Far-Right Populists in Western States of the European Union: Who They Are and What They Want

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Erratum

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ABSTRACT

The past decade has been a tumultuous period in European politics. Despite the unique economies, histories, and cultures of Western member-states of the European Union, many of these countries are alike in seeing the rise of far-right populist political parties that have challenged the status quo. This project seeks to describe the general character of these parties. They are defined by their far-right positions on social issues – namely their calls to restrict immigration and reestablish the nation-state as the basis for sovereignty – and their populist themes, wherein they deride the mainstream as a corrupt establishment that has forsaken the common people. Outside of these definitional parameters, however, these parties are a fairly diverse set. Their electoral success is varied. They have different origins and structural characteristics. It is difficult to establish a common profile of their supporters. Their positions on numerous issues, like European integration, economics, and matters concerning traditional values, contain various nuances. These factors might challenge the ability to draw accurate generalizations about them. Nevertheless, they may in fact be united in their reason for being: they could be just one symptom of a larger, albeit diffuse, social movement seeking to affect issues of European identity and culture.

The past decade has been a tumultuous period in European politics. Despite the unique economies, histories, and cultures of Western member-states of the European Union, many of these countries are alike in seeing the rise of far-right populist political parties that have challenged the status quo. Established party systems have been revolutionized by these newcomers, and many mainstream parties have had to shift their platforms in response. Not only have these parties challenged traditional powerholders, they have even challenged the left-right political spectrum, with their

simultaneous support for liberal and illiberal policies featuring heavily in their platforms. Far-right populist political parties have the potential to fragment governments in Western European states by drawing voters away from moderate parties, making coalition-building more difficult, and undermining the legitimacy of longstanding elites. Nonetheless, despite the significance of these parties and the momentum behind them, they remain poorly understood by many due to their complicated histories, nebulous voter bases, and ambiguous messaging.

This project seeks to describe the general character of these parties, especially in terms of their histories, political platforms, and rationale for these platforms. They are defined by their far-right positions on social issues—namely their calls to restrict immigration and reestablish the nation-state as the basis for sovereignty—and their populist themes, wherein they deride the mainstream as a corrupt establishment that has forsaken the common people. Outside of these definitional parameters, however, these parties are a fairly diverse set. Their electoral success is varied. They have different origins and structural characteristics. It is difficult to establish a common profile of their supporters. Their positions on numerous issues, like European integration, economics, and matters concerning traditional values, contain various nuances, though there is some alignment. These factors might challenge the ability to draw accurate generalizations about them. Nevertheless, they seem to embrace a similar ideology and may have some common reasons for being. Their long-term trajectories and true intentions, however, remain uncertain.

Definition of "Far-Right Populism"

In order to discuss far-right populist (FRP) political parties, the parameters for this set must first be established. Although there is a growing consensus on how these parties can be defined in more recent academic literature, their common character can be somewhat ambiguous. The parties themselves almost never self-identify with the word "populist," and they tend not to self-identify with the far right, with many eschewing an identity on the left-right political spectrum altogether (Mudde, 2017, pp. 3-4). Instead, distinctions by these terms are established by external observers. Such external methods of categorization face a few problems, however. There is no universal manifesto for these parties, no single work that they claim to champion the cause of, making the development of their shared ideology rather piecemeal. It can therefore be difficult to determine which of their beliefs are central to their ideology, versus those that are more peripheral or are disingenuously adopted out of political opportunism (Mudde, 2017, p. 6). Furthermore, there is a problem of bias in the existing scholarship on these parties. Few academics who study FRP parties claim to support them, so the literature is dominated by those that are openly critical of them and those that claim neutrality, creating an overall air of distrust toward them, especially since many of these parties are political newcomers (Mudde, 2017, pp. 2-3).

Nevertheless, a rough category for these parties can be established by defining "far-right" and "populism" in the context of their ideology. Dutch political scientist Cas

Mudde provides a good framework for understanding this ideology, which is broken down into three elements: nativism and authoritarianism—which inform the far-right element—and populism (Mudde, 2017, pp. 4-5)

The nativist element of far-right politics denotes the espousal of nationalism and xenophobia. FRPs idealize a conception of a homogeneous nation-state, and demonize those that do not fit into this conception (Mudde, 2017, p. 5). For FRPs, however, this homogeneous nation-state is not an ethno-state per se; FRPs embrace more of a rigid cultural conception of the nation, based in shared values and identity, as other definitional features of the nation—like religion, interstate conflict, and political ideology—have seemingly become irrelevant (Lochocki, 2018, p. 25). They are quintessentially opposed to multiculturalism and resist immigration not on the grounds that these things threaten the state's racial purity, but because foreign cultures are incompatible and risk destabilizing or replacing the native culture. These views have been called "new racism" or "culturalism" to differentiate them from classical racism, which is based in supposed biological differences (Carter, 2017, p. 33). The authoritarian element, meanwhile, indicates support for a strictly ordered society per the belief that inequality is natural. FRPs call for stricter law and order policies and view social problems, like drug abuse, as primarily security issues, not as health or economic concerns (Mudde, 2017, p. 5).

The populist component of FRP, on the other hand, is more difficult to define. Some have called it a rhetorical style or a political strategy, while others have called it a soft ideology (Betz & Johnson, 2017, p. 69). Mudde falls into this latter group, describing populist ideology as a worldview that pits a good, pure, common people against a corrupt, exploitative elite that has betrayed the people's interests. The mainstream parties are said to actually be a homogeneous political class that feign opposition to obscure their collusion. Populists seek to overthrow this class and return government to the popular will (Mudde, 2017, p. 5). The specifics of populist messaging will depend upon their environment, as the ideology adapts itself to whatever notions are popular in a local context (Rooduijn, 2018, p. 352). For FRPs, the elites are often defined as wealthy, hypocritical, deviant, and self-righteous leftist intellectuals and technocrats (Betz & Johnson, 2017, pp.69-70).

These three elements are often interconnected insofar as they inform core FRP policies. Authoritarianism and nativism both fuel anti-immigration stances, for example, as immigrants are blamed for higher rates of crime, making them a security threat. Nativism and populism combine to produce rhetoric accusing mainstream elites of suppressing discussion on the drawbacks of immigration via political correctness (Muddes, 2017, p. 5). Authoritarianism and populism can combine to create a pseudo-fascist image of a FRP party rising against the decadent old regime to revitalize the nation under its stern leadership.

These elements sometimes clash, however, especially in a European context due to the form that nativism takes. The conception of the cultural nation embraced by West-

ern European FRPs often includes Judeo-Christian, democratic, and liberal values as necessary elements, values that stress the importance of individual liberty, respect for human rights, and pluralistic decision-making (Zúquete, 2017, pp. 103-123). This conception challenges the internal coherence of Western European FRP nativism: universal human rights conflict with the logic of exclusion (Griffin, 2017, p. 23). Furthermore, authoritarianism, which might suggest the replacement of democracy with a more oligarchic or despotic system, appears to challenge these norms, and thus the nativist element. Authoritarianism seems to also contradict populism in this way, as the view that democracy is the only legitimate basis for political power and change is especially popular in Western Europe (Betz & Johnson, 2017, pp. 68-69).

