana*).

To foster awareness of citizenship rights, the movie director Fred Kuwornu has produced the documentary *18 ius soli*, which has been projected in numerous Italian schools and by local committees. These events are organized to inform the public about the campaign and to collect signatures. Even after the signatures were delivered to parliament, a new campaign began to maintain public interest in the issues raised and to pressurize members of parliament to start a discussion of the tabled bills.

Another awareness-raising device has been the *Inside Out*/*L'Italia sono anch'io* public art project run by JR, a well-known Parisian street artist. In 2012, JR agreed to launch *Inside Out* in Italy on a national scale to support the *Italia sono anch'io* campaign in collaboration with the municipalities and its promoters. 1 500 Italians and foreigners agreed to allow photographs of their faces to be used by the campaign for the two

popular initiative laws. Their photographs were taken by volunteers and assembled by JR in large black-and-white posters affixed in public spaces of eight Italian towns to testify their support for the campaign. On 20 October 2012 the spaces made available by the local administrations were 'invaded' by hundreds of posters, which turned them into large public works of art proclaiming *L'Italia sono anch'io*.

Picture 1. Inside Out/L'Italia sono anch'io

Finally, the campaign has made much use of the internet to collect and distribute news, and to post video clips produced by national promoters and local committees. The *Italia sono anch'io* Facebook pages have 10,000 friends and there a further 50 Facebook pages designed by local committees, 3,860,000 web tags[39], as well as 15,000 followers reached by the campaign every week through the social media, such as Twitter.

The *Italia sono anch'io* campaign achieved its first objective at the beginning of 2012, when signatures for both the parliamentary bills exceeded the figure of 100,000 (double the number required): 109, 268 for the bill on citizenship, 106,329 for the one on the right to vote in local elections. However, at the legislative level there has been no progress. Parties hostile to change have prevailed in the Italian parliament, and the early elections of February 2013 prevented the formation of a clear majority in favour of reforming the law. Some parties are against any

change, or they want to restrict the conditions to access naturalization even further (Lega Nord, Forza Italia, Fratelli d'Italia). Other parties maintain that citizenship for immigrants is not a priority (Five Stars Movement).[40] Yet others (Nuovo Centro Destra, Unione Democratici di Centro, Scelta Civica) are open to discussion but want to impose conditions and restrictions on the original bills, for instance choosing an intermediate point between ten years and five years of residence before naturalization is allowed; or, for children, the adoption of what is called a »moderate right of the soil« allowing naturalization only to children with one parent sojourning in Italy for five years, and holding regular status for one year (Scelta Civica). Equally, on the centre-left there are different positions. For instance, there is little consensus on the automatic right of residence for babies born in Italy - some wish to subordinate this right to certain conditions (e.g. length of residence, legal status of parents, school attendance).

Importantly, the new prime minister, Renzi, has announced his intention to modify the rules, at least for the second generation, but his government depends on the decisive vote of centre-right parties, such as Nuovo Centro Destra (NCD, New Centre Right) and Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e di Centro (UDC, Union of Christian Democrats and Centre) who are cautious on the matter. In fact, the announcement has not yet been followed by a formal political proposal.

The Italia sono anch'io campaign has nevertheless achieved one result. It has increased awareness among Italians concerning the issues raised and helped build support on the need for reform. Other factors have also certainly influenced public opinion: the President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, has repeatedly requested reform of the Italian citizenship code, in particular for children of immigrants born in Italy. As I suggested, with the decline of centre-right support in the 2012 election the position and the language of centre-right parties have lost ground. This shift from the dominance of centre-right parties over the last twenty years must be seen in the context of the economic

crisis and the rise of unemployment. With these pressing economic concerns the majority of Italians no longer think that their main problems are ensuring security, struggling against illegal immigration, or defending the country's cultural identity.[41]

This is reflected in changing public attitudes. According to a survey conducted in November 2013, more than four in every five Italians think that regularly resident migrants should be able to vote in local elections.[42] Among young people under the age of 34, the consensus exceeds 90 per cent. On the issue of citizenship, four out of ten interviewees (42.6 per cent) declared themselves in favour of the unconditional granting of Italian citizenship to persons born in Italy, a further four (45.6 per cent) were in favour but made naturalization subject to certain conditions: legal residence for a number of years, knowledge of Italian and the history of the country. Overall, therefore, Italians are more open to the granting of rights to immigrants than large part of their political representatives. The Italian Parliament has yet to find a majority to change the law on citizenship, while the majority of public opinion now appears more open to the inclusion of foreign immigrants in the Italian polity.

