

THE RESURGENCE OF THE EUROPEAN RADICAL RIGHT:
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EXPLANATIONS OF SUCCESS

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The radical right has recently made a resurgence in European electoral politics. The Freedom Party of Austria, Danish People's Party, True Finns, and Dutch Party for Freedom have each won at least 10 percent of the vote in their last national parliamentary elections, while the Greek Golden Dawn entered parliament for the first time with 7 percent of the vote. These parties, especially Golden Dawn, have attracted extensive media coverage, with journalists sparking fear that a radical right revival will threaten European liberal democracy. However, such fears are often exaggerated. Unlike the radical right parties of World War II and the immediate postwar era, the most recent radical right parties work within the European democratic system and are not neo-fascist, with the exception of Golden Dawn. Radical right parties in this new wave do not seek to undermine democracy, but rather they aim to use it to exert influence in national policymaking, pushing for limits on immigration, opposition to European integration or withdrawal from the European Union, and other policies that are perceived to protect national identity and culture. Despite their growing support, radical right parties have thus far had little impact on national policymaking. Indeed, other than the Freedom Party of Austria, the parties discussed in this thesis have not been members of governing coalitions. While fears of the radical right resurgence are overstated, it is clear that their popularity, and consequently, influence, are growing.

The rising popularity of radical right parties has prompted scholars to explore the factors that have contributed to their success. Many scholars attribute radical right success to demand-side, external factors that are out of the party's control, such as rising

levels of immigration and economic recession. Others argue that internal, supply-side variables such as party organization and leadership, explain radical right success more sufficiently. In this thesis, I argue that both external and internal factors impact the success of radical right parties, with external factors leading to short-term success and internal factors leading to long-term survival. Thus, in order to sustain success and become an established party within a political system, radical right parties must be well-organized and have professional, competent leaders and members. Therefore, both external and internal factors can lead to radical right success, but internal factors are more important in the long run. To test this hypothesis, I will examine the five aforementioned radical right parties and analyze the factors that led to their success.

Definition of the Radical Right

Throughout my thesis, I will use the term “radical right” to refer to political parties, organizations, or movements that are nationalist, xenophobic, and Euroskeptic. Radical right parties are nationalist in the sense that they seek to protect their national identity and culture from outside threats. While immigration is often viewed as the largest threat national culture and identity, European integration and globalization also pose similar threats. Radical right parties are not the only parties to hold these views, however. David Art (2011) explains that mainstream conservative and even social democratic parties sometimes display xenophobic tendencies. Yet radical right parties differ in that they “use language that mainstream parties would normally shy away from,”

referring more explicitly to issues of immigration and nationalism.¹ Radical right parties also tend to be more critical of liberal democracy, criticizing features such as pluralism, checks on power, and the protection of minorities from the will of the majority. Additionally, mainstream parties rarely prioritize issues like limiting immigration and exiting the European Union, unlike radical right parties. The term “radical right,” however, is not synonymous with fascism or neo-fascism. Ignazi (2003) explains that the meaning of the radical right changed during the 1980s; the majority of radical right parties to emerge since the 1980s have rejected fascist ideology. In sum, the “new” radical right holds nationalist, xenophobic, Euroskeptic, and often times authoritarian views while simultaneously operating within the liberal democratic system and avoiding references to fascism.

While many scholars such as Cas Mudde and Piero Ignazi include populism in their definition of the radical right, I do not view populism as a necessary feature of the radical right. Art explains that populists often claim to be outsiders who are not a part of the governing elite, yet radical right parties have been part of national coalitions or supported minority governments. Many radical right parties have an anti-establishment, populist appeal, but a party does not have to have this feature in order to be xenophobic, nationalist, and Euroskeptic.

Using this definition, I believe that the five parties I examine in this thesis fit the radical right description.

¹ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 11.

Literature Review: Variations in Explanations for Success

Literature on this topic is vast and offers several different explanations for the resurgence of the radical right. Many scholars have focused almost exclusively on the overall political and social context to explain the rise of the radical right.² For example, von Beyme (1988) explains that “future studies of right-wing extremism will have to pay more attention to the whole political context of the political movement.” Betz (1994) attributes radical right success to the economic, social, and cultural transformations that occurred in Europe during the 1990s, explaining that these parties benefit from crises.

Similarly, Jackman and Volpert (1996) find that extreme right parties benefit from high unemployment. They liken radical right success to support for the Nazis during Germany’s period of interwar economic destitute. However, this fails to explain the lack of radical right prominence in countries like Spain, Portugal, and Ireland, which were crippled by the European sovereign debt crisis and face high levels of unemployment. Additionally, the Jackman and Volpert approach discusses parties that may be considered “flash parties” and have not enjoyed any long-term success. Contrary to the studies of Jackman and Volpert, Knigge (1998) concludes that the correlation between unemployment and radical right support is in fact negative. Similarly, high inflation rates were not found to correlate with radical right support. Explaining radical right success on economic conditions alone therefore appears to be too narrow and fails to acknowledge the importance of the party itself.

² Scholars include von Beyme (1996), Betz (1994), Coffé, Heyndels, and Vermier (2007) Golder (2003), Kitschelt (1997), Schneiderman (2000), Quillian (1995), Jackman and Volpert (1996)

Rising immigration rates have also been used as an explanation for radical right success. Scholars perceive the radical right as a direct response to rising immigration rates, which threaten national identity.³ Knigge (1998) found that immigration corresponds with higher levels of support for the radical right. She tested this hypothesis by using survey data and found that immigration and radical right support is directly related in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. Like Jackman and Volpert, however, Knigge ignores factors relating to internal organization and leadership and limits her research to the effects of immigration, the economy, and political dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the recent case of Finland poses an exception to Knigge's study. The country has a foreign-born population of roughly 4 percent, yet the radical right True Finns won 19 percent of the vote in the last elections. Meanwhile, the radical right has failed in Sweden, a country with a similar political and economic culture to Finland but with a foreign-born population of 6.6 percent. This thesis therefore appears to be flawed. Indeed, while some scholars have found positive relationships between the two (e.g., Golder 2003), others have found either a negative relationship or no relationship at all (e.g. Dülmer and Klein 2005, Jesuit and Mahler 2004, Kriesi 1995).

Ignazi (2003) attributes the growing support of the radical right to the rise of post-materialist values. He explains, "The post-industrial development of Western societies enforced the decline of economic-related cleavages and the rise of non-material conflicts," leading to what Ignazi calls as "silent counter-revolution."⁴ The weakening of national authority in both domestic and international politics, the deterioration of

³ Scholars include Knigge (1998), Husbands (2001), Fennema (1997), Von Beyme (1988)

⁴ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 201.

“traditional social bonds,” and the apparent decline of homogenous, hierarchical society creates an environment conducive to radical right success. This shift in values in conjunction with the erosion of national sovereignty due to the rise of international institutions and globalization produces a demand for values of “self defense and self-reassurance.”⁵ Radical right parties’ ideologies embrace these sentiments in their nationalist, authoritarian, traditionalist platforms. According to Ignazi, the factors that influence radical right success are institutional setting, the process of de-alignment (i.e., decline in party loyalty and rise in voter volatility), ideological radicalization, politicization of issues, and “the system’s crisis of confidence.”

Another common explanation for radical right success is the process of modernization. Radical right parties are seen as “losers of modernization” and oppose developments such as globalization and post-industrialism.⁶ However, these theories tend to be vague and fail to make strong links between modernization and radical right success.⁷ The globalization argument is particularly weak because there is no scholarly consensus in regard to when globalization began. Overall, modernization theories are too vague and lack the empirical evidence necessary to identify the relationship between modernization and radical right success.

Scholars often attribute radical right success to sentiments of political distrust. While some scholars have found the relationship between political distrust and radical right success to be positive (Knigge 1998), others have found no relationship (Norris

⁵ Ibid., 201.

⁶ Scholars include Swank and Betz (2003), Loch and Heitmeyer (2001), Holmes (2000), Minkenberg (1998), Beck (1992)

⁷ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 203.

2005). Andersen (2002) points out that Denmark experienced a growing sentiment of political trust between 1991 and 2001, in which these levels increased from 40 to 65 percent, while the Danish People's Party began to make significant electoral gains. The political distrust hypothesis therefore appears to be inconsistent and therefore inconclusive in explaining radical right success.

Art argues that the literature focusing on such demand-side factors fail to form a consensus that links these sociostructural variables to cross-national variation in radical right success.⁸ Scholars that take the contextual approach often contradict one another, as exemplified by the different results presented by Knigge and Jackman and Volpert regarding the role of unemployment in radical right success. More importantly, many of these external conditions are similar across several European states, yet radical right success varies. Mudde explains, "the macro-level explanations cannot account for the striking differences in populist radical right electoral success between countries with fairly similar breeding grounds."⁹ For example, the foreign-born population is roughly 10 percent in Denmark and 11 percent in Spain, and the radical right has been successful in the former country but not the latter. These demand-side explanations cannot account for such variations in success, so the focus must be shifted to internal, supply-side, micro-level analysis.

One of the most common internal explanations for radical right success is ideology. Several scholars have argued that the most successful radical right parties have

⁸ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 13.

⁹ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 230.

moderate platforms relative to other parties in the family.¹⁰ Those with extremist platforms and links to fascism tend to fail. Yet authors using this approach have not formed a consensus on what constitutes the most attractive ideological platform. While all radical right parties are xenophobic and nationalist to an extent, it is common for them to have different economic platforms. For example, the economic platform of the Danish People's Party is neoliberal while that of the True Finns is more social democratic. Furthermore, according to this model, a party like Golden Dawn should fail due to its extremist platform and overt references to fascism, yet the party won nearly 7 percent of the vote in its last election and continues to gain support among Greeks. While a party with a more ideologically moderate platform may attract a wider share of voters than an extremist fringe party, there is a lack of consensus over what constitutes a moderate platform (i.e., "the winning formula"). Therefore, ideology alone cannot account for radical right success.

Radical right success is often attributed to party leadership. Mudde explains that there are two different types of leadership that must be examined – external leadership and internal leadership. External leadership refers to a party leader's charisma and ability to attract voters while internal leadership refers to a leader's ability to keep the party well-organized. Charismatic leaders such as Jörg Haider of the Freedom Party of Austria and Jean-Marie Le Pen of the National Front (France) have played important roles in the success of their parties. Yet Mudde argues that the importance of charisma is often overstated in the literature on the radical right. He states that there have been successful radical right parties that have been led by non-charismatic leaders, such as Pia

¹⁰ Scholars include Cole (2005), Taggart (1995), Ignazi (1992)

Kjaersgaard of the Danish People's Party or Daniel Féret of the New Front of Belgium. Additionally, there have been parties with charismatic leaders that have failed, such as Franz Schönhuber of the German Republicans.¹¹ External leadership may play an important role in a party's breakthrough phase, but becomes less important as the party grows and becomes more successful. While the charismatic appeal of Haider and Le Pen was helpful in attracting voters, this factor became less important as the parties progressed. Indeed, since the departure of Haider, the Freedom Party of Austria has continued to succeed, despite its absence of a leader as charismatic as Haider.

Mudde argues that internal, or "practical" leadership is more important than external leadership in determining radical right success in the long run. He explains that in a party's identification phase, an external leader is helpful in preaching the party's message. This stage is important in achieving initial electoral success. In the second phase of party development, the party requires a more practical leader who emphasizes organization. Organization, Mudde argues, is more important in a party's persistence rather than in its breakthrough. He explains, "A variety of examples prove that incidental electoral success can be achieved without organizational backup... However, electoral success can hardly be *sustained* without a functioning party organization."¹² The Greek Golden Dawn, which I will examine throughout this thesis, supports the first part of Mudde's argument. The party lacks any organizational structure and is comprised of mostly unprofessional, violent extremists with no political experience. Regardless, the party won roughly 7 percent in the 2012 national elections. Whether or not this success

¹¹ Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 261.

¹² *Ibid.*, 265.

will be sustained, however, is uncertain. A dysfunctional party structure often undermines the party's political influence, damages the party image, and leads to a collapse of the party. Some parties implode after their breakthrough, such as the List Pim Fortuyn (Netherlands) and the Republicans (Germany). Mudde concludes that party organization, internal "practical" leadership, and party propaganda are the most important variables to explain radical right success.

Like Mudde, Art argues that the party itself is more important than the political and social environment in which the party competes. Art explains, "while demand-side factors – especially immigration – appear to be necessary for the rise of the radical right, they are certainly not sufficient for electoral success."¹³ Art emphasizes the importance of party leaders, elected officials, and active members, placing them under the umbrella term "activists." His argument, in sum, is that "the trajectories of radical right parties are shaped by the types and number of activists they recruit."¹⁴ The members recruited by and attracted to radical right parties affect party "size, cohesion, competence, legitimacy, and ideological flexibility," all of which have a major impact on electoral performances. Art explains, "Both the size and nature of the activist core strongly influence a radical right party's ability to harness voter demand and to persist electorally." This correlation has been examined by Elisabeth Carter, who discovered that party organization accounts for one-half of the variance in vote share of radical right parties over the past twenty years. Additionally, surveys conducted by experts in the field reveal that there is a high correlation between levels of party organization and success.

¹³ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20.

Similarly, Lubbers, Gijsberts, and Scheepers (2002) attribute radical right success to the characteristics of parties themselves in addition to anti-immigrant attitudes and political dissatisfaction. They develop a statistical model that explains the importance of different factors, including political context and party characteristics, in voting for radical right parties. Lubbers et al find that the larger the proportion of non-EU citizens living in a given country is, the higher the support for the radical right will be. However, they found no relationship between levels of unemployment and radical right support. Additionally, Lubbers et al studied characteristics of each party, specifically, organization, leadership, and activism. Parties with favorable characteristics in these categories were found to be more successful than those with unfavorable characteristics, i.e., parties that are unorganized and have poor leadership.¹⁵

I find the internal organization explanation by Mudde, the agency-based approach of Art and the multilevel framework used by Lubbers, Gijsberts, and Scheepers to be the most useful in studying the European radical right. Mudde's emphasis on internal structure and "practical" leadership is useful in determining a party's chances of consistent success and explains the cross-national variation of success more sufficiently than external-focused studies. Art's research offers insights into radical right party membership and organization, which is largely ignored by other scholars. The approach used by Lubbers et al is more broad and flexible than other frameworks, as it takes into account voter profiles, public opinion, characteristics of parties, economic conditions, and other factors. Using this conceptual framework, I will examine contemporary radical right parties and determine which factors are most important. I hypothesize that external

¹⁵ Marcel Lubbers, Mérove Gijsberts, and Peer Scheepers, "Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe," *European Journal of Political Research* 41 (2002): 365.

factors may be useful in achieving breakthrough success but are less important than internal factors in achieving sustained success.

Methodology

To support my hypothesis, I will first provide a brief history of the radical right in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, and Greece. This history will explain the motives and beliefs of radical right parties and illustrate the similarities between the radical right parties of the past and present, both in motivation and platform. Additionally, it will show a historical tendency for radical right parties to achieve relative success when they compete in favorable environments, but fail when they are poorly-organized. Many of the same conditions, such as economic recession and immigration, led to the formation of radical right parties in the past and present, yet these conditions did not always guarantee success.

Next, I will explain the platforms, leaders, organization, and electoral performances of five contemporary radical right parties – the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), the Danish People’s Party (DF), the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), the True Finns (PS) and Golden Dawn. In doing so, I will examine internal factors that have contributed to the recent success of these parties.