Nevertheless, the discourse of these FRPs attempts to accommodate such conflicting ideas. They embrace a sort of culture-based ethnocratic liberalism, wherein the cultural in-group is allowed to enjoy the full rights and benefits afforded by liberal democracy as legitimate members of the nation, while out-groups—primarily non-European immigrants—are viewed with suspicion, being subjected to limitations on their rights and social benefits until they assimilate or integrate into the in-group (Griffin, 2017, p. 23). They do sometimes seem to support the universalizability of a kind of human rights, but as group rights rather than individual rights. Though they may be critical of foreign customs, these FRPs do not typically demand that foreign states conform to liberal norms developed in the West and oppose a globalist view that gives nations the right to interfere in the affairs of other nations; instead, they support the right of other nations to practice and define themselves by their own exclusive culture, so long as they remain confined to their own borders (Betz & Johnson, 2017, pp. 76-77). Western FRPs also do not oppose the democratic system outright, and in fact, as a reflection of their populist anti-systemness, often call for the implementation of more direct democracy through referendum (Carter, 2017, pp. 49-50). They satisfy the authoritarian parameter through their calls for reform involving stricter law and order policies: expansions of police forces, the curtailment of certain rights protections, and, in some cases, increased executive power (Mudde, 2017, p. 5). Still, these apparent contradictions, especially between authoritarianism and democratic values, may be a source of mistrust toward them. It is unclear whether these parties truly embrace democracy thanks to its place in European identity, or if this position is maintained purely out of opportunistic political necessity, in order to gain support and obscure ulterior motives (Mudde, 2017, p. 6).

Differentiating far-right populism from other ideologies may be conducive to a better understanding of it. Far-right populism is not synonymous with neo-fascism or neo-Nazism, which constitute the extreme right. Both of these ideologies are opposed to democratic systems out of principle, while FRPs seek to reform the system by working within it democratically, and Western European FRPs in particular seem to embrace democracy. The extreme right also tends to embrace traditional racism, defining the nation on essentialist ethnic grounds and touting the natural supremacy of certain races over others, rather than culturalism (Carter, 2017, pp. 31-32). FRPs are harder to distinguish from mainstream conservatives, particularly because views considered

mainstream may vary from country to country; in some countries, the far right might be considered mainstream (Carter, 2017, pp. 33-34). They might be distinguished by their reactionary stances. Conservatives tend to call for the maintenance of the status quo, while FRPs tend to be more reactionary, calling for a return to an older mode of governance, namely the re-establishment of the nation-state and the exclusive legitimacy of governance by in-group members of the governed population (Betz & Johnson, 2017, p. 78). FRPs can be distinguished from the political left by their acceptance of inequality as fundamentally natural. Lines can be blurred, however, especially with the populist radical left, as FRPs often call for increased spending on social welfare programs, though they also usually embrace welfare chauvinism, seeking to deny access to those that do not rightfully belong to the nation (Lochocki, 2018, p. 7).

The Diverse Who: Historical Background, Internal Characteristics, and Voters

Modern FRP parties first appeared in Western Europe in the 1970s, but they did not materialize as a serious political force until the 1980s. Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front (FN) of France and Jörg Haider's Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) became the movement's first successful forerunners after 1986 (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, pp. 12-14). They emerged from the context of a largely fragmented, diffuse, and unpopular radical right wing, owing to competition between various different sects with conflicting ideas and personalities (Griffin, 2017, pp. 21-22). The extreme right had failed in almost every country to garner support in national elections, with neo-Nazi parties never rising above 1% of the popular vote and moderately successful neo-fascist movements being restricted to a few countries, namely Italy (Carter, 2017. p. 61). In order to be successful, these movements would need to consolidate and abandon ideas that had largely fallen out of fashion. Still, there is no single story of how modern FRPs emerged. The FN appears to have represented a consolidation and moderation of more extreme elements into an attempt at a catch-all party, with Le Pen's daughter, Marine, continuing to moderate and sanitize the party's image after assuming leadership in 2011; but Haider's FPÖ represented the radicalization and revitalization of a party that, though it was founded by ex-Nazis in the 1950s, had been a fairly centrist liberal party in the years prior (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, p. 14).

Likewise, there is no common profile or ideological trajectory of the parties founded in the following years. The Sweden Democrats (SD), founded in the late 1980s, brought a number of white nationalists and Neo-Nazis into its membership, but has succeeded in moderating these tendencies under Jimmie Åkesson's leadership (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, p. 192). The Italian Northern League (LN), founded as a party in 1991, began as an alliance of independent regionalist parties calling for independence or autonomy for Padania, the richer parts of Northern Italy, and originally included a number of leftists within its ranks. Since the leadership of Matteo Salvini in 2013, however, it has moved to become a distinctly right-wing party with more of a national program (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, pp. 183-184). The Finns Party (PS) was founded as a de facto successor to the bankrupted Finnish Rural Party in 1995, an

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agrarian populist party, marking a transformation from a special interest party to one with broader appeal, prompted in part by changes in the Finnish economy due to the success of Nokia and other tech companies (Arter, 2010, pp. 485-487). The Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) was founded in 2004 by Geert Wilders after he broke from the center-right liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, and quickly filled a void left by the assassinated Pim Fortuyn by taking a particularly forceful stance against Islam and immigration (O'Leary, 2017). The Alternative for Germany (AfD) had been founded by a group of economists as a fairly moderate right-wing party in 2013, with its soft Eurosceptic position and neoliberal economics platform being its main emphasis, but it was radicalized toward a FRP direction after 2015 over the issue of immigration (Baluch & Usherwood, 2018, pp. 117-188).

FRP parties have enjoyed electoral success in many Western European countries, but this success has neither been universal nor equal. This graph shows the historical success of nine extant parties—which were picked because they have been successful, having earned more than 10% in one year—with the popular vote in their country's preeminent national election (UKIP, 2017):[1]

Popular Support for Select Far-Right Populist Parties in National Elections
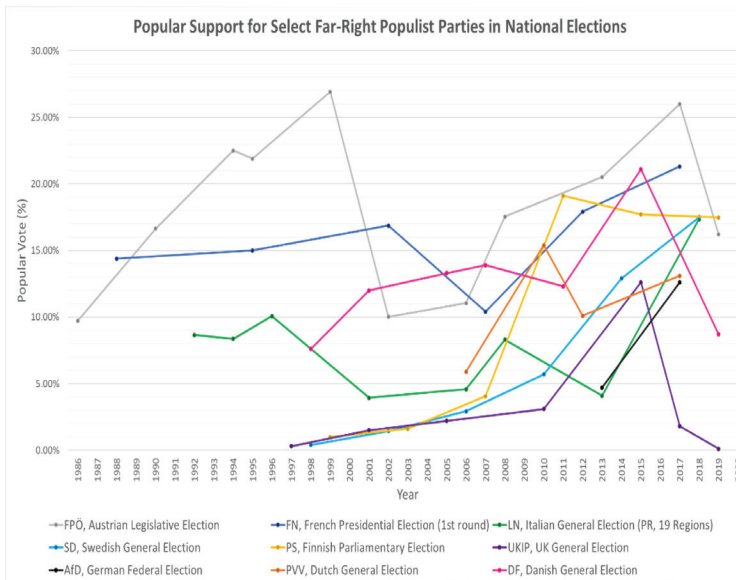
A first major wave of support for these parties can be identified as appearing during the late 1980s and was sustained through the 1990s, though less widespread. Multiple countries, namely Sweden and Germany, lacked a significant FRP party on the