This hints at how it is political actors seeking support, like Lega Nord and in some cases the Five Stars Movement, that provoke fear and xenophobia. The mobilization of civil society actors therefore performs an important role in combating these tendencies at a cultural level, and it prepares the ground for the reforms necessary to adapt the Italian institutions to the new multi-ethnic composition of society. Many NGOs, trade unions, and religious institutions are well known in Italy for their activities in favour of immigrants. By compensating for deficiencies of the public sector, or assisting irregular immigrants excluded from many public services, they provide a wide range of benefits: information, support with bureaucratic procedures, language courses, health services, free meals. But they also play a cultural and political role by disseminating a notion of immigration as a resource for Italian society and by countering xenophobic positions. In short, they perform four main

activities: they promote networks of solidarity on behalf of migrants; they organize protests against xenophobic policies and campaigns for immigrants' rights; they provide alternative services, above all for irregular immigrants; they provide legal advocacy to immigrants, in particular against public authorities.[43] It is impossible to establish a clear causal connection between their campaigns and the new political landscape in Italy. Nevertheless, they have performed a strong advocacy role during the long cultural dominance of anti-immigration sentiment and have combated xenophobic discourse and exclusory policies through legal channels and through popular mobilisation.

Conclusions. Civil society and the promotion of a new vision

Civil society actors in Italy play a salient role in the social fabric of immigrant integration. Not only by providing a wide range of services but also by defending their rights and promoting political reforms. An advocacy coalition ranging from the Catholic Church to trade unions and social movements has formed. This coalition has challenged xenophobic policies in many ways; it has won crucial battles; and it has fostered a cultural and political change of views, attitudes and rules towards immigrants. It has sometimes anticipated and substituted political parties reluctant to engage in the defence of immigrants.

Immigrants in Italy are not allowed to vote and find it difficult to become Italian citizens, their political capital is weak. Hence there is little political interest in supporting immigrants' interests and claims, and there is a greater political return from adopting anti-immigration stances. Whilst some parties may support immigrant rights in principle, the fear of losing the support of Italian voters has made them very cautious.

For organizations like trade unions, faced with problems of declining membership and a weakening of their public image, alliance with other

social actors is a way to connect with civil society and to attract new members. More than one million immigrants have joined trade unions in Italy, and they form the fastest growing group among active workers.[44] The Catholic Church, in turn, reaffirms its role of supporting vulnerable people and defending human rights.

In this chapter I have examined some of the actions undertaken by civil society actors to challenge anti-immigration policies: public protests, appeals, and demonstrations against xenophobic policies; legal battles in courts; campaigns to raise public awareness of immigrants' rights and to propose new laws which reflect the democratic governance of a multi-ethnic society.

In contrast to other European states, migrant organizations play a less significant role in Italian civil society. A lack of means and competences leaves them in a marginal position. A lack of political rights weakens the voice of immigrants and their ability to gain public support. In a vicious circle, this lack of public support weakens collective action by immigrants. Some immigrant leaders have been co-opted by trade unions or by other organizations, others have mounted radical forms of protest; but overall these actions have not yet produced true activism by immigrants in affirmation of their rights. Some progress has been achieved with the *L'Italia sono anch'io* campaign, in which immigrant associations have been involved, and some individual immigrants have been speakers at public events.

Since 2011 centre-right parties have lost a great deal of political support and many cities have changed their political leadership in recent years by electing centre-left mayors. The economic crisis of Italy has provoked a change of attitudes among Italian citizens: unemployment and economic issues have become the first priority, while fears concerning immigrants have lost ground.[45] According to recent figures, Italians seem to be questioning the idea that contemporary problems originate in the growth of an immigrant population and that security and public order are the main issues facing the country. This is not directly the

effect of civil society's campaigns, but they have nevertheless anticipated and fostered the change of attitudes and the need for reforms. The time seems ripe for major changes in citizenship and immigration policies. However, the current government is based on a heterogeneous coalition and lacks a clear majority on these issues. Citizenship and immigration matters are overloaded with symbolic and ideological meanings; they are frequently used by political parties to define their identity and to mobilize their supporters. The Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has promised a new law on citizenship, but the pressure of the economic crisis, the need for major institutional reforms, and divergences within the political majority make the priority of this commitment uncertain. Civil society will probably have to mobilize again to achieve the desired changes in Italian immigration policies.