The following chapter will provide a brief overview of the political and economic environments in each party’s country. The most important factors I examine will be the state of the economy, in the form of unemployment rates, the rate of immigration, and general attitudes towards the European Union. I will argue that certain external factors

are necessary for radical right success, yet a focus on external factors alone does not sufficiently explain the success of radical right parties due to cross-national variation in radical right success. In my conclusion, I will demonstrate how my examination of five radical right parties supports my argument that external factors are helpful in electoral performances in the short term, but insufficient in sustaining a party's success. Internal factors, therefore, are more significant in achieving sustained success.

Throughout my thesis, I will define "success" as having earned at least 5 percent of the vote in a national election. A successful, established party will have won 5 percent in three consecutive national elections; the Freedom Party of Austria, Danish People's Party, and Dutch Party for Freedom fit this criteria. The True Finns and Golden Dawn, however, have only recently won more than 5 percent. I argue that these parties will survive only if they develop a robust organization and party structure and recruit professional, competent activists. I have chosen to examine these two parties as they have only recently been successful and are often excluded in radical right literature.

Throughout the thesis, I will examine five European radical right parties using a model based on the frameworks provided by Mudde, Art, and Lubbers et al. Art's conceptual framework, extensive examination of each party, and history of the radical right provide all contribute to my hypothesis and findings. Mudde's conclusions about the importance of party organization and practical leadership will be echoed in my thesis and will be tested based on the performances of the five radical right parties discussed. I will also examine the radical right through the framework used by Lubbers et al. In doing so, I will demonstrate the impact internal and external factors have had on radical right success and failure. For the historical components of my thesis, I will use the work

of Piero Ignazi, who provides an in-depth analysis of the development of the European radical right. The historical section of the thesis will illustrate the importance of internal organization, party membership, and practical leadership in achieving long-term, consistent success. When available, I will cite official party platforms and programs. To examine external factors, I will use demographic data when analyzing rates of immigration, economic conditions, and surveys on attitudes towards the EU.

Chapter 2: A History of the Radical Right

This chapter will provide a brief history of the radical right in modern Europe. In doing so, it will demonstrate that certain conditions, both internal and external that were described in Chapter 1, have led to radical right success and failure in the past. External conditions that have historically created favorable conditions for the radical right include national political issues (e.g., Algerian independence movement) and immigration. Such conditions often led to a brief periods of relative success for the radical right that did not last long, as was the case with Pierre Poujade's party, whose support heavily relied on opponents to Algerian independence. The historical review will also demonstrate the ways in which lack of internal organization, cohesiveness, and "practical leadership" have led to the collapse of radical right parties, such as List Pim Fortuyn.

Additionally, the history will show which countries have a radical right or nationalist past, which can impact the success of the radical right in the future. The chapter will outline the history of the radical right in the countries that are the focus of the essay, but will also discuss the role played by France, Germany, and Italy in the development of the radical right. While parties from these countries are not the subject of my research, their important roles played in European radicalism cannot be overlooked. By providing a history of the European radical right, I aim to illuminate historical patterns and make parallels between radical right movements of the past and present.

France

The history of the modern European radical right traces back to revolutionary France. During this era, Jacobins and Enlightenment philosophers sparked fear among the French *anti-philosophes*, who worried that a Jacobin triumph would bring about the destruction of the monarchy and religion, making France an anarchic, godless society.¹⁶ Like many populist-right parties of today, the French counter-Enlightenment movement emphasized the importance of the patriarchal family, religion, and a strong government that would guarantee political and social stability. Counter-Enlightenment figure Joseph de Maistre called for a more religious system of governance for France and stricter law enforcement; he often argued that France needed a “Pope and Executioner.”¹⁷ While the French Revolution was successful in overthrowing the monarchy, France soon saw the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Although Bonaparte is generally not considered “radical” right, his nationalism and authoritarianism influenced various French radical right movements, including Boulangism, the 1930s fascist Leagues, Fourth Republic Gaullism, and Poujadism.¹⁸

France experienced various bouts of nationalist movements during the Third Republic in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War, but more modern radical right movements emerged in the early twentieth century. Action Française (AF) was perhaps the most prominent of these movements. The movement emerged after the Dreyfus Affair, in which a Jewish French military officer was accused of giving military secrets to

¹⁶ Darrin M. McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001): 95.

¹⁷ Peter Davies, *The Extreme Right in France, 1789 to the Present: From de Maistre to Le Pen* (London: Routledge, 2002), 31.

¹⁸ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 83.

Germany. AF's messages were monarchist, anti-republican, traditionalist, nationalist, and anti-Semitic.¹⁹ The movement's leader Charles Maurras sought to save France from cosmopolitanism; like the leaders of today's radical right movements, Maurras wanted to preserve French culture and identity, which he saw threatened by foreign cultural "invasion."²⁰ While AF acted more as a political movement rather than a political party, its ideas and messages resonate with many of today's radical right parties.

Various other proto-fascist *ligues* emerged in the early twentieth century, including the National Socialist Party, which managed to elect its leader to parliament but dissolved in 1912 when he died.²¹ Many of these *ligues*, including AF, staged a large-scale revolt in 1934, which many have considered an attempt to initiate a coup d'état. The unorganized rebellion was suppressed and amounted to little more than short-lived instability.

Following World War II and the establishment of the Fourth Republic, the French radical right was revived.²² France experienced a resurgence in nationalism resulting from decolonization efforts in Algeria and French Indochina. Jeune Nation, for example, was founded in 1950 and was "virulently anticommunist, antimodernist, xenophobic, and in favor of preserving the empire."²³ The organization was composed of young army officers and volunteers who fought in Algeria and Vietnam and opposed the Fourth

¹⁹ Peter Davies, *The Extreme Right in France, 1789 to the Present: From de Maistre to Le Pen* (London: Routledge, 2002), 83.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

²¹ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 85.

²² David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 120.

²³ *Ibid.*, 121.

Republic's inability to maintain control over its colonies. The party was openly neo-fascist and was banned in 1958 due to its violent tactics.²⁴

One of the most important figures of the French right during this era was Pierre Poujade. While not an extremist, Poujade, perhaps unintentionally, began a right-populist movement with his Union for the Defense of Tradesmen and Artisans (UCDA), which opposed the tax policies of the Fourth Republic.²⁵ Among its members was Jean-Marie Le Pen, who became an instrumental radical right leader. The UCDA won 11.6 percent of the vote in the 1956 elections, but virtually dissolved in 1958 after the collapse of the Fourth Republic.

In 1965, far-right politician Jean-Louis Tixier-Vignancour ran for president with the help of Jean-Marie Le Pen under the party name "Committee TV," but gained only 5.3 percent of the vote, which mostly comprised of opponents of Algerian independence.²⁶ In 1972, Le Pen formed the National Front (FN) with the help of the extremist militant group New Order (ON). The FN was split between Le Pen's followers, who wanted the party to embrace "classical right" ideology – anti-immigration, anticommunism, and nationalism – and New Order delegates, who favored neo-fascism.²⁷ Le Pen feared that the extremist members would challenge his leadership and harm the party image, so he forced them out of the FN.

²⁴ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 89.

²⁵ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 121.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 122.

²⁷ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 90.

While the party struggled in its formative years, the FN made headlines in 1983 when the Gaullist RPR formed a joint ticket with the FN in the municipal elections. The RPR-FN coalition ran on the platform of “revers[ing] the flow of immigrants” and won 31 percent in the first round.²⁸ Throughout the 1980s, the FN succeeded in various municipal and regional elections and performed well in European Parliament elections, too. Piero Ignazi attributes this success to the FN’s ability to politicize immigration and take advantage of growing anti-establishment sentiments.²⁹ Additionally, Le Pen was successful in broadening the appeal of the party to gain votes from less radical constituents, many of whom became disenchanted with the mainstream right.³⁰

In the most recent parliamentary election, the FN, now led by Le Pen’s daughter, Marine Le Pen, won 13.6 percent in the first round, falling behind only the Socialist Party and the Union for a Popular Movement. However, in the second round, the FN gained only 3.66 percent, winning 2 seats.

Throughout modern French history, numerous radical right movements have surfaced, yet many of them have failed to become mainstays in French politics. These movements have often emerged during environments favorable to the radical right, such as the decolonization process in the postwar years and the rise of anti-Semitic sentiments in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair. While these external conditions often led to relative success among radical right parties, they do not guarantee long-term success. Indeed, several French radical right parties petered out when they were no longer able to rely on a

²⁸ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 126.

²⁹ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 95.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 96

favorable environment. While the FN's last electoral performance was not largely successful, it has shown that there is still support for a radical right party in France.

Germany

Nationalist and anti-Semitic sentiments in Germany predate the Nazi regime. German radical right ideology can be traced back to the *Volkish* movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The *Volkish* ideology revolved around the concept of rootedness; they believed that the German people have a special connection to their land. *Volkish* thinkers opposed industrialization and longed for a simpler, rural society. This romantic ideology eventually evolved into an anti-Semitic and nationalist one. Many *Volkish*-influenced authors began to portray the Jew as a representation of modernization and industrialization.³¹ Others viewed the Germanic people as a superior race that must be preserved. These concepts of German superiority, anti-Semitism, and nationalism influenced Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist ideology.

After World War II, the Allies attempted to “de-Nazify” Germany by outlawing any party with Nazi leanings. Despite these efforts, the radical right did not disappear from Germany after the fall of the Third Reich. Radical right parties were generally comprised of war veterans and nostalgic nationalists with anti-Western sentiments. The first radical right parties to form were the Association for Economic Reconstruction, the German Conservative Party – German Right Party, and the Action Group/European People's Movement for Germany. These parties opposed the de-nazification and

³¹ George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1964), 23.

democratization processes that had begun in Germany and achieved little electoral success. The Socialist Reich Party was openly neo-Nazi and called for the unification of German people under the authority of a leader (in this case, admiral Dönitz, the successor of Hitler).³² Shortly after its participation in regional elections, the party was banned due to its unashamedly Nazi party program. In the 1953 elections, the only radical right party to attain relative success was the Refugee Party, which won 5.9 percent, due in part to abandoning much of its radical rhetoric. Support for other radical right parties declined as the parties began to fade into irrelevance.

The German radical right reemerged in the 1960s when the National-Democratic German Party (NPD) was formed. The NPD formed from the German Reich Party, the only surviving radical right party from the postwar era. In addition to using authoritarian and nationalist rhetoric, the NPD put the issue of immigration on the agenda and was the first party since the end of the war to do so. The party won 4.3 percent of the vote in the 1969 parliamentary elections, failing to overcome the 5 percent threshold necessary for entering parliament. Due to internal strife and the loss of key members, including the resignation of party leader Adolph Von Thadden, the party won only 0.6 percent in the 1972 elections.³³

The radical right resurged in the 1980s and 1990s with the birth of the Union of German People (DVU) and the Republican Party. Both parties were concerned with limiting immigration and expressed nationalist, nostalgic sentiments. While these parties performed relatively well in regional elections, they failed to make a lasting impression

³² Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 65.

³³ *Ibid.*, 67.

on German politics. For example, in 1987, the DVU won 3.4 percent and one seat in the Bremen elections, making it the first radical right party to win a seat since 1968. In the following election, it won 6.2 percent in the same region.³⁴ Much of the DVU's success came from putting the issue of asylum-granting on the political agenda, but once the issue became less topical, the party performed poorly. The Republican Party won 7.5 percent in the West Berlin regional elections and 7.1 percent in the European elections in 1989.³⁵ One of the Republicans' goals was German unification, so after the fall of the Berlin wall, the party suffered electorally, winning only 2.1 in its first election in the reunified Germany. The Republicans became afflicted with internal divisions and was classified as "unconstitutional" by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution.³⁶ Furthermore, anti-extremist sentiments were on the rise in Germany, due in part to the violence committed against immigrants and asylum-seekers. Meanwhile, the NPD failed to win more than 2.1 percent in any elections.

While Germany has a long history of radicalism, the radical right has failed to become a major player in German politics. Parties have struggled with leadership and organization and have only reached minimal success in elections with favorable external conditions, such as rising immigration. Germany's Nazi past has worked against the German radical right, as voters fear that the triumph of such a party could cause history to repeat itself. Additionally, the German government can ban parties that resemble the

³⁴ Ibid., 69.

³⁵ Ibid., 72.

³⁶ Ibid., 73.

Nazis; in 2011 and 2012, it tried to ban the NPD but was unsuccessful.³⁷ Government sanctions coupled with Germany's history will likely prevent the radical right from realizing any success.

Italy

Fascism was invented in Italy during the interwar period. After serving the Allied forces in World War I, Benito Mussolini began to develop the fascist ideology and political movement. Mussolini and his followers were extreme nationalists and sought to restore the glory of ancient Rome to Italy. His fascist ideology advocated authoritarian rule by an elite, the creation of a strong military, indoctrination through education, and a corporatist economic system. In short, the goal of Mussolini's fascism was to unite and advance the nation through authoritarian rule. After a coup d'état brought Mussolini and his National Fascist Party to power, Mussolini created a dictatorship and began an aggressive foreign policy, which led to the outbreak of World War II.

Mussolini's policies and alliance with Hitler became unpopular during World War II, leading to his execution. However, fascism did not disappear in postwar Italy. Fascist veterans created the Italian Social Movement (MSI) in 1946. The party avoided making explicit references to the Mussolini regime, yet it was undoubtedly a nostalgic fascist party.³⁸ The MSI was divided into two factions, both of which were fascist. One faction,

³⁷ "Germany moves towards ban on far-right NPD party," *Reuters*, December 5, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/05/us-germany-farright-idUSBRE8B415V20121205>

³⁸ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 36.

led by Giorgio Almirante, advocated a “radical, utopian and socialistic strand of fascism” reminiscent of pre-Mussolini national syndicalism. The other faction was more aligned with Mussolini’s fascism and had authoritarian, clerical, and traditionalist views.³⁹

In its first elections in 1947, the party gained 4 percent in Rome’s city council election. In the parliamentary elections of 1948, the MSI won 2.2 percent and six seats.⁴⁰ After this election, the MSI became more moderate and forged an alliance with the Monarchist Party. After the MSI-Monarchist alliance won 11.8 percent in the 1952 local elections, the government attempted to outlaw the party but failed.⁴¹ This move towards a more moderate position isolated the party’s more radical members, causing a faction to split and form New Order.

In 1968, anti-fascist sentiments in Italy were high, and the MSI won only 4.5 percent in the general election. After party leader Arturo Michelini died in 1969, Giorgio Almirante took over leadership of the MSI. He implemented a “two-pronged strategy,” in which he tried to attract more mainstream right voters while still maintaining the party’s militant, extreme right base.⁴² The MSI merged with the Monarchist party and recruited members from the Italian Liberal Party and Christian Democracy. In 1972, the party experienced its best electoral performance, winning 8.7 percent in the general elections. The inability of the party to control its more radical and aggressive members,

³⁹ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 209.

⁴⁰ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 36.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴² David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 211

however, began to hinder the MSI's success. In the following elections of 1976, the MSI share fell to 6.1 percent.

After this election, the MSI reconsidered its ideology once again and attempted to rid the party of its violent members. Rather than focusing on anti-communism, the MSI adopted an anti-system, populist "protest party" image.⁴³ The party condemned its violent members and forged a more peaceful image. Although the MSI abandoned its violent tactics, its core ideology was still neo-fascist; the party continued to represent nationalist, authoritarian, and corporatist values. This helped the MSI win 6.8 percent in its following election. After Almirante resigned due to health problems, the MSI's new leader Pino Rauti led the party in a more anti-capitalist, anti-Western direction. The party only managed to win 3.9 percent in 1990, its worst performance.⁴⁴

The MSI rebranded itself as the National Alliance (AN) in 1994. Ignazi explains that while the NA was made up of former MSI members, the party was less anti-system and more mainstream than the MSI.⁴⁵ AN formed a coalition with Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia, leading the party to win 13.5 percent in the Lower Chamber in the 1994 national elections.⁴⁶ This successful election and the support of Berlusconi legitimized the AN, yet the party still retained its neo-fascist, anti-democratic positions.⁴⁷

Essentially, the transformation from MSI to AN was merely a name-change.