1: These parties were chosen for analysis throughout this paper because they meet the FRP definitional parameters, and because they have been called FRP parties by other academics (namely, Mudde, preface to *Reader*, 7; and Lochocki, *Rise of Populism*, 6). Note that some parties that were successful during this period have since been dissolved, and therefore are not reflected on the graph; one example is the Danish Progress Party, which the Danish People's Party more or less supplanted. The Flemish party Vlaams Blok, dissolved in 2004 and rebranded to Vlaams Belang following a court case, also flourished after 1990, but has been excluded from this study as the subnational divisions that pervade Belgian politics can present a challenge to comparative analyses.

national level during this period. The parties that were successful during this period appear to have lost some momentum during the mid-2000s, but then a second, more widespread wave seems to have begun prior to the start of the 2010s, which also brought parties to prominence in countries that had not previously had one. Some of these parties look to remain strong, while others have lost support in more recent years. Furthermore, some Western European countries, like Ireland, have never seen a modern FRP party, while in Spain, their FRP party, the Vox party founded in 2013, has only had such a successful election more recently, in 2019 (Mudde, 2017, p. 6). Overall trends for Western European FRP electoral history are therefore somewhat rough and difficult to establish without delving into their particular characteristics and national contexts.

All of the parties included in the graph have earned seats in national government, at least during their peaks. The United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) and the FN, however, have earned significantly fewer seats than their popularity would suggest, likely as a result of these countries' respective single member district plurality and runoff systems. Only three of these parties have ever been in governing coalitions: the FPÖ, the PS, and the LN. None has ever held their country's highest office. This is partly because other parties tend to view forming coalitions with FRPs with apprehension, or maintain official policies of non-cooperation (Mudde, 2016, p. 30).

It is similarly difficult to establish a common internal character of these parties, in terms of their leadership or structure. Many are characterized by strong, charismatic leaders that build a cult of personality, especially during their periods of success, as such a leader plays an important role in their populist character, by acting as a unifying symbol of resistance against the corrupt elite (Taggart, 2017, pp. 165-167). Jörg Haider's leadership of the FPÖ throughout the 1990s, Nigel Farage's leadership of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) in 2015, and Marine Le Pen's leadership of the FN (recently rebranded to National Rally) from 2011 through today are prime examples. Many parties are also highly centralized; for instance, Geert Wilders is the only registered member of the PVV, giving him sole control of the party's platform (Camus & Lebourg, 2017, p.199). There are notable exceptions, though. The AfD is a highly factionalized party, marked by disputes between its more moderate, economically-minded Eurosceptic members and those that emphasize a harsher stance on immigration and identity issues. Its leadership has gone through turbulent changes, with no one person emerging as a clear, unifying force for the party since its conception (Eddy, 2017). Many other parties show signs of varying degrees of instability, with recent histories of key members, including elected members of government, leaving the party to join another or form their own, or being ousted by the party's leadership or factional pressures.

Trends in the support bases for these parties with regard to demographics can also be difficult to characterize in an overarching way. There is no quintessential FRP voter by population cleavage, no demographic that clearly defines them, except perhaps that they do not appeal to non-European immigrants and Muslims (Rooduijn, 2018,

p. 353). Support for FRP parties does tend to correlate inversely with education, and, to a lesser degree, lower economic classes tend to show greater support for them (Rooduijn, 2018, pp. 354-355). The strength of these trends varies from party to party, however, and for some, the trend is not significant (Rooduijn, 2018, p. 363). Some of the parties feature a noticeable gender gap, with more male support than female, although this trend is not universal. Some parties perform significantly better in certain regions: the LN unsurprisingly enjoys more support in Northern Italy, a richer region of the country, while the AfD enjoys more support in Eastern Germany, a poorer region of the country (Edwards, 2018; Steffen, 2017). Some of the parties seem to do better with middle age groups, while others do better with older populations, but it is unclear if either of these trends are significant (Rooduijn, 2018, p. 363). Ultimately, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the support for FRP parties among different demographics, as trends outside of national contexts appear fairly rough.[2] There is one unifying trend among the voters of nearly every FRP party: they overwhelmingly list immigration as their top issue (Lochocki, 2018, p. 24). This single metric is the largest determinant of whether or not someone supports a FRP party, suggesting that the parties might be considered as single-issue parties, although most do present a more comprehensive platform than just an immigration stance, complete with justifications that appear somewhat ideological.

The What: Policy Proposals of Far-Right Populist Parties

There is significant coherence between FRP parties in the realm of policy, which is to be expected, given that they are defined as a group by their ideological stances. Still, there are some nuances and differences in their positions. They are largely in agreement when it comes to policies that they emphasize in their platforms, regarding values, immigration, law and order, and structural reform, although some take stronger stances than others and outliers exist. When it comes to policy areas that they emphasize less, however, such as foreign policy positions—including stances on the European Union—and economic strategies, there is greater divergence between them.

Note that my following analysis is qualitative in nature, based primarily on a study of the manifestos and basic programs of seven parties: the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Finns Party (PS), the National Front (France, FN), the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Party for Freedom (Netherlands, PVV), the Danish People's Party (DF), and the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ).[3] I also considered the

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2: I will note that, in the course of my research, I found the pre-existing literature on this subject— especially regarding broader analyses of support for multiple parties—to be rather limited or based on data that might be outdated, as they preceded important developments correlated with the rise of FRPs, like the refugee crisis. I was unable to conduct a quantitative analysis myself due to time constraints and my unfamiliarity with the dataset, but the European Social Survey might be a decent resource for those looking to conduct future research into the subject of demographic support.

3: All of these manifestos/programs were chosen because they were the most recent editions provided in English or French on each party's website, with the exception of UKIP and PS. For PS, there were three English-language documents available: a basic program, an expanded program, and a manifesto for the European Parliamentary election, all of which were used as they were all rather limited

official website of the Sweden Democrats (SD), and some journalistic resources on the Northern League (LN).[4]

There are some limitations presented by these manifestos. They were chosen for reasons of accessibility and were adopted by the parties at different times. It is possible that some of their original meaning was lost in translation.[5] It is also possible that the parties have deviated from their basic programs, especially in cases where the manifestos are older and precede leadership changes. Some of the manifestos are more detailed than others. Shorter manifestos help to reveal which policy areas the parties consider to be of greater importance—based on how much space they dedicate to each issue—but they also create room for error. I cannot account for a party's position on an issue that they are silent on, and so the parties may be in greater agreement or disagreement on some policies than I reflect here. Parties might also be disingenuous in their basic programs, misrepresenting or omitting mentions of unpopular policies that they support, raising questions as to whether or not such manifestos are the best means of analyzing party positions. Still, alternative methods, like focusing on speeches by party leaders, may present their own problems. Note too that I have not given consideration to how these parties actually act when in government.