Notes

1 ISTAT (2013), Italia in cifre 2013 [Italy in numbers 2013], available on line at http://www.istat.it/it/archivio/30329.

2 Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali (2011) L'immigrazione per lavoro in Italia: evoluzione e prospettive [Immigration for work in Italy: evolution and perspectives], Italialavoro, Roma. Available online at: www.lavoro.gov.it; Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali (2012) Secondo Rapporto annuale sul mercato del lavoro degli immigrati – 2012 [Second annual report on the immigrants' labour market- 2012], Italialavoro, Roma. Available online at: www.lavoro.gov.it.

3 Ambrosini, M. (2013a) 'Immigration in Italy: Between Economic Acceptance and Political Rejection' Journal of international migration and integration Vol. 14(1): pp. 175–194.

4 Zincone, G. (2006) Familismo legale. Come (non) diventare Italiani.[Legal familialism. As (not) to become Italians], Roma-Bari: Laterza.

5 Ambrosini, M. (2013b) 'Fighting discrimination and exclusion: Civil society and immigration policies in Italy' Migration Letters Vol. 10(3): pp. 313–323.

6 To provide a couple of examples of the rhetoric of Lega Nord's leaders: the Interior Minister Maroni declared in 2009: 'we have to be tough and deter-

mined, not indulgent, in opposing clandestine immigration and imposing the rule of law' (Corriere della Sera newspaper, 2 February 2009). The MEP Francesco Speroni said on a Radio 24 programme in 2011: »Europe is using weapons in Libya. (..) We are being invaded, there are people who come to Italy without permits, violating all the rules. At this point we can use all possible means to send them back, we may also use weapons' (12 April 2011, http://notizie.tiscali.it/articoli/cronaca/11/04/13).

7 Ministero del lavoro e delle politiche sociali, 2011; 2012.

8 See for instance: Calavita, K. (2005) »Immigrants at the Margins. Law, Race and Exclusion in Southern Europ.«. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

9 Colombo, A. (2012) »Fuori controllo? Miti e realtà dell'immigrazione in Italia«. Bologna: Il Mulino.

10 Finotelli, C. and Sciortino, G. (2009) 'The Importance of Being Southern: The Making of Policies of Immigration Control in Italy' European Journal of Migration and Law Vol. 11: pp. 119–38.

11 Kosic, A. and Triandafyllidou, A. (2007) 'Italy' in Triandafyllidou, A. and Gropas, R. (eds.) »European Immigration. A Sourcebook«. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 185-194.

12 For example, the Bossi-Fini Law introduced a closer link between residence and work in 2002, while fighting irregular immigration more emphatically and abolishing the sponsor system introduced a few years previously. One aspect of the law requires an economic migrant to have a long-term work contract in order to be able to renew her/his working visa for a further two-year period. The sponsor system, introduced in 1998 by a center-left government, allowed the entrance of new immigrants with a one-year visa »for job search«, under the guarantee of a sponsor and the deposit of a sum as a pledge for the immigrant's return to her/his country if she/he had not found a job.

13 Thus Giovanna Zincone has spoken of a »familial« concept of Italian citizenship. Zincone, G. (2006) Familismo legale. Come (non) diventare Italiani. [Legal familialism. As (not) to become Italians], Roma-Bari: Laterza.

14 Local governments ruled by centre-right coalitions have introduced many legal and administrative obstacles to block the opening of hall of prayers for Muslim minorities.

15 Valtolina, G. (2010) 'I cittadini europei e l'immigrazione: gli italiani sono i più preoccupati' Libertà civili Vol. 6: pp. 102.

16 Diamanti, I. (ed.) (2011) »La sicurezza in Italia e in Europa. Significati, immagine e realtà. Quarta indagine sulla rappresentazione sociale e

mediatica della sicurezza«, Roma: Fondazione Unipolis.