In 2007, the AN merged with Berlusconi's Forza Italia to form the People of Freedom. This new party represents a departure from the radical right ideology of AN

⁴³ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 41.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 44.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

and instead embraces Christian democratic and center-right liberal values. The People of Freedom has been successful since its inception, winning 37.4 percent and 21.6 percent in the general elections of 2008 and 2013, respectively. While this party has been successful, its liberal, pro-European platform is far from radical right.

Although the MSI and AN have dissolved, both parties demonstrated that radical right parties can achieve success and legitimacy in the Italian political system. Unlike Germany, Italy's fascist past has not prevented radical right parties from attaining electoral success. The Italian radical right has also been able to act as coalition partners and merge with mainstream right parties, which grants the party more legitimacy. While a radical right party is not currently in power, radical members of the People of Freedom hold positions in the Italian parliament, including former AN leader Gianfranco Fini, who currently serves as President of the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

Austria

Austrian politics between the 1880s and 1980s is often divided into three sub-societies, or, *lagers*. The first lager refers to Catholic conservatives, the second to socialists, and the third to German nationalists. The third lager emerged during the First Austrian Republic and embraced anti-Semitic, pan-German nationalist, and fascist ideologies.⁴⁸ During the 1930s, conflict between the Christian Social Party and Social Democrats led to the establishment of an authoritarian clerical government, dubbed

⁴⁸ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 115.

Austrofascism, by the Catholics.⁴⁹ This regime ended when Austrian Nazis assassinated Prime Minister Engelbert Dollfuss, who had outlawed Nazi parties, and with Austrian unification with Third Reich Germany.⁵⁰ Many Austrians supported the unification, or *Anschluss*, and became Nazis. Austrian support for and identification with the Third Reich was strong throughout the Second World War and remained with Austria in the postwar era.⁵¹

After the war, the Allied Powers put three parties in charge of dissolving Nazi parties: the Social Democratic Party, the center-right Austrian People's Party, and the Communist Party of Austria.⁵² Austrian Nazi veterans and other extremists consequently formed secret organizations, many of which did not have political goals, but existed only for nostalgic purposes. One organization was the Austrian Association of Gymnastics, which, in addition to being a sports organization, secretly discussed and spread Nazi ideology.⁵³ The only radical right organization to enter electoral politics was the authoritarian and nationalist National Democratic Party, led by extremist Norbert Burger. The party initially focused on South Tyrol, a disputed territory in Northern Italy, and utilized terrorist actions in the region.⁵⁴ The party failed electorally, receiving only 3.5 percent in its best performance.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 107.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵² David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 116.

⁵³ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 109.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 109.

In 1949, a new party called the League of Independents (VdU) was formed and incorporated former members of the NSDAP into the party. In order to compete in elections and avoid getting outlawed, the party embraced liberal constitutional principles and only made thinly-veiled references to nationalism. Regardless of this centrist position, the party called for the “abolition of restrictions against the ex-Nazis.”⁵⁶ This approach proved to be successful, as the VdU won 11.7 percent in its first legislative election and 15.4 percent in the 1951 presidential election.⁵⁷ Most of these votes came from former Nazis; it is estimated that around 25 percent of Austrians still had Nazi affiliations after the war.⁵⁸ The VdU declined in success after the two major parties began recruiting former Nazis, taking away the main VdU voter base. Moreover, the VdU became divided between anti-clerical and anti-socialist members. Finally, the party collapsed in 1955 when Austria’s independence was re-declared and was no longer unified with Germany. The VdU was replaced by the Freedom Party, which remains a major actor in Austrian politics today.

Today, the Freedom Party of Austria, while more moderate than its fascist predecessors, is keeping Austria’s culture of nationalism alive. Yet the historical background and culture of nationalism alone cannot explain the success of the Freedom Party. Unlike many of the failed Austrian radical right parties and movements, the Freedom Party evolved into a well-organized, professional party whose success did not rely on the votes of Nazi sympathizers and pan-German nationalists. In the next chapter,

⁵⁶ Ibid., 110.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 110.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 110.

I will explain in further detail the internal structure and platform of the Freedom Party and explain how it became an important player in Austrian politics.

Denmark

Unlike Austria, the radical right has not had a longstanding presence in Denmark. During the rise of the Nazis, the Danish National Socialist Worker's Party had only four thousand members and was unable to overcome the 2 percent threshold in the elections of 1935 and 1939.⁵⁹ The Nazis did not take over the Danish government, as they had in Norway, so Denmark never experienced far right leadership. After the war, Nazi sympathizers were purged and the radical right, which was small to begin with, became virtually nonexistent.

The Danish radical right did not truly emerge until the establishment of the Danish Progress Party (FRPd). Founded by Mogens Glistrup, the FRPd had an antiestablishment, right-libertarian platform. Glistrup proposed abolishing income taxes and opposed European Community membership. He even suggested abolishing the Danish military and replacing it with a recording that said "We surrender" in Russian.⁶⁰ The party was also opposed to European integration, making it popular among the largely Euroskeptic Danish population. While the party was not radical right in the xenophobic or nationalist sense, the FRPd was perhaps the farthest right party Denmark had seen since the 1930s. The FRPd achieved success after its inception in 1972, winning over ten

⁵⁹ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 152.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 153.

percent in each parliamentary election between 1973 and 1979.⁶¹ During its peak, the FRPd enjoyed a favorable environment, including a culture of widespread mistrust of politicians and opposition to recent income tax hikes and the European Community referendum of 1972.⁶²

The FRPd began to factionalize between newer members who wanted to cooperate with mainstream parties and Glistrup and the original members, who did not want to compromise their platform.⁶³ The party was loosely organized, which gave way to internal problems. Glistrup opposed traditional party organization and instead favored “a fluid and loose movement that could easily follow him in his inflammatory statements.”⁶⁴ After being imprisoned for tax fraud, Glistrup left the FRPd and was replaced by Pia Kjaersgaard as party leader.⁶⁵ Party infighting and factionalism led Kjaersgaard to leave the Progress Party and form the Danish People’s Party, one of the most successful European radical right parties in recent years.

The Netherlands

Historically, Dutch far right parties have been unsuccessful. In the interwar years, fascist movements emerged, including the National Socialist Movement (NSB). As the

⁶¹ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 141.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 141.

⁶³ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 153.

⁶⁴ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 143.

⁶⁵ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 153.

name implies, the NSB was authoritarian, nationalist, and corporatist in nature. After winning 7.9 percent in local elections, the party formed an armed militia. Many NSB members collaborated with Nazis and were persecuted after the war; party founder and leader Anton Mussert was executed along with other members.⁶⁶

In the postwar years, the extreme right survived through Nazi veteran aid associations. The National European Social Movement, comprised mainly of former Nazis, was one association. Shortly after its establishment, the Supreme Court outlawed the Movement, as it viewed the party as a revival of the NSB.

The agrarian, right-populist Farmers' Party (BP) broke through the Dutch political system in the 1960s, winning three seats in the 1963 election.⁶⁷ The party "represented a curious mixture of authoritarianism and individualism, anti-tax protest, and anti-parliamentarism."⁶⁸ In the 1966 Senate elections, the Farmers' Party nominated Hendrik Adams, a former Nazi collaborator, causing severe backlash against the party. The party dismissed Adams and declined in popularity until it eventually dissolved in 1981.⁶⁹

In 1971, the neo-fascist Union of Dutch People (NVU) formed. The party was authoritarian, racist, and anti-parliamentary and had little support; in the Hague local elections, the NVU candidate managed to win 1.8 percent of the vote. The NVU became increasingly radical by adopting neo-Nazi stances and attacking immigrants. The goal of the NVU was to unite all Flemish-speaking peoples and expel all non-Dutch from the

⁶⁶ Ibid., 162.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 163.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 163.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 163

country. This led to a decline in popularity; the NVU only won 0.4 percent in the 1977 elections.⁷⁰

After this poor performance, members of the NVU left to form the Centre Party (CP), which supported the “preservation of Dutch culture,” but avoided nationalism and neo-fascism. The party won 2.5 percent in the European elections but became afflicted with factionalism between radicals and moderates. After electoral failure, the CP shut down but revived shortly after under the name Centre Party ’86 (CP’86). The CP’86 was far more radical than its predecessor and adopted a racist, corporatist platform.

According to Ignazi, the CP ’86 held “proto-Nazi” and racist ideas, advocating a National Revolution that was neither capitalist nor socialist.⁷¹ The party was successful in electing four town councilors in 1990 and eight seats in the municipal elections of 1994.

Meanwhile, the Democratic Centre (CD), another newly-formed xenophobic party, won a seat in parliament in the 1989 election and twelve councilors in the Netherlands’ largest cities – Amsterdam, the Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht – in the 1990 local elections.⁷²

After the short wave of success in local elections, the Dutch radical right declined. In 1998, new rules made running for local office more difficult; the CD only managed to reelect two out of the 77 local councilors in the local elections and won only 0.6 percent nationally.⁷³ CP’86 also failed electorally and was banned for racism in 1998.

In 2002, Dutch politician Pim Fortuyn formed a radical right party called List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) after being dismissed from Livable Netherlands due to his controversial anti-Islam comments. The party’s ideology was grounded in right-libertarianism,

⁷⁰ Ibid., 164.

⁷¹ Ibid., 165.

⁷² Ibid., 167.

⁷³ Ibid., 167.

populism, and anti-immigrant stances. Fortuyn sought to limit immigration to the Netherlands as much as possible and was especially concerned about the perceived “Islamization” of Dutch culture.⁷⁴

After founding the party in February 2002, Fortuyn had to recruit members by April 1 in order to qualify for the May 15 elections. Fortuyn had not developed an organized method of recruitment and did not have enough time to carefully select candidates, so he rushed the process and ended up with a party full of inexperienced candidates and activists. The recruits had little time to learn about the Dutch political system and how to work in parliament and was therefore heavily reliant on Fortuyn’s leadership.

Just nine days before the party’s first foray into national electoral politics, Fortuyn was assassinated by an animal rights activist. The party remained on the ballot regardless and won 17 percent of the vote. Twenty-six members were elected to parliament, but the majority of them were inexperienced. Fortuyn was succeeded by Matt Herben, but grew unpopular within the party and was replaced by the inexperienced Harry Wijnschenk.⁷⁵ Party infighting and factionalism escalated and led to a rapid decline in popularity; the party polled at 2 percent in a public opinion poll. However, LPF performed surprisingly well in the 2003 elections, winning 5.7 percent of the vote. Yet as internal strife worsened, the party became less popular and failed to win a seat in the 2006 elections. The LPF officially dissolved in 2008. Perhaps Wijnschenk summed up the problems of

⁷⁴ Ibid., 180

⁷⁵ Ibid., 182.

the LPF best: “We were a group of inexperienced people, with no clue what we were talking about, and with our hands full with our own internal troubles.”⁷⁶

Factionalism, anti-racist sentiments, and legal action prevented the brief radical right surge in the 1990s from gaining much momentum. While the radical right resurged in the 2000s with the success of List Pim Fortuyn, the loss of the party’s leader, inexperienced activist base, and constant infighting led to the party’s demise. The Party for Freedom, however, has shown that support for the radical right exists in the Netherlands and has the potential to become a mainstay in Dutch politics.

Finland

While the radical right hardly existed in the other Nordic countries, it was prevalent during the interwar years in Finland. The Lapua Movement was a nationalist, authoritarian, anti-communist movement that emerged in 1929. The Movement often utilized political violence; the organization kidnapped a former president and two Communist MPs.⁷⁷ After staging a failed coup d’état in 1932, the Movement was banned. Another fascist party soon emerged, the Patriotic People’s Movement. While this movement had mass support, it performed poorly in elections. At the end of World War II, all fascist parties and organizations were banned, and no significant radical right

⁷⁶ Ibid., 183.

⁷⁷ Giovanni Capocchia, *Defending Democracy: Reactions to Extremism in Interwar Europe* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 165.

movement materialized.⁷⁸ The relationship Finland formed with the Soviet Union also ensured that any party that had far right tendencies would be stifled.⁷⁹

Finland showed some signs of a radical right movement in the 1990s when the Finnish Rural Party and the Constitution Party of Finland radicalized. The Rural Party, the predecessor to the True Finns, adopted a populist, xenophobic platform. The Patriotic National Alliance was formed as a neo-fascist, nostalgic organization that promoted xenophobia and nationalism, yet did not participate in any elections.⁸⁰ The xenophobic and populist Reform Party was founded in 1998 and participated in the 1999 parliamentary elections, winning only 1.1 percent.

While the Finnish radical right has historically performed poorly since the end of the Second World War, the populist True Finns, who have recently adopted a more radical platform, broke through with an impressive 19 percent in the last parliamentary elections.

Greece

Throughout the 20th century, Greece went through various authoritarian regime changes. After a series of coup d'états and short-lived dictatorships following the First World War, an authoritarian regime was established by former general Ioannis Metaxas in 1936. While not a fascist, Metaxas was a radical right dictator; his regime was authoritarian, nationalist, anti-liberal, anti-parliamentarian, and incorporated Italian

⁷⁸ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 160.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 160

fascist concepts into his ideology.⁸¹ Shortly after Mussolini's troops invaded Greece, Metaxas died. An Axis puppet government was then established in Athens, putting an end to the Metaxas regime.

In 1967, the right-wing Colonel George Papadopoulos staged a coup with other colonels and established a dictatorship. The coup was the culmination of more than thirty years of political tension between the right and left. Unlike many of the other radical right movements I have examined, the colonels' coup was influenced by anti-leftist sentiments rather than anti-immigrant, nationalist ones. Under Papadopoulos and the colonels, all political parties were banned, the mass media were controlled, and a secret police was formed.⁸² Although the regime was not fascist, it was certainly authoritarian. The colonels' dedication to the revitalization of traditional Greek culture, its anti-bureaucratic stances, and desire to "save the Fatherland" makes the regime populist and nationalistic in nature.⁸³

The regime faced fierce opposition since its inception. Alexandros Panagoulis, a future MP, attempted to assassinate Papadopoulos. Thousands of Greeks protested the regime in Athens and demanded democracy. In response to demands for reform, Papadopoulos attempted to liberalize the regime, yet faced opposition from more radical colonels.⁸⁴ Papadopoulos was overthrown by Dimitrios Ioannidis, an opponent of Papadopoulos' liberalization efforts. Ioannidis' aggressive authoritarianism was

⁸¹ Aristotle A. Kallis, "Fascism and Religion: The Metaxas Regime in Greece and the 'Third Hellenic Civilisation'," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8:2 (2007): 234.

⁸² Theodore A. Coulombis, "The Greek Junta Phenomenon," *Polity* 6:3 (1974): 352.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 355.

⁸⁴ Ioannis Tzortzis, "The *Metapolitefsi* that Never Was: a Re-evaluation of the 1973 'Markezinis Experiment,'" *University of Birmingham* (2002)

unpopular among Greeks, including junta officials. The junta called for a meeting and decided to dissolve the regime and reinstate democracy.