Regarding Islam

In order to talk about modern FRP policies, it is important to understand their relationship with Islam. Muslims are usually the group construed by the modern far right to be the antithetical other to Western culture, the out-group that must be kept at a

in terms of their content. I chose to analyze UKIP's 2017 manifesto instead of their 2019 manifesto because UKIP failed to be relevant in the 2019 election, having been essentially replaced by Farage's unsuccessful Brexit Party. They also had a weak showing in 2017, but this could be attributed to the UK's electoral system—polling for UKIP remained around 10% until the election was called for in April. Immediately afterwards, their poll numbers dropped significantly, hovering around 5% until election day, where they won only 1.8% of the vote. This suggests to me that the UK's single-round SMDP system—not shared by other countries involved in this study—enticed voters that would have preferred UKIP to make the strategic decision to support another party. Considering this situation, there is good reason to believe that the sentiments expressed by UKIP during this election, via their manifesto, were still fairly popular. I decided against using their 2015 manifesto, from when they actually earned 12.6% of the vote (although only one seat on account of the electoral system), because their status as a FRP party for this election is more controversial, as they did not take as strong xenophobic and authoritarian positions as they did in 2017.

4: The SD maintain an English version of their main webpage, which outlines their primary policies, though they do not provide their manifesto in English. Journalistic sources were chosen for the LN in order to have some representation of a party from southern Europe; they do not appear to maintain any English resources themselves. These sources are limited to reporting on official LN positions and speeches by Matteo Salvini, as speeches by other members of the party are more likely to deviate from official positions, given the party's historical internal divisions and Salvini's character as a strongman within the party.

5: It would be possible to conduct a quantitative analysis of these manifestos using datasets like the Manifesto Project Database, which bases its data on the original language versions of manifestos, but some of the scholars whose works I read were critical of such datasets, either because of how they quantified the data or because such quantification risks losing nuances in positions.

distance (Zúquete, 2017, p. 103). Whereas Jews once occupied this position for the far and extreme right for being thought of as a stateless, conspiratorial, elitist people, Muslims find themselves here on the basis of fundamentalist interpretations of their religion and recent Islamic terrorism (Zúquete, 2017, p. 109). Also unlike Jews, who have resided in areas across Europe for centuries, large Muslim populations are a recent addition to many central and western European countries. Muslims from Turkey and North Africa were invited as guest-workers to western Europe, particularly West Germany, to compensate for postwar labor shortages. France's Muslim population increased dramatically in the 1970s as a result of citizenship policies that allowed them to settle permanently, despite tensions that began to appear during the oil crisis (Zúquete, 2017, p. 106). Muslims thereafter rose in prominence as a particular enemy of the far right, a position that was solidified in the early 2000s after numerous terrorist attacks, including the July 7, 2005, London bombings, as well as assassinations in the Netherlands (Zaslove, 2008, p. 181). The rise of the Islamic State and terrorism connected to it in Europe during the mid-2010s further contributed to the view of Muslims as the natural enemies of Europeans. FRPs have since told a revisionist history of a Europe continually at war with Islam, featuring conflicts dating as far back as the Battle of Tours in 732 (Zúquete, 2017, p. 110).

FRPs criticize many fundamentalist Islamic beliefs on the basis of their incompatibility with Western values. They take issue with its opposition to secularism in the form of Sharia Law. They accuse the veil and the burqa of being oppressive toward women, restricting their freedom of expression, and also position themselves as the defenders of women over passages that sanction concubinage and wife-beating (Zúquete, 2017, p. 112). FRPs even come to the defense of Jews and homosexuals, pointing to how they are oppressed and murdered in Islamic countries (Zúquete, 2017, p. 109). Islam is considered to be not just a faith, but a political project with the goal of conquering the world and demanding its subservience. Muslims in Europe are made out to be a fifth column, a people who will act to bring about this end once given the chance (Betz & Johnson, 2017, pp. 74-75). Islam thereby threatens Europe's security and its ability to practice its own culture, as do the politically correct mainstream elites, who refuse to confront this uncomfortable truth.

Some of the parties include explicit condemnations of Islam within their manifestos. The FN, for example, has a line that translates to, "Defend the rights of women: fight against Islam that restricts their fundamental liberties" (Rassemblement National, 2017). UKIP calls for the burqa and niqab to be banned from public places, calling them barriers to integration and a security risk, presumably because they obscure one's identity (UKIP, 2017). The SD state on their website, "We will never give space to Islamism or any other extremism, this is a land of democracy and equality" (Sweden, 2020). The PVV takes the most radical stance against Islam. Nearly half of its one-page manifesto pledges to "De-Islamize the Netherlands," by calling for all mosques to be closed, public Islamic expressions to be prohibited, and the Quran to be banned (Wilders, 2017). Other parties avoid referencing Islam directly in their principle plat-

form, but their animosity toward the faith is still apparent, and none include language that condemns anti-Islamic sentiments.

Immigration Policies

All of the party manifestos oppose what they see as unfettered mass immigration into their countries. They are primarily opposed to immigration from the Islamic world, with Eastern Europeans often also being considered undesirables, albeit to a lesser degree—they are not mentioned specifically in any of the manifestos. The parties give a variety of interrelated justifications for opposing immigrants. Some of these arguments directly relate to culture, presenting them as a threat to national cohesion. They risk transforming traditionally homogeneous nation-states into multicultural societies, marred by unintegrated, hostile ghettos. For instance, the PS claims that immigration is responsible for "eroding important societal values, such as the respect for equality" (Finns Party, 2019). The DF says in its manifesto, "Denmark is not an immigrant-country and never has been. Thus we will not accept transformation to a multiethnic society" (Danish People's, 2002).

As a result of their incompatible values, immigrants are also said to be a security threat. Immigrants are more likely to be radicalized or spread extremism themselves, thereby causing terrorism. Additionally, they cause crime, especially crimes against women as a result of their backward cultures. The AfD claims that "in the wake of uncontrolled mass immigration there is a rise in crime figures" (Alternative, 2016). They might also be said to be disproportionately responsible for crime because they are poor, having come to the country as economic migrants with few productive skills. Other economic arguments against migrants claim that they are responsible for crumbling social welfare systems, like unemployment benefits and public healthcare, as they abuse these systems in large numbers. They are also said to lower wages via labor market competition, especially for blue collar work, and to raise the unemployment rate for native peoples, as they are willing to work for less and thereby steal jobs. The PS, for example, says, "Those costs [of mass immigration] have been—and are presently—huge.… This immigration is not bringing new taxpayers to Finland—or providing resources to face future challenges. These high costs fall on the taxpayer— regardless of whether the immigrant comes to Finland as an asylum-seeker or as a provider of cheap labour" (Finns Party, 2019).