17 It is worth noting that most of these measures have been abolished as a result of decisions by the Constitutional Court or European institutions, but their rhetorical impact has remained powerful: immigrants have been considered in principle a potential danger to Italian society.

18 Triandafyllidou, A. and Ambrosini, M. (2011) 'Irregular Immigration Control in Italy and Greece: Strong Fencing and Weak Gate-keeping Serving the Labour Market', European Journal of Migration and Law Vol. 13: pp. 251–273.

19 Human Rights Watch (2011), Everyday Intolerance. Racist and Xenophobic Violence in Italy. March 2011. Available online at: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2011/03/20/everyday-intolerance-0.

20 Corriere della Sera: http://archiviostorico.corriere.it/2008/maggio/18/Linea_dura_del_governo_accordo_co_9_080518055.shtml. Downloaded the 7th July 2014. However, it has been argued that this statistic only referred to the rules regarding Roma settlements and didn't reflect all of the new measures.

21 Diamanti, I. (2009) »Sillabario dei tempi tristi«. Milan: Feltrinelli.

22 Those treated »for necessary and urgent care«, as the Italian law puts it.

23 See, for an analogy with a similar issue in the Netherlands, Van der Leun, J. (2006) 'Excluding Illegal Migrants in The Netherlands: Between National Policies and Local Implementation', West European Politics Vol. 29(2): pp. 310-326.

24 Geraci, S. and Bodini C. (2011) 'Networks of networks for immigrants' health', Salute e società Vol. 10(2): pp. 148-161.

25 An important juncture in the debate came with the publication in February 2009 of an interview with the President of the Association of Catholic Doctors of Milan, a well-known surgeon, in the influential magazine L'Espresso. The headline was: »We'll never do it«.

26 Ambrosini, M. (2013c) 'We are against a multi-ethnic society': policies of exclusion at the urban level in Italy', Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol. 36(1) pp. 136-155; Ambrosini, M. and Caneva, E. (2012) »Local policies of exclusion: The Italian case«, Accept Pluralism Project, 7th EU Framework Programme, European University Institute. Available online at: www.accept-pluralism.eu/Research/ProjectReports/CaseStudiesPoliticallife.aspx.

27 Manconi, L. and Resta, F. (2010) 'La xenofobia municipale' [Municipal xenophobia], Mondi migranti, Vol. 4(2): pp. 321-331.

28 Ambrosini, M. (2013c) 'We are against a multi-ethnic society': policies of exclusion at the urban level in Italy', Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol. 36(1) pp. 136-155.

29 The interviews were conducted in 2012 by Elena Caneva, researcher at the Department of Social and Political Sciences, university of Milan.

30 ANOLF is a non-profit association linked to CISL. It was founded in 1989 and its aim is to promote an equal multiethnic society, and to fight racism and discrimination.

31 Boccagni, P. (2012) La partecipazione politica degli immigrati: dal dibattito internazionale al caso italiano [The political participation of immigrants: from the international debate to the Italian case] , in Governare città plurali. Politiche locali di integrazione per gli immigrati in Europa [Governing diverse cities. Local policies of integration for immigrants in Europe], edited by M. Ambrosini. Milano: FrancoAngeli, pp. 69-97; Mantovan C. (2007) Immigrazione e cittadinanza. Auto-organizzazione e partecipazione dei migranti in Italia. [Immigration and citizenship. Self-organization and participation of immigrants in Italy], Milano: FrancoAngeli.

32 »Bresciaoggi« newspaper, 10 April 2011.

33 In the Italian legislation system, the Prefect is an officer who represents the national government within the Province (county) and supervises the activities of local administrations. The Prefect is in charge of the Territorial Office of the Government and is answerable to the Ministry of the Interior. Among his tasks is guaranteeing public order and security.

34 For example in the Tradate municipality, a provision was introduced to give a grant for babies born to Italian parents resident in the city for five years. After the judgment, the municipality eliminated the requirement of Italian citizenship, but then declared that there was no more money for babies, so that it did not give funding to either Italians or immigrants. Also in Brescia (the second largest town in Lombardy, about 200,000 inhabitants) , the »baby bonus« was not given to anyone, including Italians, after the judgment condemning the discriminatory provision. By eliminating the bonus for all families, the local governments fostered resentment towards immigrants. A new ruling has been necessary to oblige the local government of Brescia to give the grant to the parents of all the babies born in the town.