In 1974, in the first democratic elections since the fall of the military regime, the conservative New Democracy won an absolute majority. The party sought to distance itself from the military regime and adopted a more moderate, center-right platform. During these elections, the radical right National Democratic Union was formed, campaigning on granting amnesty to junta members and anti-communism. The party won only 1.1 percent and quickly dissolved. In 1979, two more radical right parties formed – the United National Movement and the Party of Progress. Both parties failed in national and European elections and disbanded. The far-right National Political Union succeeded these parties and managed to win 2.3 percent and one MEP in the European elections of 1984.⁸⁵ Like its predecessors, the National Political Union advocated authoritarian rule and amnesty for junta members. This minor success was not repeated, as the party only gained around 1 percent in the remainder of its elections before dissolving in 1994.

Overall, the radical right has been unsuccessful in post-junta Greece. In the case of Greece, the nation's legacy of nationalism and authoritarianism has put the radical right at a disadvantage. The authoritarian junta regime was extremely unpopular in Greece and references to this era are often met with contempt. In order for a radical right party to succeed in Greece, it may need to distance itself from the colonels' regime. With the exception of the Party of Progress, failed radical right parties lacked strong

⁸⁵ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003): 193.

leadership.⁸⁶ Additionally, the center-right New Democracy had conservative and populist appeal and took away potential votes from radical right parties. While the radical right was a failure in Greece between the 1970s and 1990s, it has resurged recently with the breakthrough of the extreme right Golden Dawn.

Conclusion

This history has demonstrated that certain political and social conditions have led to the rise of various radical right movements and parties. For example, anti-Semitic sentiments arising from the Dreyfus Affair led to the growth of the Action Française movement and increased immigration to Germany brought about a brief surge in popularity of the National-Democratic German Party. While such issues appear to have contributed to relative radical right success in many instances, they have not contributed to sustained, long-term success. Indeed, most of the radical right parties discussed above have since dissolved. The dissolution of radical right parties appears to be a result of disorganization, poor leadership, and unprofessionalism coupled with a reliance on favorable external conditions. This was the case with parties such as the Dutch List Pim Fortuyn, the Austrian League of Independents, and the Danish Progress Party. It therefore takes more than favorable external conditions to realize success. In my next chapter, I will focus on three parties that have achieved long-standing success, i.e., parties that have won at least 5 percent in three consecutive elections, and two parties that have only recently been successful.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 194.

Chapter 3: Party Profiles and Internal Explanations of Success

This chapter will examine and discuss the origins and history, ideology, leaders and members, organization, and electoral performances of five contemporary radical right parties. The first three parties I examine have been successful in at least three consecutive elections. These parties, the Freedom Party of Austria, the Danish People's Party, and the Dutch Party for Freedom, not only share similar platforms but similar organizational structures and membership profiles. Their success illustrates the importance of these internal factors in radical right party development.

The last two parties I examine, the True Finns and Golden Dawn, have only been successful in their latest parliamentary elections, winning 19 and 7 percent, respectively. In doing so, their ideologies, leaders, structures, and membership profiles will be compared with the long-term successful parties.

The Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)

With a history dating back to 1956, the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) is the oldest radical right party I will examine. After the fall of the League of Independents (VdU), the FPÖ took the party's place as Austria's sole far-right party. Like the VdU, the FPÖ was led by and comprised of former Nazis. The party platform was therefore unashamedly fascist. For example, in 1968, the party proposed the use of eugenics to

preserve and promote Austrian ethnic purity.⁸⁷ Beginning in the 1970s, however, the FPÖ began to break ties with its Nazi past and adopted a more moderate, liberal approach in order to broaden the party's appeal. By the end of the 1970s, the FPÖ had evolved into a mainstream political party that was far removed from the radical right fringe. The party was accepted into the Liberal International in 1979 and, in 1982, under party leader Norg Steger, became a part of the governing coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ).⁸⁸

This trend toward liberalism and coalition with the Social Democrats alienated some of the party's extremist members, creating an ideological split in the party.⁸⁹ The radical faction was led by Jörg Haider, who aimed to lead the FPÖ in a more nationalist and populist direction. Haider's support within the party grew and allowed him to take control of the FPÖ in 1986.⁹⁰ The rise of Haider resulted in a radical shift in the FPÖ platform; the party reverted to its nationalist roots and adopted an antiestablishment, populist position. Haider's antiestablishment messages criticized the state bureaucracy, the inefficiency of the welfare system, the corruption of politicians, and the greediness of banks.⁹¹ However, Haider retained many of the neoliberal elements of the FPÖ, stressing

⁸⁷ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 111.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 112.

⁸⁹ Herbert Kitschelt, *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 170.

⁹⁰ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 112.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

individual freedom, privatization, and the reduction of interest groups' and political parties' influence on the economy.⁹²

Haider's party leadership led Social Democrat Chancellor Franz Vranitzky to formally dissolve the SPÖ- FPÖ governing coalition and call for new elections.⁹³ Haider's FPÖ garnered 9.7 percent of the vote in the new elections, the most the party had gained in its history.⁹⁴ The party's 29.0 percent won in Carinthia's regional elections made Haider the region's president, marking the first time an FPÖ leader held a regional presidency position. A year later, the FPÖ gained 16.6 percent of the vote in the general elections.

In light of these electoral successes, Haider began to consolidate more control over the party. He forced out the liberal members of the party in order to reduce factionalism and eliminate any threats to his leadership.⁹⁵ For example, the FPÖ candidate for president in 1992, liberal Heidi Schmidt, was forced to leave the party in 1993 and consequently formed her own party. Additionally, Haider eliminated more extremist and neo-Nazi members from the party, fearing that such an image would alienate voters. For example, he effectively removed power from Krimhild Trattnig, who had a pan-German extremist following in Carinthia.⁹⁶ He replaced these liberal and

⁹² Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 134.

⁹³ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 120.

⁹⁴ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 113.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁹⁶ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 138.

extremist members with inexperienced but loyal recruits.⁹⁷ Among these recruits were television personalities, business tycoons, and Olympic skiers who were appointed medium- to high-ranking positions within the party hierarchy.⁹⁸ In order to gain more control over the party, Haider forced FPÖ members to sign the “Contract of Democracy,” which provided Haider with their financial information and renounced certain pension benefits.⁹⁹ Haider also adopted a policy of selective recruitment that kept membership low, allowing him to maintain tight control over the party.¹⁰⁰

According to David Art’s research on radical right activism, the median FPÖ activist comes from a high socioeconomic and educated status and has professional or political experience.¹⁰¹ FPÖ recruits also tend to be relatively moderate and are therefore more willing to work within the European democratic system than their extremist counterparts. Unlike failed radical right parties, the FPÖ has a loyal voter base. In many instances, radical right and populist parties receive votes of protest rather than votes of support. In the French presidential elections of the late 1980s, for example, a majority of Le Pen’s voters did not want him to become president. The FPÖ, on the other hand, has built a loyal voter base since the 1980s. Indeed, between 1986-1999, the FPÖ had between 77 and 81 percent loyal voters.¹⁰²

⁹⁷ Ibid., 137.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 136.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 138.

¹⁰⁰ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 116.

¹⁰¹ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 54.

¹⁰² Cas Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 229.

In the national elections of 1994, the FPÖ gained 22.5 percent of the vote. This success continued throughout the remainder of the 1990s; in each election to both the national parliament and the European Parliament, the party won over 20 percent.¹⁰³ During this time, the FPÖ adopted a more xenophobic platform, which proved to be successful in attracting voters.

In 1997, the FPÖ platform emphasized the importance of Austrian national identity and the need to protect it from immigration, multiculturalism, and globalization.¹⁰⁴ The European Union opposed this shift in ideology and imposed sanctions on the party in 2000. The EU commission found that the FPÖ did not pose a threat to immigrants and European democracy and consequently lifted the sanctions. Regardless, Haider stepped down as party leader in May, retaining his position as president of Carinthia.¹⁰⁵ In the following elections of 2002, the FPÖ experienced its worst electoral performance since 1986, winning only 10 percent of the vote.¹⁰⁶ This electoral downturn led to fighting and disorder within the FPÖ between a xenophobic, populist faction and a more moderate faction that sought to remain in government with the ÖVP.

This internal strife and electoral defeat prompted Haider to leave the FPÖ. Together with members of the FPÖ, he founded the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) in 2005, which managed to gain 4.1 percent of the vote in the 2006 general

¹⁰³ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 113.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁰⁵ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 140.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 141.

elections. Shortly after the party's successful 2008 elections, in which it won 10.7 percent of the vote, Haider died in a car accident.¹⁰⁷

Since the formation of the BZÖ, the FPÖ has fared well in Austrian elections. Under the leadership of Heinz-Christian Strache, the party won 14.8 percent in the Viennese state elections of October 2005 and 11 percent in the parliamentary elections of 2006. The FPÖ continued to utilize xenophobic and populist rhetoric, employing slogans such as "Austria First," "Prosperity Instead of Migration," and "At Home Instead of Islam," in its campaigns.¹⁰⁸ The party focused on common radical right themes, such as "anti-immigration, EU skepticism, crime and Austrian nationalism" while also supporting economic and social policies that appeal to blue-collar voters.¹⁰⁹ In the most recent parliamentary elections of 2008, the FPÖ won an impressive 17.5 percent.

The FPÖ has proven to be a legitimate party within the Austrian political system. The success of the FPÖ can be attributed to the party's organization and leadership. Lubbers, Gijsberts, and Scheepers created a statistical model measuring the organization, charisma of party leaders, and membership activism for various radical right parties, and the FPÖ, along with the Flemish *Vlaams Blok*, ranked highest in all scores.¹¹⁰ Haider's ability to avoid the infiltration of extremists and careful selection of loyal activists seem to have also helped the FPÖ by creating a more positive party image and reducing factionalism. While Haider's charisma and organizational structure played a large role in the success of the FPÖ, the results of the 2008 elections suggest that the party is not

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 142.

¹⁰⁹ Kurt Richard Luther, "The Revival of the Radical Right: The Austrian Parliamentary Election of 2008," *West European Politics* 32 (2009): 1052.

¹¹⁰ Marcel Lubbers, Mérove Gijsberts, and Peer Scheepers, "Extreme right-wing voting in Western Europe," *European Journal of Political Research* 41 (2002): 361.

reliant on Haider; whereas several radical right parties collapse after the departure of their leader, this has not been the case with the FPÖ.

The Danish People's Party (DF)

In 1995, Pia Kjaersgaard left the Danish Progress Party and created the Danish People's Party with three other members of parliament. She managed to take roughly one-third of the Progress Party's members with her, including several local city council members.¹¹¹

In an effort to avoid the inner-party turmoil that plagued the FRPd, Kjaersgaard created policies that would eliminate threats to her power and prevent factionalism. For example, a party member that publicly engages in inner-party disagreements are given a written warning, and a second offense results in expulsion.¹¹² Similar sanctions are imposed upon members who break any party rules.¹¹³ Like the FPÖ under Haider, the party leader holds a disproportionate amount of power; there is little democratic decision-making within the DF.¹¹⁴

Prior to the 1998 elections, Kjaersgaard created an organized, strict candidate selection process. In order to become a candidate, applicants must belong to the DF for at least six months and submit an application that includes a cover letter, statement of

¹¹¹ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 154.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 154.

¹¹³ Nora Langenbacher and Britta Schellenberg, ed., *Is Europe on the "Right" Path? Right-Wing Extremism and Right-Wing Populism in Europe* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011), 250.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 250.

purpose, CV, and a criminal background check. Successful candidates are then interviewed by a nominating committee which always includes two members of the national party.¹¹⁵ This recruiting process ensures that the DF candidates are professionals that will not give the party a poor image or reputation. Like the FPÖ, the DF's activists and candidates come from high socioeconomic and educated backgrounds, have professional or political experience, and are relatively moderate. Out of one hundred candidates in the DF, fifty were managers and professionals, the highest number out of the eight parties examined in David Art's study.¹¹⁶ The DF has also taken measures to prevent extremists from joining the party. Nineteen DF members were expelled from the party in 1999 when it was discovered that they had ties with the extreme-right Danish Forum, for example.¹¹⁷ DF deputy party leader Peter Skaarup said, "Racist, extreme, and undemocratic views run counter to everything that is Danish and therefore also to the Danish People's Party."

The Danish People's Party adopted a xenophobic and nationalistic platform, making it far more radical than the Progress Party. The party views multiculturalism and immigration as a threat to Danish culture and identity and like many other radical right parties, frequently makes references to its nation's history, culture, and people. The party's program states, "In the Danish People's Party we are proud of Denmark; we love our country and we feel a historic obligation to protect our country, its people and the Danish cultural heritage." The program continues to read, "Denmark is not an

¹¹⁵ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 154.

¹¹⁶ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 50.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 155.

immigrant-country and never has been. Thus we will not accept transformation to a multiethnic society.”¹¹⁸ The DF therefore prioritizes strong national defense and secure borders. This emphasis on the importance of preserving Danish nationality and culture also explains the DF’s opposition to the European Union. The platform states, “The Danish People’s Party wishes friendly and dynamic cooperation with all the democratic...peoples of the world, but we will not allow Denmark to surrender its sovereignty. As a consequence, the Danish People’s Party opposes the European Union.”¹¹⁹ Additionally, the DF platform covers other themes common among radical right and populist parties, such as emphasis on the importance of the family, stating that “the family is the heart of Danish society,” and a commitment to enforcing law and order.

In its first general election, the DF won 7.4 percent and 13 seats, while the Progress Party managed to only gain 2.4 percent.¹²⁰ In 2001, the DF received 13 percent and won 22 seats in parliament. After this election, the DF began to support two mainstream parties, the Liberal and Conservative parties, while remaining outside of the governing coalition.¹²¹ The DF supported policy initiatives created by the Liberals and Conservatives that aligned with the DF party platform, such as laws calling for limited immigration and ending welfare state abuse. By working with mainstream parties in parliament, the DF demonstrated that it had the potential to be more than a fringe radical

¹¹⁸“The Party Program of the Danish People’s Party,”
http://www.danskfolkeparti.dk/The_Party_Program_of_the_Danish_Peoples_Party.asp

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Nora Langenbacher and Britta Schellenberg, ed., *Is Europe on the “Right” Path? Right-Wing Extremism and Right-Wing Populism in Europe* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011), 248.

¹²¹ Ibid., 250.

populist party and could become a legitimate political actor.¹²² Additionally, this cooperation with mainstream parties attracted more voters who had previously feared that voting for a radical party was akin to “throwing away” a vote.

The DF won over 13 percent in the parliamentary elections of 2005 and 2007, and won 12.3 percent in 2011. While these gains are modest, the DF is currently the third-most represented party in the Danish parliament, trailing the Liberals and Social Democrats. Although she emerged from a protest fringe party, Pia Kjaersgaard has successfully created a well-organized, professional radical right party. The DF has proven its legitimacy and has become an established party within the Danish political system.

The Party For Freedom (Netherlands) (PVV)

In 2004, radical right politician Geert Wilders left the Liberal Party (VVD) in opposition to the party’s support for Turkish membership in the EU.¹²³ While Wilders left the Liberals, he retained his seat in parliament and referred to his “party,” consisting only of Wilders himself, as Group Wilders.¹²⁴ In 2006, Wilders established the radical right Party for Freedom (PVV).

Like other radical right party leaders, Wilders maintains tight control over the PVV. According to David Art, Wilders is technically the only member of the party and therefore is not obligated to operate his party democratically or reveal the sources of his

¹²² Ibid., 251.