Demographic concerns are also cited as a reason to resist mass migration. Native European birth rates have fallen below the replacement rate in recent decades, with the birth rates of immigrants in Europe typically being higher. These shifting demographics, with the native European population declining and the Muslim population increasing relative to it, present an existential threat to FRP national identity. There is a tangible fear among FRPs that immigration will be a means to Europe's Islamization, which would deprive Europeans, whether of this generation or the next, of their own cultures in their own homelands. These parties thus seek policies that promote the growth of traditional families as a solution to demographic problems, as an alternative

to immigration. The FPÖ's program states, "Austria is not a country of immigration. This is why we pursue a family policy centered around births" (Freedom Party, 2011).

Still, there are different nuances in each party's position on immigration. While all call for its overall reduction, some do support limited immigration via a reformed system. These parties generally call for immigration to be limited to those with certain technical skills and educated professionals. UKIP, for example, supports an Australian-style points-based immigration system, with questions related to a potential immigrant's values affecting their rating, rather than the outright cessation of immigration (UKIP, 2017, p. 33). The AfD similarly calls for legal immigration for skilled workers, referencing the Canadian model as an ideal immigration policy, although immigrants still have a responsibility to learn German and integrate into the local culture (Alternative, 2016). The FN is even more demanding, calling for immigrants to not only integrate, but assimilate into French culture (Rassemblement, 2017). Many, including the LN, want to make it more difficult for immigrants to obtain citizenship (Edwards, 2018). The PVV, meanwhile, calls for the immediate closure of their country's borders and an end to all immigration from Islamic countries (Wilders, 2017).

When it comes to refugees, most of the parties claim to support the humanitarian need to help legitimate refugees—a category that does not include economic migrants, who should be deported—thereby practicing some traditional liberal human rights values. The PVV is an exception, calling for the immediate closure of asylum centers and the withdrawal of asylum residence permits (Wilders, 2017). According to the FPÖ, "Humanity dictates that political asylum should be granted in our country for those persecuted for racist, religious, or political reasons, provided there is a need for such protection" (Freedom Party, 2011). However, FRPs also emphasize how help for refugees cannot compromise the security or prosperity of the nation, and therefore call for a reduction in the number of refugees settled in their country. The FPÖ, immediately after this humanitarian claim, seems to reference the Dublin Regulation rule that asylum seekers apply in the first EU country that they enter, stating that "those entering Austria from a safe third country should apply for asylum there" (Freedom Party, 2011). The AfD promotes the sponsorship of asylum shelters in foreign countries, like Turkey, by the EU and UN (Alternative, 2016). Some, like the SD, propose foreign policy solutions, albeit vague ones, calling to fix the problem of refugees at its source by working to end conflict and give developmental aid to countries like Syria (Sweden, 2020). This is so that refugees can be returned sooner; all of the parties expect refugees to return to their home countries as soon as the situation stabilizes.

Endorsement of Traditional and Liberal Values

As part of their aim of creating a stronger national identity, many parties feature policies that promote a more traditional approach to cultural and social issues. Education policies are one particular realm for this expression. They stress the importance of teaching the national language in education, as well as other traditional cultural

symbols and concepts, like national history. The FN is one example, calling for the promotion of the French language and history in schooling, including at the university level, and an end to the teaching of languages and cultures of origin for immigrant children (Rassemblement, 2017, pp. 15-16). They also call for the state to increase its sponsorship of the arts and local cultural organizations, including sports clubs (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 4). The FPÖ similarly supports a cultural education, saying that, "To enable people to evolve and develop fully in society we require spiritual education, the best possible training and further education, a guarantee of freedom in teaching and learning and equal social opportunities. To this end, scientific research and teaching, the development and opening up of the arts as well as teaching of the arts must be free" (Freedom Party, 2011). UKIP is more critical of the expansion of higher education, calling for the state to cease its support for programs that do not earn their students relevant, graduate-level careers, which it says are "politically motivated" and have "deceived and blighted a generation" (UKIP, 2017). The AfD also appears suspicious of modern education, supporting a prohibition on "political and ideological indoctrination in schools" and an end to the promotion of gender research, in order to restore academic freedoms (Alternative, 2016, pp. 51-53). Additionally, the AfD wants to alter how topics of German history are approached: "The current narrowing of the German culture of remembrance to the time of National Socialism should be opened in favor of a broader understanding of history, which also encompasses the positive, identity-establishing aspects of German history" (Alternative, 2016, p. 47).

Many parties find themselves attracted to Christianity. Such positions could be adopted in earnest, but they seem to be more opportunist, as a way to better contrast Islam on the front of religious identity (Zúquete, 2017. p. 106). Few include substantive policies meant to encourage religious participation; most of their pro-Christian expression consists in identifying Christianity as a source for many individualistic Western values. The FPÖ, for instance, describes their values as being rooted in "cultural Christianity," which, unlike a theocratic conception of Christianity, embraces the separation of church and state and religious freedoms for individuals (Freedom, 2011). The DF takes a stronger religious stance, as it declares that "the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church is the church of the Danish people," and therefore wants to increase state financial support for the church, although it also says it maintains support for "ordinary religious freedom" (Danish People's, 2002). The FN, by contrast, emphasizes an unqualified dedication to secularism, wanting the words, "The Republic recognizes no community" to be enshrined in the constitution, and for religious expressions to be banned from public spaces (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 15). These differences could be attributed to the different popular and historical cultural attitudes toward religion in each country. At any rate, both secularism and Christianity are used as grounds for limiting Islamic teachings, practices, and expressions.

Most of the parties endorse policies intended to support the growth of families that could be construed as emerging from a fundamentalist conception of Christianity. However, considering how most of them are actually justified, it seems more likely

that these policies are motivated by a reaction to the demographics crisis, as a means of growing the nation, rather than by a conception of religious doctrine; although their relation to traditional right-wing positions is probably not insignificant. The AfD seeks to restrict access to abortion, in order to protect unborn life (Alternative, 2016, p. 43). The FN wants to replace homosexual marriage with a civil partnership and maintain a ban on surrogacy (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 13). The FPÖ wants do away with state recognition of homosexual partnerships entirely, idealizing the heterosexual nuclear family by saying, "The family, as a partnership between a man and a woman with common children, is the natural nucleus that holds a functioning society together" (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 13). By contrast, UKIP supports "true equality" for LGBT people, although this support is given alongside a condemnation of an implicitly pro-Islamic political correctness that allows "misogynistic and homophobic attitudes [to be] tolerated in the name of 'respecting cultural differences'" (UKIP, 2017, p. 13). Most parties also support economic incentives for families to produce children, including tax benefits and childcare resources.