35 Lorenzetti A. (2010) 'Le ordinanze sindacali e il principio di uguaglianza: quali garanzie?', Le Regioni, Vol. 1-2: pp. 93-112.

36 Alberto Guariso, former President of the Association, quoted in Giorgi, C. (2011) Avvocati per niente. Milano: Terre di Mezzo, pp. 99.

37 Maria Nardella, student of Social Sciences o Globalization, conducted the interviews and collected materials for this section.

38 The first national D-Day was held on 1 October 2011, the second on 19 November, the third on 17 and 18 December 2011 on the occasion of the international day for the rights of migrant workers and their families. Other D-Days were held in 2012, on 21 January and 4 and 5 February, to mark twenty years since law 91/92, and on 3 March 2012, the last day before conclusion of the campaign.

39 A citation on the Internet.

40 On 23 January 2012, after a speech by the President of the Italian Republic in favor of Italian citizenship for the children of immigrants born in Italy, Beppe Grillo wrote on his blog: »Citizenship for children born in Italy if their parents are not citizens is senseless. Or better, it has a sense: to distract Italians from the real problems and turn them into fans«.

41 Valtolina, G. (2014) Gli italiani e l'immigrazione [The Italians and immigration], in FONDAZIONE ISMU, Diciannovesimo rapporto sulle migrazioni 2013. [Nineteenth report on migrations 2013]. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

42 Survey Community Media Research – Questlab for the newspaper »La Stampa«, November 2013 (number of interviews: 900).

43 Ambrosini, M. (2013b) 'Fighting discrimination and exclusion: Civil society and immigration policies in Italy', Migration Letters Vol. 10(3): pp. 313–323.

44 In Italy trade unions organize also retired workers with success, offering them political representation and several services.

45 Valtolina, G. 2014. Gli italiani e l'immigrazione [The Italians and immigration], in Fondazione Ismu, Diciannovesimo rapporto sulle migrazioni 2013. [Nineteenth report on migrations 2013]. Milano: FrancoAngeli.

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Chapter 10

Conclusion and reflections

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It is a commonly held assumption that populist, anti-immigration parties are on the rise, fuelled by the economic crisis and increasingly negative attitudes to immigration. The research presented in this book takes issue with such a description of contemporary Europe: Anti-immigration attitudes are not increasing, populist parties do not gain electoral support all over Europe and local political mobilisation, including the civil society, is often successful in countering simplistic and divisive rhetoric.

Several points have been raised in this book that challenge ubiquitous claims about what drives the support for populist, anti-immigration parties and about how they can be countered. The widespread believes that economic downturns spur support for populists, or that voters are mainly choosing to vote for these parties as a »protest vote«, or that populist parties necessarily destabilise, and wither, if they are given any political influence, divert focus from the issues that are core to the support for the populist, anti-immigration message. These are issues about immigration itself, but also about the effects of globalisation on equality of opportunity and of the future of democratic national self-determination in an internationalised world.

Understanding Support of Populism

The economic crisis has not implied a substantially increased appeal of the populist, anti-immigration message. Unsurprisingly, many voters are more worried about the economy than immigration in times of crisis. This is good news for established parties, who still enjoy more trust from voters than populists do on the economic matters. Rather than being attracted to those offering simplistic solutions and focusing on external and internal enemies (immigrants and the political elite), the vast majority of voters turn to parties that make and present an array of policies aimed at ensuring economic recovery and growth. If these parties can keep focusing the political agenda on economic

and social policy, populist parties will have little to offer voters.

It is also, however, bad news. If anti-immigration sentiments or support for populist, anti-immigration parties cannot be explained by the economic crisis, then this means that such attitudes will not automatically disappear as the economy recovers. They are instead a symbol of our time – of a globalised world, that has left some behind. Although, globalisation has mostly been a positive force, not all have benefitted equally and in many European countries, opportunities are far from equal. The same is true of immigration. While on the whole most research shows that everyone benefit economically from low-skilled as well as skilled immigration, effects on wages and employment are often negligible for low-skilled native workers.