¹²³ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 185.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 185.

funding.¹²⁵ To recruit candidates, Wilders personally interviews applicants and ensures that chosen candidates do not stray from the party line or challenge Wilders' power. Party member Hero Brinkman spoke on television about the PVV, a violation of the party's rules, and discussed his dissatisfaction with the party, stating that it is not democratic and has no structure.¹²⁶ Wilders promptly removed Brinkman from the list of potential candidates for an upcoming election, and such incidences have not occurred since. Wilders also trains his candidates and coaches them in debates, preventing the party from the incompetence and unprofessionalism that often afflicts radical parties. Of the fifteen PVV members of the House of Representatives, all have had either political or professional experience. This gives the party the image of a legitimate political actor that has a chance at governing rather than an unruly protest organization.

Wilders has successfully avoided affiliations with neo-Nazi and fascist organizations and rhetoric. He has claimed to be pro-Israel and considers himself “a friend of the Jewish people.”¹²⁷ By avoiding extremist membership, the PVV can draw appeal from a wider base than an openly-racist, neo-Nazi fringe party.

The PVV platform blends economic liberalism with xenophobia and populism. Wilders and his party has gained notoriety for its strong opposition to immigration and Islam. In regards to immigration and Islam, Wilders calls for the closing of all Islamic schools, the exportation of non-Dutch citizens who commit crimes, the banning of the Koran and the headscarves in public places, restrictions on immigrant labor from EU

¹²⁵ Ibid., 186.

¹²⁶ Nora Langenbacher and Britta Schellenberg, ed., *Is Europe on the “Right” Path? Right-Wing Extremism and Right-Wing Populism in Europe* (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2011), 134.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 129.

member states, and strict Dutch language proficiency requirements and ten-year Dutch residency in order to receive welfare benefits.¹²⁸ In response to criticism of his Islamophobia, Wilders said, “I have a problem with Islamic tradition, culture, ideology. Not with Muslim people.” He compares the Koran to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, claiming it is a fascist text. According to Wilders, “Islam is not a religion, it’s an ideology, the ideology of a retarded culture.”¹²⁹ Wilders regularly receives death threats from Islamic extremists and lives under twenty-four hour police protection.¹³⁰

Like many European radical right parties, the PVV is also Euroskeptic. Its party program supports withdrawal from the Euro Zone, in favor of returning to the Dutch guilder, and the abolition of the European Parliament. He additionally opposes the high salaries of EU officials and civil servants, dubbed “eurocrats,” and consequently created a website on the issue titled stopeuprofiteers.com. Wilders has even protested the flying of the EU flag in Amsterdam.¹³¹

In its first election in 2006, the PVV won 5.9 percent, awarding the party nine seats in parliament. The party reached its peak in 2010, winning 15.5 percent and 24 seats, yet dropped down to 10.1 percent and 15 seats in 2012. While support for the PVV dropped in the latest elections, it remains the third largest party in parliament. The PVV’s rigid organizational structure, party loyalty and cohesion, professionalism, and

¹²⁸ Dutch Party for Freedom Party Program, 2010-2015. Translated from Dutch to English. http://www.pvv.nl/images/stories/Webversie_VerkiezingsProgrammaPVV.pdf

¹²⁹ Ian Traynor, “‘I don’t hate Muslims. I hate Islam,’ says Holland’s rising political star,” *The Guardian*, 16 February 2008. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/feb/17/netherlands.islam>

¹³⁰ David Art, *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 187.

¹³¹ “Wilders says No to EU flag in Amsterdam,” *Radio Netherlands Worldwide*, 12 July 2012. <http://www.rnw.nl/english/article/wilders-says-no-eu-flag-amsterdam>

prevention of extremist members from entering its ranks has allowed the party to evolve into a legitimate and successful political party.

True Finns (PS)

The True Finns' origins begin with populist leader Veikko Vennamo. Vennamo was a member of the Agrarian League, which has since changed its name to the Centre Party. When Agrarian League member Urho Kekkonen was elected president of Finland in 1956, Vennamo's relationship with party officials deteriorated. Vennamo left the Agrarian League and started the populist Finnish Rural Party.¹³² Vennamo's Rural Party built a support base around poor farmers, many of whom were displaced from lands occupied by the Soviet Union.¹³³ The Rural Party was successful in the parliamentary elections of 1970 and 1983, in which it won 18 and 17 seats respectively. Yet the Rural Party's support faded after this election and ultimately filed for bankruptcy in 1995.

Former Rural Party secretary Timo Soini established the True Finns (PS) with other Rural Party members after the party's dissolution. Like other European radical right and populist parties, Soini organized the True Finns as a leader-centric party. Out of all of the parties competing in the 2011

¹³² David Arter, "Analysing 'Successor Parties': The Case of the True Finns," *West European Politics* 35: 813.

¹³³ Kyösti Karvonen, "What's Up With the 'True Finns' Party?" *This Is Finland*, May 2011.

<http://finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=220384&nodeid=41805&culture=en-US>

elections, the True Finns emphasized strong leadership the most.¹³⁴ While the party organization depends heavily on strong leadership, the True Finns have a more democratized decision-making process than its predecessors, the Agrarian League. Party members, for example, are represented at the True Finns' annual conference, whereas the Agrarian League restricted this representation to party elites.¹³⁵ Many True Finns candidates are politically experienced and served positions in local and parliamentary government or worked with other political parties; 28 percent of PS parliamentarians formerly served as either MPs or MP candidates with the Rural Party.¹³⁶ However, in 2011, the party's most successful election, many candidates were political novices running for office for the first time. Arter explains that many of these candidates were attracted to the "ethno-nationalist, welfare chauvinist mix in the PS's fabric." Like the FPÖ, several of the PS's MPs and activists are nationally recognized from the "world of sport and entertainment" who have no political experience. Many members hold hard-line anti-immigrant and nationalist stances. Consequently, Soini has issued a party statement condemning racism and discrimination and has condemned a new MP for his use of racist language. Soini has also expressed concern over the political inexperience of the party's candidates and has required all candidates to sign a contract stating that, if elected, they would not join another party.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Mari K. Niemi, "Messenger and Defender – Timo Soini's Populist Leadership and Media Strategies in Winning the Elections of 2011," *Research on Finnish Society* 4 (2012): 8.

¹³⁵ David Arter, "Analysing 'Successor Parties': The Case of the True Finns," *West European Politics* 35: 817.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 818.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 819.

The True Finns' original party program emphasizes the importance of social justice and demonstrates a commitment to the welfare state; the party is "built on core values of Christian social thought."¹³⁸ The program continues to outline the True Finns' support for unemployment benefits, stating that "every Finn has the right to an honorable job." While the True Finns appear to be a center-left party in fiscal terms, the party's right-wing populism becomes evident when social issues are discussed. The program states that "[Foreigners] have to accept our social and legal systems."¹³⁹ While such a stance is not xenophobic, the True Finns hardened their stance on immigration in later party manifestos. Arter explains that in the party's 2007 manifesto, the True Finns claim that immigrants do not seek to adapt to Finnish culture and that "large-scale immigration will ultimately threaten the indigenous Finnish culture."¹⁴⁰ The True Finns also support teaching "healthy nationalism" in schools and eliminating Swedish as one of the two official languages in Finland.¹⁴¹ While the True Finns are not as xenophobic as most European radical right parties, their anti-immigrant stances coupled with Finnish nationalism make the party radical right.

Like many European radical right parties, the True Finns' platform stresses the importance of Finnish sovereignty and shows signs of Euroskepticism. The program reads, "We want to be first and foremost Finnish...Finland should be careful in regard to the expansion of the defense, the single currency and the fiscal and social policy [of the

¹³⁸ The True Finns Party General Programme, 1995. Translated from Finnish to English. <http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=fi&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.perussuomalaiset.fi%2F>

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ David Arter, "The Breakthrough of Another West European Populist Radical Right Party? The Case of the True Finns," *Government and Opposition* 45 (2010): 484-504.

EU]...National decision-making must not be undermined!”¹⁴² The True Finns have become increasingly Euroskeptic, as demonstrated in the party’s 2011 election program. The program outlines the party’s desire to reduce the role of EU decision-making in issues that “concern only the Finns.” The program continues to read, “Rather than a model pupil, Finland should become a Euroskeptic partner.” It additionally condemns potential EU expansion to the east and Turkish membership, stating that “the more fragmentary the cultural basis of the Union becomes, the more bureaucratic and oligarchic its administrative structure will be.”¹⁴³ In the 2011 election, the True Finns threatened to withdraw Finland from the EU if power was not transferred back to member states.¹⁴⁴

The 2011 also program covers other common populist themes, giving special attention to farmers, small businesses, national pride, and family values. Arter explains that the True Finns hold “traditionalist socio-cultural views,” such as opposing same-sex marriages, supporting fundamental Christian values, and having zero tolerance toward drug and alcohol abuse.¹⁴⁵

In its first parliamentary election, the party only managed to win roughly 1 percent, giving the True Finns one seat in parliament. The True Finns proceeded to win

¹⁴² The True Finns Party General Programme, 1995. Translated from Finnish to English. <http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=fi&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.perussuomalaiset.fi%2F>

¹⁴³ The True Finns’ Election Program for the Parliamentary Election 2011 Summary http://translate.googleusercontent.com/translate_c?depth=1&hl=en&rurl=translate.google.com&sl=fi&tl=en&twu=1&u=http://www.perussuomalaiset.fi/ohjelmat/getfile.php%3Ffile%3D1935&usg=ALkJrhi0D46QyHj-tg1ZL5J24c06aEduUA

¹⁴⁴ Teija Tiilikainen, “Eurosceptic ‘True Finns’ Shatter the Old Consensus,” *The Guardian*, 14 April 2011.

¹⁴⁵ David Arter, “The Breakthrough of Another West European Populist Radical Right Party? The Case of the True Finns,” *Government and Opposition* 45 (2010): 484-504.

three and five seats in the 2003 and 2007 elections, respectively.¹⁴⁶ The party's first sign of success appeared in 2009, when it won 9.8 percent in the European Parliament election.¹⁴⁷ In the latest Finnish parliamentary elections, the True Finns won a surprising 19 percent of the vote and 39 seats, nearly quadrupling its results in the previous election.¹⁴⁸ With this victory, the True Finns are the third-largest party represented in parliament. The majority of these voters, however, voted in protest; Arter finds that roughly 70 percent of the True Finns' votes were protest statements, many of whom were former Social Democrats who had become disillusioned with the party.¹⁴⁹ This could indicate that the True Finns are merely a protest party that will not last in Finnish politics. Yet this does not change the fact that the True Finns won 19 percent, which is an impressive feat for any party. The 2011 elections therefore demonstrate the potential for the True Finns to evolve into a legitimate political party along the lines of the FPÖ or DF rather than a populist fringe party.

Golden Dawn (Greece)

Golden Dawn began as a fringe protest group in the 1980s. In the 1970s, future party founder and leader Nikolaos Michaloliakos served time in prison for illegally

¹⁴⁶ Mari K. Niemi, "Messenger and Defender – Timo Soini's Populist Leadership and Media Strategies in Winning the Elections of 2011," *Research on Finnish Society* 4 (2012): 8.

¹⁴⁷ David Arter, "The Breakthrough of Another West European Populist Radical Right Party? The Case of the True Finns," *Government and Opposition* 45 (2010): 484-504.

¹⁴⁸ "Election Success for the True Finns: Finland's Right Turn Spells Trouble for Europe," *Spiegel*, April 18, 2011. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/election-success-for-the-true-finns-finland-s-right-turn-spells-trouble-for-europe-a-757702.html>

¹⁴⁹ David Arter, "Analysing 'Successor Parties': The Case of the True Finns," *West European Politics* 35: 817.

possessing guns and explosives. After his release, Michaloliakos began publishing his right-wing views in a magazine called *Chrysi Avgi*, or, *Golden Dawn*. The magazine often featured portraits of Adolf Hitler and other Nazi leaders, Nazi propaganda, and nationalist and anti-Semitic articles.¹⁵⁰ After *Golden Dawn* ceased publication, Michaloliakos and a group of followers founded an ultra-nationalist, xenophobic political party and named it after the magazine.

In response to increased waves of immigration from Albania and Eastern Europe in the 1980s and 1990s, Golden Dawn members began acting as “vigilantes” and focused on attacking immigrants in Athens rather than operating as a political party.¹⁵¹ Other members fought with the Serbs in the Balkans and participated in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre of Bosnian Muslims.¹⁵² ¹⁵³ The organization made headlines in the 1990s when its members attacked students in Athens during a protest against the use of the name Macedonia by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁰ Maria Margaronis, “Fear and loathing in Athens: the rise of Golden Dawn and the far right,” *The Guardian*, 26 October 2012.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-greece-far-right>

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Anthony Faiola, “Anti-immigrant Golden Dawn rises in Greece,” *The Washington Post*, October 20, 2012. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/anti-immigrant-golden-dawn-rises-in-greece/2012/10/20/e7128296-17a6-11e2-a346-f24efc680b8d_story.html

¹⁵³ William Wheeler, “Europe’s New Fascists,” *The New York Times*, November 17, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/18/opinion/sunday/europes-new-fascists.html?src=recg&r=1&>

¹⁵⁴ Maria Margaronis, “Fear and loathing in Athens: the rise of Golden Dawn and the far right,” *The Guardian*, 26 October 2012.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-greece-far-right>

Unlike the other parties I discuss, Golden Dawn does not have an official party program or platform.¹⁵⁵ Yet the party's violence against immigrants make its message clear – they want to build, as their slogan says, a “Greece for the Greeks.” The party has shown that they support some form of assistance to impoverished Greeks, as party members often distribute food and clothing to needy persons, so long as they are Greek.¹⁵⁶ Such charitable notions may give the party populist appeal among poorer Greeks who are willing to overlook the party's extremist stances towards foreigners. Golden Dawn also seems to embrace an anti-establishment message common among populist parties. Nikolaos Michaloliakos often accuses mainstream parties of being corrupt and selling out their people.¹⁵⁷ The Golden Dawn offers Greek citizens an alternative to the country's seemingly corrupt and elitist leaders.

Golden Dawn participated in the 2009 parliamentary elections and won only 0.3 percent, gaining no seats in parliament. However, the party took advantage of rising xenophobic sentiments and achieved relative success in the 2010 Athens city council elections, where it earned 5.3 percent and one city council seat. In 2012, the party won 7 percent of the vote and 21 seats, entering parliament for the first time. Another election was held in June, in which the party won 6.9 percent and 18 seats.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Sophie Sportiche, “Q&A: Greece's Golden Dawn,” *Al Jazeera*, 7 May 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/05/201257123259482708.html>

¹⁵⁶ William Wheeler, “Europe's New Fascists,” *The New York Times*, November 17, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/18/opinion/sunday/europes-new-fascists.html?src=recg&_r=1&

¹⁵⁷ Maria Margaritis, “Fear and loathing in Athens: the rise of Golden Dawn and the far right,” *The Guardian*, 26 October 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-greece-far-right>

¹⁵⁸ William Wheeler, “Europe's New Fascists,” *The New York Times*, November 17, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/18/opinion/sunday/europes-new-fascists.html?src=recg&_r=1&

Since Golden Dawn has entered parliament, the party has been gaining international attention for its extremist views and violent tactics. Unlike the other radical right parties I discuss, the Golden Dawn does not hide its racist and xenophobic stances or prevent extremists from joining its ranks. Party members often wear black t-shirts with the Golden Dawn's swastika-like logo, use Nazi-esque salutes, and chant slogans such as "Get the Stench out of Greece," "Greece for the Greeks," and "Blood, Honor, Golden Dawn." Hundreds of immigrants have been attacked by Golden Dawn members in the past year; members often patrol areas with high immigrant populations at night and beat their targets with brass knuckles, iron rods, and wooden bats.¹⁵⁹ Three Golden Dawn MPs smashed immigrant vendors' stalls in the towns of Rafina and Messolonghi.¹⁶⁰ Golden Dawn members have also been violent towards left-wing politicians and activists. Party spokesman Ilias Kasidiaris slapped Communist Party member Liana Kanelli on national television, for example.¹⁶¹ Despite these incidences, Golden Dawn has risen in popularity since its election and now comes in third in national opinion polls.¹⁶²

Golden Dawn is an unorganized, inexperienced, xenophobic, nationalist and neo-fascist party. Ignoring external factors, the success of the Golden Dawn is an enigma.