When it comes to women's rights, FRPs often position themselves as the truest defenders of women, as the mainstream fails to protect them against violent immigrants and their repressive ideologies due to their elitist interests in multiculturalism and the supporting norms of political correctness. The linkage of immigration to crime and the erosion of societal values, like respect for equality, by the PS is accompanied by the statement that "children and women must be safe in Finland" (Finns Party, 2019, p. 5). Some parties are more consistent in their support for women's equality than others. UKIP, for example, is critical of "lad culture" that tends to treat women as sex objects, as well as Islam (UKIP, 2017, p. 22). The FN endorses a plan for equal pay, job security, and social security for men and women, though it also stands against affirmative action in the name of meritocracy (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 15). The FPÖ also supports ensuring equal opportunities and pay for men and women, but not to the extent of enforcing any sort of sex-based affirmative action, as they say that "statistical inequalities caused by a variety of factors cannot be evened out by wronging individual people" (Freedom, 2011). Both the FPÖ and the AfD also support compensating individuals for time spent rearing children or caring for elderly or disabled relatives via social security and pension systems, a traditionally progressive policy (Alternative, 2016, pp. 35-36).

The parties often seek to support traditional values by offering support to traditional and culturally significant industries, too. The FN stresses the importance of the traditional family farm in French culture, and wants to create economic incentives for young people to take up farming (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 21). UKIP idealizes small fishing and coastal communities and calls for their revitalization, particularly through deregulation by leaving the Common Fisheries Policy (UKIP, 2019, p. 9). Multiple parties, including the DF, venerate manual labor and blue-collar work—though not typically to the derision of entrepreneurship or innovative white-collar work—and support the expansion of trade schools and apprenticeships (Danish People's, 2002). The parties are also supportive of small and medium-sized businesses, seeking to sup-

port them economically, while generally being somewhat more suspicious of larger businesses, especially multinational corporations.

The parties appear to support civil liberties for their cultural nation, per their importance in Western tradition, tracing their roots to the Enlightenment and the Revolutions of 1848. Free speech and democratic decision-making in particular are emphasized. The PS says that "the freedom of speech is an important principle and value of a democratic society.… Political solutions must not distort the truth or force silence" (Finns Party, 2018). FRPs also call for increased academic freedom, for guaranteed freedom of thought and freedom from an ideologically paternalistic education, probably seeking to combat an idea of a leftist-dominated academia. The FPÖ describes their conception of freedom as "rooted in an idealistic belief where people are not tied down by their material needs," whereby the freedom of the individual is only limited by the freedom of other citizens and the laws necessary to maintain order (Freedom, 2011).

Herein lies the illiberal element of FRP liberalism. FRPs often phrase their stances in liberal terms, appealing to the ideal of freedom, but this freedom comes with caveats that substantially undermine it. Continuing the FPÖ's example, they mention how a freedom to practice religion presupposes a freedom to not be exposed to religious doctrines (Freedom, 2011, p. 5). But to what extent does this entail? If a freedom from religious doctrine means freedom from being coerced to follow a religion, then this would be an undeniably liberal conception. If a freedom from religion entails the inability of others to adhere to practices mandated by their religion that only directly affect them, such as wearing a burqa in public, then this conception would be fairly illiberal, especially if the principle is applied unequally to different religious groups. Indeed, the FPÖ has called for a ban on the burqa, a call that the governing coalition acceded to in 2017 in an effort to stem the FPÖ's rising popular support (Oltermann, 2017). In a similar vein, the FN claims to support parental rights to choose a private education for their children, but also wants to ensure that private schooling aligns more with the values of the Republic, which in practice suggests the banning Islamic private schools (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 4). The AfD's simultaneous sponsorship of academic freedoms and wish to cease promoting certain viewpoints in schooling, namely critical gender studies which they say "do not meet the claim of reputable research," also suggests a more limited view of freedom (Alternative, 2016, pp. 35-35).

A similar tension can be seen in FRP's calls for direct democracy referenda. Multiple FRPs propose that citizens have the ability to demand controversial legislation, including treaties, be put to a referendum, and for citizens to be able to start their own legislative initiatives via a similar system. While such direct democracy reforms may be desirable in some contexts, their unrestrained use risks creating rule by a tyranny of the majority. Direct democracy could be used as a way to justify and legitimize abridging the rights of ethnic or religious minorities, or to prevent the state from acting to protect these minorities.

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Liberties are also weighed against other practical and cultural considerations. Within the nation, one may be free to do as they choose, but that does not abrogate their responsibility to choose to support the nation. While liberties might be said to be fundamental, it is also said that they cannot exist without the rule of law, imposing another limit. The SD's website reads, "We feel that rights should be connected to duties, that first you do your duty and then you demand your right" (Sweden, 2020). The FPÖ similarly says, "Our country is a community of citizens that have particular rights and obligations. The rights of our citizens include the right to vote, the right to proper education and the right to help from the community when in need. The obligations include solidarity with fellow citizens, the payment of contributions to preserve public functions, and personal commitments to maintain internal and external security and the fabric of society" (Freedom, 2011. p.7).

Freedom for FRPs does not seem to be about expanding the typical conception of freedom, in an effort to seek broader, more absolute freedoms for individuals. Rather, it is about shifting the window of acceptable views, enabling the expression of certain beliefs that have been condemned by the mainstream, such as critiques of Islam and immigration, while making the expression of other views deemed tolerable by the mainstream, like Islamic reverence, unacceptable on the grounds of their incompatibility with a free and safe Western society. It is unclear how narrow the window of acceptable views desired by FRPs actually is. They might only seek to limit supposedly expressions that they believe present a serious risk to the nation, but this idea may or may not in fact extend to enforcing a strict adherence to a single political ideology among the nation, rather than allowing for a true diversity of views and pluralistic democracy.

Law, Order, Defense, and Anti-Corruption Reforms

The FRP parties of Europe are closely aligned on issues of the rule of law. They call for pre-existing laws to be enforced more strictly and carry harsher penalties. UKIP, for instance, calls for the rigorous enforcement of legislation regarding drugs (UKIP, 2017, p. 22). The DF calls for rapid conviction and punishment for crimes (Danish People's, 2002). The AfD wants tighter laws, harsher punishments, and fewer procedural protections for accused criminals (Alternative, 2016, p. 25). The FN even wants to take away social benefits for parents of recidivist minors (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 5). Some appear a bit more liberal: the FPÖ stresses how there must be considerable distinctions between violent and property crimes, and states that they categorically reject the death penalty (Freedom, 2011, p. 13). When criminals are foreign nationals, they typically call for their deportation, and when their own citizens commit treasonous acts, namely becoming jihadists and declaring their allegiance to some foreign terror organization, many of them call for these people to be stripped of their citizenship (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 6). They also call for the illegalization of independent arbitration based on Sharia Law, when legal in their countries (UKIP, 2017, p. 35).

Many seem to want to make order and deference to authority more of a cultural emphasis, reflected in their education policies. The Sweden Democrats want schooling "that prioritizes knowledge and order" (Sweden, 2020). The AfD wants to increase the ability of schools to discipline students, in order to combat truancy and bullying. The FN wants mandated school uniforms, and to restore the authority of and respect for teachers in school (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 16).