Furthermore, the meaning of national sovereignty has become diversified as powers have moved from national governments to transnational institutions and the European Union. These institutions battle with a democratic deficit that has left many with a deep sense of a loss of control. Likewise, we can see that borders within the EU have opened up, at the same time as borders into the EU remain tightly protected. Following the recent horrors in Syria and Iraq, as well as Libya and Eritrea, the number of asylum seekers in Europe has increased and there has been a shocking rise in deaths of people trying to reach Europe by sea. Rather than increasing solidarity with those fleeing war and persecution, the increased number of refugees has seemingly created a backlash in which European states are perceived to have lost control over their borders. This is despite the fact that Europe still hosts very few of the total number of refugees in the world and has nowhere near the same influx of Syrians and Iraqis as the bordering countries, such as Turkey and Lebanon. Instead, the perception that Europe is losing control over its borders fits in a wider narrative of the alleged erosion of democratic national self-determination.

The sense of loss of control is twofold: In addition to national self-determination being hollowed-out by power moving to the EU,

populists find support in those mistrusting established political parties. Democratic self-governance is in their view being undermined by domestic political elites, as much as external factors, such as the EU and immigration. This is not the equivalent of a protest vote. Voters largely make their electoral decisions based on the policies of populist parties, mainly anti-immigration ones. But it is part of understanding support for populism as driven by a loss of control of one's own prospects and a loss of one's democratic voice.

If these sentiments are symbols of our time, rather than of specific economic circumstances, winning the immigration debate is not a quick fix. It will require empowering segments of society that are the so-called »losers of globalisation«. This shows us that socio-economic issues need to be at the fore of political debate and in particular address those with the least resources to advance in society. In so doing, they must not be conflated with immigration. Most economic and social questions that face European populations today have nothing to do with immigration. It is only in the populist, anti-immigration message where immigration is described as both the key problem and solution (restricting it) to structural economic problems.

Another important point to take from this book is therefore that issues that populist parties try to frame as questions of immigration, such as social deprivation and criminality, cannot be ignored. The claim from populists is that mainstream parties try to brush these issues aside in fear of coming across as discriminatory. The successful cases, where support for anti-immigration parties has been curbed, have instead dealt with these questions unapologetically, albeit without using immigration as the scapegoat for economic and social problems.

A related point is that support for populist, anti-immigration parties should not primarily be seen as protest votes, but as grounded in policy-preferences. It is a preference for the anti-immigration policies of populist parties that attract voters. The reasons why some people

favour such policies are often grounded in long-term political, cultural and economic changes, but as pointed out above, voters simply vote for parties whose policies they agree the most with. This is equally true for those supporting anti-immigration, populist parties. Immigration must therefore also be discussed. But if it is disentangled from issues it has little to do with, such as crime or education, it can hardly be made the prime political concern of contemporary Europe that populist is trying to make it into.

Winning the Debate on Immigration

So how do you turn the debate around? If support for anti-immigration, populist parties is a symbol of our time – of distrust in established politics and media, and of a sense of powerlessness in the face of rapid economic and cultural shifts – then how do you win the debate on immigration?

Firstly, as this book has shown, attitudes to immigration have not become more negative in the last decade. A demand for anti-immigration policies has always existed, but was until recently not met by the supply of professionalised and legitimised populist parties. Now that such parties are in place, it may be more fruitful to address these attitudes as such. In other words, even if demand for anti-immigration policies have not changed, voters now have viable parliamentary options to channel their opposition to immigration through. Therefore, it is not enough to focus all energy on populist – their message of a parochial nationalism needs to be challenged as well. Offering populist parties the role as victims of an established political elite, refusing to engage with questions on immigration, will only strengthen them.

On the one hand, it has been suggested that the best strategy is to try and discredit populist parties, or even ban them, or, on the other hand, that they should be welcomed to positions of power, which would reveal their true colours as incompetent xenophobes. None of these tactics will

necessarily work very well. Discrediting has for example been used by many established Swedish parties. The Sweden Democrats are now the third largest party. The second strategy, of engagement, has for example been used in the Netherlands, where PVV has been acting as supporting party for the VVD government. Initially, this worked to PVV's advantage, though they lost out in recent elections.