¹⁵⁹ Joanna Kakissi, "Reclaiming Xenophobia: The Rise of Ultra-Nationalism in Greece," *Time*, October 31, 2012. <http://world.time.com/2012/10/31/reclaiming-xenophobia-the-rise-of-ultra-nationalism-in-greece/>

¹⁶⁰ Maria Margaronis, "Fear and loathing in Athens: the rise of Golden Dawn and the far right," *The Guardian*, 26 October 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-greece-far-right>

¹⁶¹ Karolina Tagaris, "Greek TV attack deals blow to rightist party image," *Reuters*, June 8, 2012. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/06/08/us-greece-dawn-idUSBRE8570Y820120608>

¹⁶² Maria Margaronis, "Fear and loathing in Athens: the rise of Golden Dawn and the far right," *The Guardian*, 26 October 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/26/golden-dawn-greece-far-right>

Given its poor public image, violent membership, extremism, and lack of organization, Golden Dawn *should* perform poorly in elections, as it did prior to the 2012 elections. What, then, brought about this success? To further understand Golden Dawn's breakthrough, I will examine the political, economic, and social environment of Greece in the next chapter.

Conclusion

The first three parties examined in this chapter are well-organized, led by “practical” leaders, avoid extremism, and recruit professional members and activists. The research outlined in this chapter indicates that there is a positive relationship between these internal factors and likelihood of success. When one compares the FPÖ, DF, and PVV to failed parties discussed in Chapter 2, it is clear that internal variables differentiate the successful parties from the failed parties. The Danish Progress Party, for example, was loosely organized and afflicted with factionalism, leading to the party's demise. Meanwhile, the DF, the Progress Party's successor, was able to quickly rise to prominence in Danish politics. Similarly, the Dutch List Pim Fortuyn imploded after its leader died, while the PVV has enjoyed electoral success since its establishment; the party scored nearly 6 percent in its first ever parliamentary election and has yet to fall below that threshold.

The True Finns and Golden Dawn are similar to each other in that they have only recently been electorally successful, yet the parties themselves, in terms of platform, members, and organization, are different. The True Finns' Timo Soini has charismatic

qualities that are often instrumental in achieving breakthrough success, as was the case with Haider with the FPÖ and Le Pen with the FN. Soini has taken steps to organize the party and recruit members that may not be politically experienced, but are national figures in Finland. Haider took a similar approach with his party and enjoyed favorable results. On the other hand, Golden Dawn is extremely unorganized and unprofessional, yet was still successful in its last election. This breakthrough success of the Golden Dawn may therefore rely on external conditions, specifically, rising immigration rates, a crippled economy, and widespread Euroskepticism.

While I find these internal factors to be the most important in achieving long-term, consistent success, I believe that external, demand-side factors also play a role in determining success and should not be ignored. My next chapter will focus on these variables and test whether or not these parties' success rely on external or internal factors.

Chapter 4: External Explanations of Success

In this chapter, I will discuss the political, economic, and social environments in Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, and Greece. Specifically, I will examine immigration rates, unemployment rates, and attitudes toward the European Union to determine whether or not a party enjoys a supportive environment. I use immigration as a measurement because one of the main tenets of radical right ideology is preserving national identity and culture by limiting immigration. For this reason, many scholars, including Knigge (1998), Husbands (2001), Fennema (1997), and Von Beyme (1988) have attributed radical right success to rising immigration rates. To determine whether or not immigration helps radical right parties succeed, I will analyze immigration trends in the five countries examined in this thesis.

Unemployment has also been used as an explanation for radical right success. Scholars such as Jackman and Volpert (1996) have argued that higher rates of unemployment correlate with higher levels of support for radical right parties. Additionally, unemployment is often viewed as one of the most important issues to European voters, based on Eurobarometer surveys. It is therefore likely that an individual's personal financial situation may impact the way he or she votes.

The five radical right parties I examine are Euroskeptic, so I will examine the overall attitudes towards the EU in each country and determine whether or not this impacted each party's success. Literature relating Euroskepticism to radical right success is limited, but given the political importance of the EU in the context of national politics, I believe it is an important factor to examine.

I argue that while external factors may lead to success in a party's breakthrough phrase, they are not sufficient in establishing long-term, consistent success. Therefore, parties that rely solely on external factors will not succeed in the long run. Additionally, I argue that explaining radical right success by analyzing external conditions alone is insufficient because it fails to explain cross-national variations in success. To address this point, I will compare the conditions of Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands, Finland, and Greece with countries that have similar conditions but with little to no radical right success.

Austria

Austria has traditionally been a homogenous country. In the 1961 census, foreign citizens accounted for only 1.4 percent of the population, a majority of which came from Western European countries.¹⁶³ Yet in the last few decades, Austria has been receiving large amounts of “non-traditional” immigrants, i.e., immigrants from non-EU countries. Between 1981 and 1991, the size of Austria's foreign-born population grew from 291,000 to 518,000.¹⁶⁴ In the first half of the 1990s, there was a net migration of over 250,000 people. This increase is attributed to the fall of the Iron Curtain and the resulting immigration boom in people from the former Eastern Bloc. The number of migrants continued to grow throughout the 1990s; between 1991 and 2001, the foreign population grew by roughly 190,000. According to Eurostat, as of 2011, foreign citizens, i.e.,

¹⁶³ Heinz Fassmann and Ursula Reeger, “Austria: From guest worker migration to a country of immigration,” *IDEA Working Papers* (2008): 8.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10

“persons who are not citizens of the country in which they reside,” make up 10.8 percent of Austria’s population.¹⁶⁵ EU countries with similar rates are Belgium (10.6), Germany (8.8), Greece (8.5), and Spain (12.3). The radical right has been successful in Belgium, with the Flemish nationalist-separatist *Vlaams Blok/Belang* winning at least 5 percent of the vote in each national election between 1991 and 2010. In Greece, the radical right has only recently made a revival with Golden Dawn and has been relatively weak since the fall of the colonels’ regime. Despite the brief radical right resurgence in the 1980s and 1990s, the German radical right has failed in its recent elections, with the Republican Party failing to achieve 1 percent of the vote. Meanwhile, the radical right in Spain is virtually non-existent. The immigration-focused theory does not account for these cross-national differences in radical right success. Attributing the Freedom Party’s (FPÖ) success to immigration alone would therefore be insufficient.

The increase in immigration to Austria, however, does coincide with the breakthrough of the FPÖ. Austria was experiencing an influx of immigrants in the 1980s throughout the 1990s, and Haider and the FPÖ began to incorporate anti-immigrant stances into the party’s platform.¹⁶⁶ Anti-immigrant sentiments were on the rise in Austria. Roughly 40 percent of Vienna perceived immigration to be the most important problem Austria faced, and in a 1990 survey, 21 percent of Austrians were classified as “strongly xenophobic.” Austria was considered the most xenophobic country in Europe in 1990, with 77 percent of Austrians agreeing that “nationals should have priority in

¹⁶⁵ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-105_en.htm

¹⁶⁶ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 113.

receiving jobs.”¹⁶⁷ Haider was able to politicize the immigration issue and use it to his advantage. While immigration alone may not be able to explain the FPÖ’s rise, I argue that its influence cannot be ignored.

Despite the global recession, the Austrian economy has remained strong. Austria remains the eleventh richest nation in the world measured by GDP per capita.¹⁶⁸ During the recession, unemployment in Austria did not rise as steeply as most EU countries; in 2012, the national unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, one of the lowest rates in the EU.¹⁶⁹ Scholars who focus on demand-side factors often argue that there is a direct relationship between unemployment rates and radical right success, yet the success of the FPÖ presents an inconsistency in this theory when compared to countries with higher unemployment rates. In 2012, Ireland had an unemployment rate of 14.6, one of the highest rates in the EU. Regardless, no radical right party even exists in Ireland. Similarly, Spain reported a devastating 26.6 percent unemployment rate and also lacks a radical right presence. This cross-national variation makes the economic conditions approach to explaining the emergence of radical right parties seem inconsistent and flawed. The fact that Austria has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the EU yet has one of the most successful radical right parties leads me to believe that the FPÖ currently does not rely on economic downturns to achieve success.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 118.

¹⁶⁸ International Monetary Fund

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/01/weodata/weorept.aspx?sy=2006&ey=2009&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=122&s=NGDPD%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPGDP%2CPPPPC%2CLP&grp=0&a=&pr.x=60&pr.y=5>

¹⁶⁹ CIA World Factbook

http://www.theodora.com/wfbcurrent/austria/austria_economy.html

While Austria's unemployment rate has remained relatively low since the post-war era, it rose briefly during the 1990s, hovering around 6.4 percent between 1990-97.¹⁷⁰ In 1990, the FPÖ won 16.6 percent of the vote, which was the party's highest score at the time. The FPÖ's electorate consisted mostly of blue-collar workers; 26 percent of Austrians in this category voted for the party in 1994, an election in which the FPÖ won an unprecedented 22.5 percent.¹⁷¹ This brief rise in unemployment was by no means a national crisis, but it is likely that it made the FPÖ a more attractive choice among Austria's working-class population during the party's breakthrough phase. Yet economic conditions cannot explain the fact that the FPÖ won 17.5 percent in 2008, when the unemployment rate was just over 4 percent. Therefore, the case of Austria suggests that economic factors may play a role in a radical right party's breakthrough phase, yet do not make much of an impact in the long run.

Austria has been a relatively Euroskeptic country since the EU's founding, due in part to the country's tradition of neutrality. Indeed, Austria did not join the EU until 1995, which is late compared to its Western liberal democratic counterparts. When Austria voted on EU accession, 66 percent of Austrians voted in favor of EU membership. Nevertheless, 59 percent of FPÖ voters surveyed in 1994 opposed EU membership, falling behind only the Greens' 62 percent. In the EU's Eurobarometer survey, when asked "Do you think that Austria's membership of the European Union is 'a good thing' or 'a bad thing'" 36 percent answered positively, 25 percent negatively, and 37 percent answered that it is neither good nor bad. This makes Austria one of the

¹⁷⁰ Eurofound <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emire/AUSTRIA/ANCHOR-ARBEITSLOSIGKEIT-AT.htm>

¹⁷¹ Piero Ignazi, *Extreme Right Parties in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 114.

most EU critical countries. Similarly, 38 percent of Austrians are pessimistic about the EU's future, putting it above the EU-wide average level of 24 percent. An overwhelming majority of Austrians support national decision making in regards to pensions, the welfare system, and the fight against unemployment. In a 2012 Eurobarometer survey, 58 percent of Austrians associated the EU with "a waste of money," the second-highest to poll in this category.¹⁷² In the same survey, 54 percent of Austrians claimed to be dissatisfied with the way democracy works in the EU. Portugal, Spain, and the UK had similar levels, yet the radical right is weak in these countries. Forty-seven percent of Austrians viewed the EU as "unable to protect citizens." Overall, Austria appears to be relatively Euroskeptic, which creates a somewhat supportive environment for the radical right. While Euroskepticism may contribute to the FPÖ's success, it is unlikely that this is the only factor that led to this success.

In the FPÖ's breakthrough phase, immigration, and to some extent, unemployment, played a role in the party's success. During this time, the FPÖ was able to take advantage of these external factors. But the fact that other countries have similar conditions yet radical right parties failed to emerge in them suggests that these factors, while they may be helpful, cannot alone account for radical right success. I therefore argue that immigration and unemployment helped the FPÖ break into the Austrian political system, yet do not account for the party's long-term success.

¹⁷² Eurobarometer 2012
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb77/eb77_public_en.pdf

Denmark

Like Austria, Denmark has historically been a homogenous country, but it has experienced a surge in immigration to the country in recent years. In 1986, the foreign-born population of Denmark was just under 2 percent, yet rose to around 6 percent by 2004. The main surge in immigration from developing countries occurred in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁷³ This resulted in a wave of anti-immigrant sentiments within Denmark, which corresponds with the rise of the Danish People's Party (DF), which adopted a xenophobic platform shortly after its inception. It is likely that these unprecedented levels of immigration, especially from the developing world, impacted the DF's initial success. Yet focusing on immigration alone does not explain the Progress Party's rapid decline in popularity during this time. After Mogens Glistrup's exit from the party, the Progress Party began to embrace anti-immigrant stances, yet their support decreased as immigration increased. Immigration rates alone cannot sufficiently explain why xenophobic voters chose to vote for the newly-formed DF rather than the Progress Party, which had achieved electoral success in the past. Immigration rates to Denmark have continued to grow. As of 2011, foreign citizens make up 6.2 percent of the Danish population.¹⁷⁴ Countries with similar rates include Sweden (6.6), France (5.9), Italy (7.5), and the United Kingdom (7.2). France and Italy have both had relatively successful radical right parties, yet the radical right has struggled in Sweden and is extremely unsuccessful and unpopular in the UK. While immigration likely had some impact on the

¹⁷³ Thomas Liebig, "The Labour Market Integration of Immigrants in Denmark," *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers* (2007): 9.

¹⁷⁴ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-105_en.htm

DF's electoral breakthrough, a cross-national comparison of immigrant populations suggests that immigration alone cannot fully explain radical right success.

The Danish economy experienced a severe downturn in the 1990s. In May 1993, the unemployment rate reached 9.9 percent.¹⁷⁵ Yet by 1998, the DF's first year competing in a parliamentary election, this rate fell down to 4.9 percent. It is unlikely, therefore, that economic conditions played a large role in the DF's ascendancy. Indeed, as the DF's support grew, the unemployment rate decreased. In 2007, in which the DF won 13.8 percent of the vote, the unemployment rate fell below 4 percent. In 2011, however, the DF won 12.3 percent of the vote, while the unemployment rate hovered around the 7 percent mark. If one focuses on economic conditions alone, one would expect the DF's support to have increased since 2007, not decrease. Yet the small decline in popularity suggests that unemployment rates do not play a large role in the DF's success. The unemployment rate has continued to increase in Denmark; as of October 2012, it stands at 7.9 percent.¹⁷⁶ The DF continues to poll favorably in opinion polls, scoring 16.9 percent in the March 2013 poll, which places the party behind only the Social Democrats.¹⁷⁷ Countries with similar unemployment rates include Belgium (7.4), the Czech Republic (7.4), and Romania (6.7). While the Flemish separatist *Vlaams Belang* has been successful in its recent elections, the radical right in the Czech Republic and Romania is extremely weak. This cross-national variation in radical right success

¹⁷⁵ Eurostat

https://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=z8o7pt6rd5uqa6_&met_y=unemployment_rate&idim=country:dk&fdim_y=seasonality:sa&dl=en&hl=en&q=unemployment%20rates%20denmark

¹⁷⁶ Eurostat (via *The Guardian*)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/oct/31/europe-unemployment-rate-by-country-eurozone>

¹⁷⁷ Megafon. Translated from Danish to English. <http://politiskindeks.megafon.dk/>

cannot be explained by focusing on unemployment alone. While the DF's post-2011 popularity has risen as unemployment rates have increased, the fact that the party achieved success when the country experienced unemployment rates under 4 percent suggests that unemployment does not play a significant role in its success.