FRPs call for significant expansions of the police forces, intelligence services, and prison systems. They want to reduce or remove procedural safeguards that are meant to protect against abuse by these organizations as a means of making them more efficient. UKIP, for instance, wants to reinstate stop and search powers for the police, and reduce their paperwork burden (UKIP, 2017. p. 40). They also want to specifically expand anti-terrorism and anti-radicalization resources, though they often only care about Islamic extremism. Matteo Salvini, for example, was quoted after the Christchurch shooting that, "The only extremism that merits attention [in Italy] is the Islamic kind" (Salvini, 2019). Geert Wilders in his manifesto even calls for the "preventive detention of radical Muslims," alongside "a lot of extra money for defense and police" (Wilders, 2017).

FRPs also typically want to expand and increase spending on the military. Where conscription is a policy, they usually support it, as in the case of the PS (Finns Party, 2019). The same can be said for FPÖ, who also notes that they oppose expanding conscription to include women (Freedom, 2011, p. 13). The FN wants to gradually reestablish military service in France with a mandatory minimum of three months, and they want to increase spending to 3% of GDP (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 19). The AfD wants to reinstate compulsory service and strengthen the Bundeswehr, too (Alternative, 2016, pp. 30-31). The DF says that Denmark "should make the necessary contributions" to NATO (Danish People's, 2002).

The parties promote a number of reforms that are phrased as a means of mending the corrupt or incompetent activities of the mainstream elites. This entails streamlining the bureaucracy, cutting wasteful programs, and eliminating vanity projects. UKIP identifies a high-speed rail project as the wasteful pursuit of prior governments (UKIP, 2017, p. 10). They also want to eliminate the House of Lords, seeing it as a useless body of government whose only purpose is to fund elite activities with taxpayer money (UKIP, 2017, p. 58). The PS says that the education, training, guidance, and social integration programs for migrants pursued by the other parties are ineffective and wasteful, and that "the throwing away of money and resources must stop" (Finns Party, 2019, p.5). In order to reduce administrative costs, the FN wants to reduce the size of the French Parliament by over 400 members between both houses, and to reduce the number of levels of government from six to three: communes, departements, and états (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 3). The AfD also calls for a smaller government, arguing, "Government should serve its citizens, and not vice versa. Therefore, only lean government is good government. Government should merely provide a framework within which its citizens can thrive" (Alternative, 2016, p. 8). FRPs seem to

endorse the view that, outside of a large police force, military, and intelligence program, smaller government is better, as larger governments are necessarily wasteful and corrupt. Some parties also identify large corporations, especially multinationals, as a source of corruption. The FN wants to increase sanctions against corporate executives that commit fraud to the detriment of consumers, and to fight tax evasion by taxing the operations of multinational corporations in France more dutifully (Rassemblement, 2017, pp. 9-12).

European and Foreign Policies

All of the parties maintain at least a soft Eurosceptic position in regard to the European Union. Many call for a popular referendum on EU membership, with some directly calling for their country's withdrawal, unless they are able to achieve certain reforms. The AfD, for example, "are in favour of returning the European Union to an economic union based on shared interests, and consisting of sovereign, but loosely connected nation states," and promote withdrawal if this change is not realized (Alternative, 2016, p.15). Wilders' manifesto includes the line, "The Netherlands independent again. Leave the EU" (Wilders, 2017). The FPÖ wants any treaty that would fundamentally alter the constitution, including EU law, to be subjected to a binding referendum, and rejects "any artificial synchronisation of the diverse European languages and cultures by means of forced multiculturalism, globalisation and mass immigration" (Freedom, 2011, p. 17).

There are a few reasons for this Euroscepticism. First, the EU in its current form is a supranational organization that violates national sovereignty, an ideal stressed by FRPs on the grounds that the only legitimate rulership of a nation comes from within the nation itself. Furthermore, the people subjected to the EU's rule are only given limited decision-making power over its policies via the European Parliament, whose powers are meager compared to the elitist, technocratic, unelected Commission. In many ways, the EU in its current form is an FRP nightmare: it is a multinational conglomerate led by an expansive bureaucracy. The EU presents a particular challenge to FRP ambitions insofar as it denies sovereignty to states in the area most salient to FRPs: borders. The common labor market denies nations the ability to control who may or may not coexist with them. Some parties also argue that the EU is not in their country's economic interests. UKIP says that leaving the EU would allow it to independently pursue beneficial trade agreements with other entities and supra-national bodies (UKIP, 2017, p. 7). The FN wishes to support French enterprises via their own subsidies and selective protectionist measures, which would require leaving the EU (Rassemblement, 2017, pp. 7-21). Meanwhile, the LN wishes to leave the eurozone to regain sovereignty over monetary policy (Edwards, 2018).

However, this does not mean that the parties reject a common European identity. All of them do in fact embrace a loose conception of a common European identity, based on cultural, religious, and historical bonds among European nation-states— except perhaps for UKIP, who might favor more of an Atlanticist identity, though

they would still accept a broader common Western tradition with Europeans (Vasilopoulou, 2017, p. 127). All of these parties, per this identity, thereby agree that some cooperation is in their mutual interest (Vasilopoulou, 2017, p. 130). There is disagreement, however, on the route to a more ideal form of cooperation, and the form that this cooperation should take. Sofia Vasilopoulou identifies three general patterns in the Eurosceptic positions of FRPs. The rejecting position is a principled opposition to integration. Mutual trade and military alliances may be desirable, but common institutions to facilitate these relationships represent an undesirable loss of sovereignty. The conditional position accepts that some integration is necessary, but seeks to withdraw from the current system of the EU, as it goes too far. The compromising position, meanwhile, also accepts some integration, and additionally thinks that reform of the EU is possible, by working within it (Vasilopoulou, 2017, pp. 128-129).

An ideal EU for most FRPs would probably look like some sort of loose confederal system (Zaslove, 2008, p. 186). Political integration would be limited. There would be no European Court of Justice to tell states which laws they may or may not create for themselves, nor would there be any decision-making body that promulgated international legislation without the unanimous consent of the member-states; and if this sort of legislation did exist, it would probably have to pass via referendum in each state. They would probably trade with each other, but some might break from the ideal of free trade to support their own industries. At a minimum, non-tariff barriers, especially borders, would be maintained. The primary purpose of a FRP EU would probably be to stand in cultural solidarity against larger, existential threats to European culture, like Islam. If a substantial threat emerged, they would likely coordinate a response out of a need for security, but afterwards, they would probably return to their more particular interests.

Outside of Europe, FRP foreign policies diverge significantly, seemingly as a result of desires to defend particular national interests. Many are skeptical of the United States' hegemonic leadership of the world due to its conduct during the Kosovo War and the Iraq War, its support for neoliberal supranationalism, and its melting-pot culture (Zúquete, 2017, p. 106). UKIP says it values the special relationship between the US and UK, but stresses that it opposed the Iraq War and wants a stronger, more independent foreign policy that promotes closer ties with the countries of the British Commonwealth and reaffirms British dominion over the Falklands and Gibraltar. (UKIP, 2017, pp. 42-43). The FN similarly wishes to strengthen ties between France and francophone Africa, via co-development programs in the realm of education, agriculture, defense, and security (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 19). It also wants France to withdraw its forces from NATO's integrated command structure, as it does not want the country to be drawn into foreign wars that are not their own (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 19).