The key lesson is thus that political tactics on how to engage or not engage with populist, anti-immigration parties are less important than actual engagement with their voters and the issues that concern them. As the Danish and Italian case studies show, it is possible to offer a positive story of immigration and a multicultural society as a way of countering anti-immigration and divisive rhetoric. These cases highlight the important role of local politicians and civil society to counter the simplified views on immigration and immigrants' rights offered by populists (and sometimes by many mainstream parties as well). The way for civil society actors to be successful in this endeavour, and to act as a positive force in the immigration debate, is to form broad coalitions with a wide range of legal, religious and cultural organisations.

Delivering such a positive story on immigration may be trickier for established parties given the low trust they enjoy amongst voters of populist parties, and the fact that their main means of communication, mainstream media, suffers from the same trust deficit amongst populists' core voters. Part of the solution lies in learning to navigate in a new media landscape. Yet this challenge for democracy is more deep-rooted. Virtually every political party fights for the position as the most trustworthy and non-elitist in order to win elections. Populist opposition to immigration should be seen in this light, as a symbol of a loss of control by the ordinary person. In the populist message, democratic governance has been corrupted as power rests comfortably in Brussels and with domestic political elites. Retaining strict border controls is but one way of restoring democratic national self-determination.

Democracy and National Self-Determination

Therefore, winning the immigration debate is part of bigger debates about parochial versus liberal ideas of national self-determination. We need to ask ourselves: How do we guarantee everyone a voice in a globalised world? This requires a focus on multilevel approaches to citizenship and the exercise of political control over one's social, economic and cultural environment. How can we make sure that people feel a sense of ownership over their local communities, of their countries and of Europe respectively? How can freedom of movement within the EU be reconciled with a notion of national self-determination? What are the bases of belonging and a shared political identity in such a vision?

The answers to these questions from the defenders of an open society must be fundamentally different to the anti-immigration, populist ones. Most importantly, the answers must include notions of universal rights that sometimes override national self-determination and a clear commitment to the individual, wherever she originates from. One group cannot be put against another and there can be no unconditional support of »the national interest« in the face of refugee crises and human suffering. Yet such a vision need not be oblivious to the human need of communities. Collective self-determination, or the ability to control the social, economic and cultural conditions of one's communities, lies at the heart of individual autonomy, and is a partial answer to the challenges presented by globalisation and supranational governance. Populist, anti-immigration parties tap into feelings of not being listened to, of being unable to control changes that have a fundamental impact on how we live our lives. These sentiments ought to be prime concerns for those committed to the ability of individuals to author the course of their lives.

This emphasises what several of the case studies also show, that in order to empower local communities and voters who may feel neglected by the so-called establishment, responses to anti-immigration populism should be delivered locally, in people's everyday life, and with a clear

policy-agenda. At this level it is possible to question whether the story of immigration told by populists accord with the reality people face on an everyday basis. Do the issues and concerns of voters really stem from increased migration or do they have other roots? And if they do, how can these be addressed? Only this approach can combine a message of increased democracy and political awareness about the concerns of voters, with a pro-immigration agenda, in a non-populist and non-elitist way. Politicians need to bury their tactics towards populism and instead engage with voters and their policy-preferences.

Hence, in conclusion, short-term strategies involve putting socio-economic policies high on the political agenda, especially for groups who have not benefitted from the globalised economy; not conflating such issues with immigration, whilst still taking them seriously; not victimising populist parties; and involving broad pro-immigration coalitions at the local level, in particular including civil society actors. In the long-term, pro-immigration actors must formulate and be able to deliver a vision of democratic national self-determination that is compatible with less control over borders. How can local and national communities nonetheless feel empowered in such vision? Answers to these questions will involve a re-think of integration and citizenship, as well as the welfare state. These are hard questions, but acknowledging that there are no simple answers, is also what differentiates the defenders of an open society from the anti-immigration populists.

European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate

Why are some people opposed to immigration and have more people become negative over time? Did the economic recession boost support for populist, anti-immigration parties? Why do some cast their vote on an anti-immigration party and how does the new media landscape, increasingly dominated by social media, change support for populism?

European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate provides analyses by some of Europe's most prominent researchers on the subject. This book lets the reader understand the nature of support for anti-immigration populists in the current European context. In addition to the comprehensive theoretical background, four case studies show how concerns about immigration have been met by politicians and civil society in Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark, in order to better understand how immigration can be debated in ways that challenge the populist, anti-immigration message.

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