Despite joining the EU in 1973, Denmark has widely been considered a Euroskeptic country. Denmark opted out of the single currency and initially rejected the Maastricht Treaty, which called for European integration. However, Denmark has since signed the Maastricht Treaty, and overall, Euroskeptic attitudes have declined. In a 2012 Eurobarometer survey, 48 percent of Danes reported to have trust in the EU, placing them 15 percentage points above the EU average.¹⁷⁸ In 2009, a Eurobarometer survey showed that 65 percent of Danes view Denmark's membership in the EU as a positive thing. Countries with far more Euroskeptic attitudes have had unsuccessful radical right parties, indicating that Euroskeptic attitudes cannot guarantee radical right success. For example, in a 2012 Eurobarometer survey, only 34 percent of Czechs surveyed trusted the EU, yet the radical right has had extremely limited success in the Czech Republic. In the same survey, only 20 percent of those interviewed in the UK responded positively to the EU, and the radical right British National Party has failed to win a seat in parliament. This cross-national variation in Euroskepticism suggests that Euroskepticism alone is not a sufficient explanation for radical right success. The fact that support for the DF has increased as Danish Euroskepticism has decreased further supports this point.

Out of the three external factors I have examined, it appears that immigration is the only one to play a role in the DF's breakthrough phase, with a correlation between the

¹⁷⁸ Eurobarometer 2012
http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_fact_dk_en.pdf

party's successful election and the rapid increase in immigration. Yet unemployment and Euroskepticism do not seem to have had any significant impact on the DF's success. I conclude, therefore, that immigration created a favorable environment in the DF's initial stages, yet due to cross-national variations in radical right success, cannot account for the party's long-term success.

The Netherlands

The Netherlands has historically been open to immigrants and multiculturalism. It is estimated that between 1590 and 1800, the foreign citizen population was never less than 5 percent.¹⁷⁹ During the postwar era, migrants from newly-independent former Dutch colonies, especially Indonesia, dominated immigration to the Netherlands. Additionally, like many other European countries, the Netherlands adopted a guest worker program, leading to immigration from Southern Europe, Yugoslavia, Turkey, and Morocco. In 1975, after the Dutch granted independence to Suriname, the Netherlands experienced a surge in Surinamese migrants, fearing that their country would be unstable without support from the Dutch government.¹⁸⁰ In the 1990s, the Netherlands experienced a surge in immigration from the Dutch Antilles, Aruba, and Curacao.

After the September 11 attacks, anti-Muslim sentiments began to surface throughout the Netherlands. These Islamophobic sentiments coincided with the rise of Pim Fortuyn, who became leader of the flash party List Pim Fortuyn (LPF). Fortuyn's

¹⁷⁹ Focus Migration: The Netherlands <http://focus-migration.hwwi.de/The-Netherlands.2644.0.html?L=1>

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

party won 17.6 percent of the vote in the 2002 general elections, perhaps indicating that anti-immigrant sentiments translated into radical right success. Yet after Fortuyn was assassinated, his party failed electorally and dissolved. If one were to focus exclusively on immigration as an explanation for success, it would be expected that the party would continue to succeed electorally, despite the death of its leader. As was the case with Denmark, Dutch voters supported a new party, the Party for Freedom (PVV), rather than LPF. Clearly, there was a demand for an anti-immigrant party, yet a demand-side explanation focusing on immigration cannot explain why voters chose to back the PVV rather than LPF.

Foreign citizens make up only 4.0 percent of the Dutch population.¹⁸¹ Countries with similar percentages include the Czech Republic (4.0), Slovenia (4.0), and Portugal (4.2). Radical right parties have achieved little to no success in these countries. In the Czech Republic, the extreme-right Workers' Party received 1.14 percent in its best electoral performance and has since been banned due to its racism and extremism. The nationalist-populist Slovenian National Party has held seats in its parliament in the past, yet failed to win any in its last election. In Portugal, the National Renovator Party has not won a single seat in parliament. This cross-national variation in success indicates that immigration cannot ensure radical right success.

The Dutch economy has fluctuated over the past twenty years. As of December 2012, the unemployment rate is 5.8 percent.¹⁸² It reached one of its highest points at 8.2

¹⁸¹ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-105_en.htm

¹⁸² https://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=z8o7pt6rd5uqa6_&met_y=unemployment_rate&idim=country:nl&fdim_y=seasonality:sa&dl=en&hl=en&q=unemployment%20rates%20netherlands

percent in 1983. Yet during this period, the radical right was weak and only achieved limited success on the local level. In November 2006, the unemployment rate fell to 4.1 percent, and the PVV won 5.9 percent in its first election. The theory that radical right parties succeed the most during economic downturns does not hold true in the case of the PVV. Countries with similar rates include Germany (5.4), Luxembourg (5.1), and Iceland (5.3). None of these countries have strong radical right parties, nor do countries with much higher unemployment rates. The right-populist League of Polish Families, for example, has enjoyed limited success in the past but currently holds no seats at the national level, despite the unemployment rate of 10.6 percent. Similarly, the radical right is weak in Portugal, whose unemployment rate is 16.3. If the unemployment-based explanation for radical right success were true, the radical right would fail in the Netherlands and succeed in countries like Poland and Portugal.

Dutch Euroskepticism has been on the rise since the signing of the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. The Netherlands voted ‘no’ on the 2005 European Constitution referendum, which was surprising given the Netherlands’ long-standing support for the EU and European integration.¹⁸³ Lubbers and Scheepers attribute this rising Euroskepticism to the introduction of the euro. Countries with higher GDP, such as the Netherlands, are more likely to oppose the euro than countries with lower GDP, especially in times of economic crisis.¹⁸⁴ It is likely, therefore, that Euroskepticism has helped the PVV succeed. Similarly, the Euroskeptic Socialist Party has risen in popularity. As is the case with Denmark, however, Euroskepticism and the success of the

¹⁸³ Marcel Lubbers and Peer Scheepers, “Divergent Trends of Euroscepticism in Countries and Regions of the European Union.” *European Journal of Political Research* 49 (2010): 787.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 811.

radical right in the Netherlands does not prove that the two are directly related. The Czech Republic, UK, and Spain are far more Euroskeptic than the Netherlands, yet have not seen any radical right success in recent years. While it seems as though rising Euroskepticism has helped the PVV gain popularity in its formative years, I do not believe that Euroskepticism alone is a sufficient enough explanation for the party's long-term success.

Overall, the Netherlands has become a supportive environment for the radical right due to rising immigration rates and increasingly Euroskeptic national sentiments. Yet given the absence of radical right parties in countries with similar conditions, it is unlikely that the PVV would be able to thrive if it only relied on these factors.

Finland

Finland is a traditionally homogenous country. In 2010, the Finnish government reported that a total of 248,135 foreign nationals lived in Finland by the end of the year, making the foreign national population 4.6 percent.¹⁸⁵ Eurostat reports that the foreign citizen population is 3.1 percent.¹⁸⁶ The majority of this foreign-born population (65 percent) were born in Europe. Twenty percent were born in Asia and 9 percent in Africa. The largest foreign-language groups, i.e. languages other than Finnish, Swedish, or Sami, were Russian, Estonia, Somali, English, and Arabic. While these numbers are modest, immigration to Finland has been increasing since the 1990s. The foreign population in

¹⁸⁵ Statistics Finland http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2010/vaerak_2010_2011-03-18_tie_001_en.html

¹⁸⁶ http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-12-105_en.htm

1980 was around 10,000 and increased to over 20,000 by 1990. By 2000, the foreign population had reached 91,000, or 1.8 percent of the total population.¹⁸⁷ This sudden boom in migration to Finland is attributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union and Finland's integration into the EU. Finland's foreign-born population continues to grow. In 2012, the total population of Finland grew by 25,407 persons, 22,122 (87 percent) of whom were foreign-language speakers.¹⁸⁸ The rapid growth and unprecedented level of immigration is likely to have prompted the True Finns to take a relatively anti-immigrant stance. While the True Finns shy away from the blatant xenophobia embraced by the other parties in this study, they are the only Finnish party to address immigration as an issue. It is likely, therefore, that the True Finns satisfy the demand for a party that is tougher on immigration than the mainstream parties. While immigration may have played a role in the True Finns' breakthrough, the lack of success of radical right parties with much higher immigrant populations suggests that immigration alone cannot guarantee radical right success. If radical right success was contingent on immigration, then why would a party in Finland, with a foreign population of roughly 4 percent, succeed, while parties in Germany (8.8) fail? The failure of radical right parties operating in countries with high levels of immigration and the success of parties in Finland, the Netherlands, and other countries with relatively low foreign populations indicates that immigration does not play a large role in creating radical right success.

¹⁸⁷ Pauliina Raento and Kai Husso, "Cultural Diversity in Finland." *FENNIA: International Journal of Geography* 180 (2002): 159.

¹⁸⁸ Statistics Finland http://www.stat.fi/til/vaerak/2012/vaerak_2012_2013-03-22_tie_001_en.html

Like much of Europe, Finland was hit hard by the European economic crises and currently has an unemployment rate of 8.7 percent, as of February 2013.¹⁸⁹ Yet this rate is more or less in line with Finland's unemployment over the past decade, with its lowest rate at 6.4 percent in 2008 and its highest at 10 percent in 1999. The sudden rise in immigration in the 1990s coincides with the radicalization of the Finnish Rural Party, yet the party never achieved success close to that of its successor, the True Finns. Countries with similar unemployment rates include Denmark, which has a successful radical right party, and the Czech Republic, where the radical right is weak. As I argue throughout this chapter, the external conditions thesis cannot account for cross-national differences in success when comparing countries with similar conditions. That is, if an unemployment level of 8.7 percent caused radical right success in Finland, why didn't radical right parties in the Czech Republic experience similar levels of success? It appears, therefore, that the economic conditions did not play a large role in the True Finns' electoral breakthrough.

Finns have a relatively supportive attitude towards the EU. In a Eurobarometer survey, 47 percent of Finns reported to trust the EU, compared to the 33 percent average of all 27 EU countries and only 28 percent of Finns have supported leaving the euro.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹¹ While most Finnish citizens support the EU, Finnish politics in general has become more Euroskeptic. For example, in 2011, the Social Democrats voted against the Greek and Irish loan packages, arguing for greater private sector liability and financial

¹⁸⁹ Statistics Finland http://www.stat.fi/til/tyti/2013/02/tyti_2013_02_2013-03-26_tie_001_en.html

¹⁹⁰ Eurobarometer http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_fact_fi_en.pdf

¹⁹¹ Matti Ylönen, "Understanding Finland's Eurosceptic Surge." *Fresh Thinking (Foundation for European Progressive Studies)* 1 (2012): 24.

regulation. This represented a departure from the center-left party's traditional pro-EU stance. The Centre Party, also traditionally supportive of the EU, is now in opposition along with the True Finns and voted against the second Greek package in February 2012.¹⁹² The largest party in Finland, the center-right National Coalition, has remained relatively supportive of the EU but has also begun to act more critical towards EU countries seeking loans. The rise in anti-EU attitudes among mainstream Finnish parties may reflect a growing Euroskeptic sentiment in the country, but it could also be interpreted as a means of attracting True Finns supporters for the next election cycle. It is therefore unclear as to whether or not Euroskepticism helped the True Finns in their last election.

In sum, despite the low number of immigrants residing in Finland, rising immigration rates have created an environment conducive to the True Finns' success. Indeed, Finnish radical right parties in the past have not performed nearly as well as the True Finns and operated in environments marked by extremely low rates of immigration. The economic factors do not seem to have played a significant role in the True Finns' success, as the unemployment rate, while high, is nothing new for Finland; Finnish radical right parties in the past often competed in environments with higher unemployment rates, but achieved little success. The growing Euroskeptic sentiments expressed by Finnish politicians may present a rising demand for a Euroskeptic party, yet whether or not the Finnish population is similarly becoming more Euroskeptic remains unclear.

¹⁹² Juha Jokela and Kaisa Korhonen, "A Eurosceptic Big Bang: Finland's EU Policy in Hindsight from the 2011 Elections." *Finnish Institute of International Affairs Briefing Paper 106* (2012): 5.

Greece

Greece has historically been associated with emigration rather than migration, but has experienced a surge in immigration throughout the past two decades. In 1986, the foreign-born population was 90,000, making up roughly one percent of the population.¹⁹³ But by 1991, this number grew to 167,000. Much of this immigration stemmed from the collapse of the socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. By 2001, the foreign population had grown to 762,000. In recent years, illegal migration to Greece has been on the rise. In 2010, 132,524 persons were arrested for illegal entry, and roughly half of those arrested were deported.¹⁹⁴ The majority of immigrants in Greece are Albanians, making up 63.7 percent of the total migrant population, followed by Bulgarians, Georgians, and Romanians.¹⁹⁵ Today, Greece's foreign citizen population is 8.5 percent, but this number does not reflect the number of illegal immigrants residing in the country.

Unlike the other countries I have studied, xenophobic sentiments in Greece are visible and widespread. In a country like Austria, for example, there are high levels of immigration, but that does not necessarily mean that there are correspondingly high levels of xenophobia. Xenophobia has been fueled by an increase in crime, which is often attributed to immigrants. Additionally, the economic crisis has caused immigrants to become scapegoats. This has created fierce opposition to immigration and has resulted

¹⁹³ Charalambos Kasimis, "Greece: Illegal Immigration in the Midst of Crisis." *Migration Information Country Profiles*

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=884>

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Georgios A. Antonopoulos and John Winterdyk, "The Smuggling of Migrants in Greece: An Examination of its Social Organization." *European Journal of Criminology* 3,4 (2006): 439-461.

in widespread xenophobic violence. Human Rights Watch reports that xenophobic violence in Greece has reached “alarming proportions.”¹⁹⁶ Police have done little to prevent violence towards immigrants and in many cases, perpetuate the violence. A spokesman from an immigrant support group said, “We have hundred of reports from people who are beaten while policemen were standing there doing nothing.”¹⁹⁷ Greek authorities have written off police-initiated violence against immigrants and asylum-seekers as “isolated incidents,” which makes anti-immigrant violence seem somewhat acceptable in Greece.¹⁹⁸ The Greek government’s failure to address the issue of xenophobic violence creates a supportive environment for the Golden Dawn to not only make xenophobic statements, but to violently attack immigrants.

Rising immigration rates have clearly coincided with Golden Dawn’s success. There are countries with similar foreign citizen populations that have weak radical right parties, such as Germany (8.8) and Ireland (8.1), so immigration clearly does not have a universal impact on radical right success. But in the case of Greece, rising immigration has directly coincided with Golden Dawn’s success. The fact that Golden Dawn’s issue of most concern is immigration indicates that this rise in immigration and xenophobia have played a large role in the party’s breakthrough success.

The Greek economy has been crippled by its sovereign debt crisis and shows little to no signs of recovery. As of January 2013, the Hellenic Statistical Authority reports that the seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate is 27.2 percent, an increase from 25.7

¹⁹⁶ Liz Alderman, “Greek Far Right Hangs a Target on Immigrants.” *The New York Times*, July 10, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/11/world/europe/as-golden-dawn-rises-in-greece-anti-immigrant-violence-follows.html>

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Amnesty International, “Police Violence in Greece: Not Just ‘Isolated Incidents.’” *Amnesty International Ltd* (2012): 7.

percent in December 2012.¹⁹⁹ Golden Dawn has successfully taken advantage of this record-high unemployment rate. For example, Golden Dawn members distribute food and clothing to Greeks in the most poverty-stricken areas of the country that have experienced surges in crime and immigration. Dimitris Kaklamanos, a gas station worker, said that he voted for Golden Dawn because they “are the only ones out there demonstrating they care about Greek people.”²⁰⁰ Kaklamanos had been a regular supporter of the Socialists, but grew disillusioned due to the party’s failure to mitigate the effects of the economic crisis. Similarly, Kaiti Lazarou said that she received food from Golden Dawn members, saying that “[Golden Dawn] protects the Greeks, while [Greek Prime Minister] Samaras and the government are out of touch with the people.”²⁰¹ While Golden Dawn does not present any economic recovery plans, its grassroots aid campaigns show that the party cares about the Greek people and offers voters a sense of security.

The failure of the governing parties (New Democracy, Panhellenic Socialist Movement, and the Democratic Left) to alleviate the economic depression has created widespread anti-establishment sentiments and disillusionment, which creates an electoral environment beneficial to Golden Dawn. Indeed, as the economic situation in Greece worsens, support for Golden Dawn has increased. The party won 7 percent in its breakthrough election of 2012, but public opinion polls now show that the party has

¹⁹⁹ Tom Stoukas, “Greece’s Unemployment Rate Increased to Record High in January.” *Bloomberg*, April 11, 2013. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-04-11/greece-s-unemployment-rate-increased-to-record-high-in-january.html>

²⁰⁰ Liz Alderman, “Greek Far Right Hangs a Target on Immigrants.” *The New York Times*, July 10, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/11/world/europe/as-golden-dawn-rises-in-greece-anti-immigrant-violence-follows.html>

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

support ranging from 11.5 to 14 percent.²⁰² Meanwhile, support for New Democracy, the largest party in parliament, has fallen from 29.7 percent to 22 percent. The Socialists, coalition partners with New Democracy, have also lost support, falling from 12.3 percent to 6.5.²⁰³ It is therefore not only the poor economy that has made Golden Dawn popular, but the party's efforts to help those in need (so long as they can prove they are Greek) and the perception that the mainstream parties will fail to alleviate poverty. The economic environment has given Golden Dawn the opportunity to win the support of voters, a strategy that has proven to be successful. I therefore argue that the state of the Greek economy has created an electoral environment conducive to the Golden Dawn's success. The radical right has failed in Spain and Portugal, countries with similarly devastated economies, which suggests that rising unemployment rates and overall poor economic conditions do not always lead to radical right success. But in the case of Greece, the economic downturn and the failure of the mainstream parties to alleviate poverty has created a supportive environment for Golden Dawn.

Not surprisingly, Greeks have become extremely critical and skeptical of the EU in the wake of the economic crisis. In a 2012 Eurobarometer survey, only 18 percent of Greeks polled reported to "tend to trust" the EU, compared with the 33 percent EU 27 average.²⁰⁴ But before the economic crisis, Greeks were among the most pro-EU

²⁰² Matthew Boesler, "The Latest Polls Confirm Everyone's Worst Fears About The Golden Dawn in Greece." *Business Insider*, November 2, 2012.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/latest-greece-political-opinion-polls-11-2012-11>

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Eurobarometer

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_fact_el_en.pdf

countries, favoring European integration.²⁰⁵ Yet since the economic crisis devastated the Greek economy, negative attitudes towards the EU have skyrocketed. Eurobarometer surveys have shown a drastic increase in Greeks agreeing with each negative statement towards the EU: “membership a bad thing;” “negative image of EU;” “EU going in wrong direction;” “not benefitted from membership;” and “tend to not trust EU.”²⁰⁶ This sudden increase in Euroskepticism began shortly after the fall of 2009, coinciding with the onset of the Greek economic crisis. This increasing sense of Euroskepticism has created a demand for anti-EU parties. Golden Dawn is one of the two Euroskeptic parties in Greece, along with the far-left SYRIZA. Both parties experienced surges in support in 2012, with the Golden Dawn going from less than 1 percent to 7 percent and SYRIZA going from 4.6 to 16.8 in the May 2012 and then to 26.9 in the June 2012 elections. As Golden Dawn and SYRIZA are the only Euroskeptic parties, it is likely that much of their support came from voters frustrated with the EU. As the Greek economy worsens, it is likely that Euroskepticism will increase, as the poor economy is the source of Greek’s Euroskepticism. Golden Dawn therefore enjoys an electoral context conducive to success.

Out of the five parties that are the subject of this study, Golden Dawn has benefitted the most from external conditions. The fact that the party went from winning 0.3 percent in 2009, shortly before the crisis hit, and then went on to win 7 percent in the following election demonstrates that the crisis affected the party’s breakthrough success. Unlike the True Finns, Golden Dawn did not change its tactics, platform, or recruitment

²⁰⁵ Kyriaki Nanou and Susannah Verney, “The Eurozone Crisis Has Increased Soft Euroscepticism in Greece, Where Greeks Wish to Remain in the Euro, But No Longer Trust the EU.” *London School of Economics Blog*. March 2, 2013. <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2013/03/02/greece-euroscepticism/>

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

practices since 2009; the party has always been unorganized, ultranationalist, and neo-fascist. Therefore, if supply-side, internal factors did not change, then what caused Golden Dawn's breakthrough success? It seems that the only likely explanation is the crumbling of the Greek economy and rising xenophobia and Euroskepticism associated with it. I therefore argue that these external factors played an enormous role in Golden Dawn's electoral victory. If the Greek crisis had not occurred, it would be unlikely that Golden Dawn would have an electoral breakthrough unless it changed its internal organization, recruitment practices, and leadership.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the ways in which immigration, unemployment, and attitudes towards the EU have impacted radical right success. Based on my analysis, it appears that these factors play a large role in radical right success in the short run. In the case of Austria, increasing rates of immigration and unemployment coincided with a dramatic increase in the FPÖ's success. Similarly, rising immigration levels in Denmark seem to have helped the newly-formed DF achieve breakthrough success. The PVV broke through as rates of immigration, unemployment, and Euroskepticism increased, indicating that these external factors may have played a role in gaining support during the party's initial phases. The True Finns' breakthrough coincided with an increase in immigration and the party's adoption of a slightly more nationalist and anti-immigrant platform. Golden Dawn had the most supportive environment out of the five parties, competing in a country where more than a quarter of the population is unemployed and

violence towards immigrants has become the norm. I believe the correlation between such factors and initial success indicates that external conditions helped these parties, to an extent, attract voters. This correlation seems too prevalent to be written off as a coincidence. I therefore agree with Cas Mudde's hypothesis that external conditions may help a party break through the political system.

Yet explaining success based on these factors alone cannot explain the variation of success among radical right parties competing in similar environments. For example, the United Kingdom and Ireland, with high levels of immigration and unemployment, respectively, both have not experienced any radical right success. Why would a radical right party in Finland, with relatively low immigration rates, succeed whereas one in the UK fails? It appears that factors unrelated to political, social, and economic environments must play a role in a party's success, or else the British National Party would win a seat in parliament at the very least. But the demand-side, external-based theories of radical right success cannot explain why such discrepancies exist. I therefore believe that external factors can play a role in a party's success, especially in its initial phases when the party is trying to attract voters and create an image. But parties that rely too heavily on these factors will at best become "flash parties" that disappear after small electoral gains.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

With more than five radical right parties currently holding seats in national parliaments, it is clear that the radical right has made a resurgence in European politics. Seeing that radical right parties continue to enter parliaments and governing coalitions, they can no longer be dismissed as fringe movements that operate outside of national politics. As the radical right continues to grow, it is likely that their influence in national decision making will be amplified. While the relatively successful parties that have emerged in the past few decades have lacked the power to exert much influence over national policymaking, their influence will rise if their support continues to expand. It is therefore important to understand why several radical right parties are experiencing such surges in support and success.

In this thesis, I have argued that European radical right success is impacted by both external, demand-side variables and internal, supply-side factors. While external factors such as immigration, economic conditions, and attitudes towards the EU seem to help parties achieve breakthrough success, they appear to be insufficient in creating long-term, sustained success. On the other hand, internal factors, such as party organization, recruitment practices, and leadership play a more important role in establishing such sustained success. My analysis of five contemporary European radical right parties and the history of the radical right has shown that parties with long-term success (Freedom Party of Austria, Danish People's Party, and the Dutch Party for Freedom) are well-organized, cohesive, and professional, while parties afflicted with factionalism, poor

leadership and organization, and amateurism tend to dissolve even after impressive electoral performances (e.g., List Pim Fortuyn, Danish Progress Party).

In the case of the FPÖ, DF, and PVV, external conditions created environments conducive to their success and therefore cannot be completely ignored. In Austria, for example, unprecedented levels of immigration and a rise in unemployment coincided with the FPÖ's revival in the 1980s and 1990s. While I have argued that external factors alone cannot explain radical right success, it seems that increases in immigration and unemployment created an environment that helped the FPÖ achieve breakthrough success. These conditions make it easier for radical right parties to gain popularity; xenophobic and nationalist messages resonate more with the public when the country is experiencing rising immigration. Yet as I have argued throughout this thesis, external conditions may help a party gain success, but they cannot alone *guarantee* success. The cross-national variation in success supports this argument. Countries with external conditions that are conducive to radical right success (e.g., high levels of immigration) do not always have successful radical right parties. Germany and the United Kingdom, for example, have high immigration rates yet the radical right parties in these countries perform poorly. Similarly, parties with short-term, breakthrough success have also enjoyed conducive environments. The populist Danish Progress Party experienced outstanding electoral performances when mistrust of Danish politicians and mainstream parties was at a peak. List Pim Fortuyn's anti-Islamic message appealed to widespread post-9/11 Islamophobic sentiments. Yet both of these parties collapsed internally after experiencing breakthrough success. Therefore, it seems that external conditions may

present the potential for a radical right party to succeed, it does not necessarily lead to success.

Internal factors appear to play a larger role in the success of radical right parties. Parties with strong “practical leadership,” cohesion and resistance to factionalism, professional and experienced activists (e.g., candidates, members, elected officials), and a well-organized party structure tend to perform better than unorganized, unprofessional parties. In the Danish People’s Party, for example, potential candidates undergo a rigorous selection and interview process before receiving permission to run for any public position. Similarly, Geert Wilders of the Dutch Party for Freedom personally interviews potential members and coaches candidates on debating and campaigning skills. Jörg Haider filtered out the FPÖ’s extremist members, which prevented factionalism and widened the party’s appeal to more moderate voters. While the new wave of True Finns candidates are more well-known as entertainment figures rather than politicians, 28 percent of the party’s members of parliament previously held seats in parliament.

On the other hand, List Pim Fortuyn, for example, lacked a party hierarchy and structure. Its members were inexperienced and chosen hastily. The party’s success essentially relied on its leader, whose assassination brought about the collapse of the party. Likewise, the National Democratic German Party’s share of the vote went from 4.3 percent to 0.6 percent after the resignation of its party leader and increased party infighting. Such instances indicate that internal factors, specifically, practical leadership, organization, and membership and activist bases play a large role in determining the success of radical right parties. Differences in radical right success across countries with similar external conditions, therefore, can best be explained by differences in internal

party structure. For example, Denmark's immigration rate is similar to that of Germany's, and Germany has a longer history of radical right politics, even excluding the Nazi era. Yet the relatively young Danish People's Party has been far more successful than the National Democratic German Party, the German Republicans, and other various radical right parties in the country. If external factors cannot account for this disparity in success, then internal factors must play a larger role in radical right success.

As radical right parties continue to succeed, scholarly research will continue to be conducted on the topic. Taking cues from David Art and Cas Mudde, this research should focus on the parties themselves rather than the overall context in which the parties operate. As I have illustrated in my thesis, the social and political context may play a role in radical right breakthrough, but is not sufficient in establishing long-term success. Therefore, radical right scholarship should build upon the foundation laid by Art and Mudde by analyzing the parties themselves. In doing so, scholars must avoid grouping all radical right parties together and analyzing them as a single, homogenous group, which was a common trend in radical right scholarship in the 1980s and 1990s. As this thesis has shown, radical right parties can differ ideologically. The neo-fascist extremism of Golden Dawn is far removed from the neoliberalism of the Danish People's Party, for example. This may require a further subdivision of radical right parties (e.g., more "moderate" parties such as the True Finns would be separated from extremist parties such as Golden Dawn).

Future research should include analysis on the True Finns and Golden Dawn because as both parties have only recently experienced electoral breakthroughs, literature on the parties is very limited. Golden Dawn's violent tactics and extremist views have

attracted much media attention, yet the inner workings of the party remain undisclosed. Without understanding the internal structure of the party, it is difficult to determine whether or not the party will succeed in the future. Throughout this thesis, I have echoed David Art and Cas Mudde's argument that a party without a robust internal organization and that is composed of violent, neo-fascist members will not last long in electoral politics. Yet if Golden Dawn repeats its 2012 success, it will represent a major exception to the theory. Perhaps, then, more work should be done on the context of political violence in Greece and the lack of social sanctions against such violent groups. Indeed, Greece has a long history of political violence and has recently witnessed a resurgence in violence committed not only by Golden Dawn but also by anarchists and other far-left groups. Therefore, when analyzing Golden Dawn's success, focus should not only be placed on the usual internal and external factors examined, but on the Greek culture of political violence.

The True Finns' leap from 4 percent to over 19 percent in the last parliamentary elections requires more scholarly analysis. Given the True Finns' relative obscurity prior to the 2011 parliamentary elections, there has been little analysis on the party. The same was true, however, for the Party for Freedom (Netherlands) and Danish People's Party, both of which are now regularly discussed in literature on the European radical right. It is therefore likely that the True Finns will similarly gain more attention in radical right studies. David Arter has conducted research on the internal workings of the True Finns, but as the party grows in popularity, more work should be done in this area.

Additionally, research should focus on the ideological categorization of the True Finns. I have grouped the party in with the radical right family, as David Arter has, but whether or

not the True Finns fits in this category is debatable. While the party is nationalist, Euroskeptic, and favors limits on immigration, the party is not as xenophobic as other radical right parties. Furthermore, in fiscal terms, the party is center-left, which differentiates the party from the more center-right, liberal policies of other radical right parties. If the True Finns continue to succeed electorally, perhaps more research on the party will be done that results in a more accurate categorization of the party.

Despite the wealth of literature on the European radical right, the volatility of success among parties has made it difficult to identify a common trend in radical right politics. This thesis has suggested that radical right analysis should be focused on internal factors, as this appears to explain the success and failure of radical right parties more sufficiently than an external, demand-side analysis. Should radical right parties continue to succeed, perhaps a more clear trend will be illuminated, allowing for a more adequate understanding of these parties. While radical right parties have thus far had little influence over policymaking and governance in Europe, more long-term implications will be made apparent if these parties continue to prevail in electoral politics.

Appendix

Party	Last Electoral Performance	Immigrant Population	Unemployment Rate	Attitudes towards EU
Freedom Party of Austria	17.5%	10.8%	4.4%	Mostly negative
Danish People's Party	12.3%	6.2%	7.9%	Mostly negative
Party for Freedom (Neth.)	10.1%	4.0%	5.6%	Mostly positive
True Finns	19.05%	3.1%	7.9%	Mostly positive; negative trend in recent years
Golden Dawn (Greece)	6.9%	8.5%	27.2%	Negative

Sources: Eurostat; European Election Database; Eurobarometer

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