Some of these states seek a closer relationship with Russia. UKIP sees Russia as an important ally in the struggle against Islamic terror, although they do not see a way to work with Russia until it respects the territorial sovereignty of other countries (UKIP,

2017, p. 43). By contrast, the PS takes a particularly anti-Russian stance; it sees the security against Russia provided by the EU as the primary justification for Finland's place in the EU (Finns Party, 2019). It feels that Finland is fairly isolated from the rest of Europe, and that France and Germany hold all of the influence in the EU, mitigating their say in the system. They would prefer a closer relationship with the Nordic countries, on the basis of their closer cultural similarities (Finns Party, 2019).

The AfD wants Germany to take a more active role in world affairs, calling for reforms to the structure of NATO and the UN that would give Germany more of a leading role (Alternative, 2016, pp. 28-29). Meanwhile, the FPÖ seeks to maintain Austrian neutrality, especially in regard to alliances dominated by non-European states, seeing neutrality as the best way to avoid conflict and keep its nation secure (Freedom, 2011, p. 3). It does also, however, seek to diplomatically support the interests of German minorities in the former Habsburg Empire, and denounces their expulsion from Czechia and Yugoslavia after World War II (Freedom, 2011, p. 3).

Economic Programs

The parties also take fairly diverse stances on economic issues, although they seem to agree that the economy should primarily serve the nation, and thereby support policies that encourage the hiring of nationals, discourage the outsourcing of jobs, and restrict access to social benefits to members of the nation, a concept known as welfare chauvinism. Some of the parties, like the AfD, UKIP, and FPÖ, embrace neoliberal economics, deregulation, and free trade, either because they see these systems as the best way to produce wealth for the nation, or because they consider them to be the freest economic system for the nation. The AfD says that "free market competition produces the best economic results," and therefore promotes "key principles [of] ownership, personal responsibility, and free pricing" in the economy (Alternative, 2016, p. 66). UKIP supports free trade so long as agreements are transparent and do not come with "unreasonable demands," as, "Post-Brexit, UKIP's aim is to establish the UK on the world market as a low tax, low regulation economy" (UKIP, 2017, p. 49). The FN, meanwhile, supports a far more interventionist economic program. It calls for the state to maintain control of state companies, support national champions and emerging industries through cooperation, subsidy, and selective procurement, and engage in "intelligent protectionism" to help shield vulnerable French businesses from competition (Rassemblement, 2017, pp. 7-21).

Regardless of overarching economic programs, however, all of the FRPs seek to maintain and protect popular social welfare programs, although the PS is the only one that has consistently promoted use of the welfare system to substantially impact wealth inequality within the nation (Arter, 2010, pp. 500-501). UKIP, for instance, criticizes efforts by the other parties to secretly privatize the NHS using PFI contracts, and even relaxes its anti-immigration language, guaranteeing the right of EU nationals to work in health and social care due to labor shortages in these sectors (UKIP, 2017, pp. 16-20). Simultaneously, these parties generally want to cut taxes. Some seek a more

progressive taxation system, with cuts going towards lower- or middle-income groups and small to medium sized businesses, while others, like the LN, seek a flat tax (Edwards, 2018). The parties thus seem to reflect a belief that the national budget, social benefits, and healthcare systems are only overwhelmed because they are mismanaged, abused by elites, and drained by foreigners. Once this rot is removed from the system, they suggest that it will function flawlessly, as they are more fiscally capable and responsible by virtue of their legitimate interest in serving the people, not themselves.

What They Truly Want and Why: Some Ideological Commonalities

Considering the policies forwarded by Western European FRPs, the degree to which they are detailed and emphasized, and the language used to justify them, it is possible to sketch out a rough ideology shared by them, one that is more detailed than their definitional parameters. Herein lies the theoretical basis for FRP policies: the ends that they seek and the means to these ends, the reasons why, according to the parties, their policies will better the country.

Above all else, national cohesion is essential. National cohesion in this context, different from a kind of essentialist racial purity, is the degree to which members of a delineated nation agree on similar or compatible cultural norms and values, which thereby enable mutual understanding and cooperation. National cohesion is construed to lie at the base of all other societal issues considered to be important, whether it's the efficiency of systems, crime and safety, or issues of wealth. Cohesion might be an end in and of itself, but more importantly, it is a nearly universal means to all desirable ends. When national cohesion is high, people feel a sense of responsibility toward each other, and seek to support each other out of a feeling of solidarity. Employment will go up, the people will work harder, the government will be more efficient, the rich will be more charitable of their own volition, crime will go down, people will take care of the environment around them, it will be easier for people to raise children and pursue their passions, and people will be happy, living in harmony. The inverse happens when national cohesion is low: people fail to trust and feel responsible toward each other and thus seek individual ends to each other's detriment, thereby degenerating society on all fronts.

A few parties seem to express this idea explicitly. The FPÖ stresses the need for a "genuine community of solidarity" as an obligation of citizens and a prerequisite for substantial freedom (Freedom, 2011, p. 7). In the beginning of the FN manifesto, Marine Le Pen says that, above all else, she wants to protect the French national identity, independence, unity of the French, social justice, and prosperity for all, while her globalist competitors seek less cohesion among the French. The PS says that it prioritizes help to Finns that are in need out of a principle of "domestic solidarity," and that "The party's 'world view' is to value individuality that enhances a person's contribution as a member of a family and a community, and the community that enhances the

worth of the individual" (Rassemblement, 2017, p. 2). The SD "want a Sweden where we together rejoice in our success and together help out in adversity" (Sweden, 2020).

National delineations are necessary to ensure national cohesion. The nation exists only so long as it is exclusionary, so long as there are people that exist outside of the nation. A nation need not be based entirely in blood or ethnicity—some ethnic diversity might even be embraced as a source of cultural enrichment—but it needs to have clear, coherent boundaries, otherwise it ceases to be a meaningful identity (Zaslove, 2008, p. 179). FRPs define the nation on cultural grounds, establishing which beliefs, attitudes, and symbols are definitive or permissible on the basis of some historical continuity and the compatibility of their content. Still, the cultural nation can be something of an ambiguous notion, something better felt and experienced than described. The PS, for instance, observes that, "History does not repeat itself, but a Finn will nevertheless know what it does mean to be Finnish—and what it does not. To be 'Finnish' is to recognize 'something' in the spirit…. No single tradition, attitude, opinion, or style is the core of Finnish culture—but it is the combination of language, history, customs, values, and symbols. Finns feel Finland in their heart and soul" (Finns Party, 2018). The nation is therefore the only legitimate basis for sovereignty: only a member of the nation can lead the nation, as only they understand the nation and have its interests at heart. FRP parties therefore value and endorse policies insofar as they will strengthen the national culture per their conception of it, or will protect the national culture from threats. They tend to construe non-integrated immigrants, Muslims, and the corrupt political elite as out-groups, differentiated from the nation of the common folk.

FRPs reject the idea of a universal, human nation as meaningless. For one, there needs to be a common culture among the nation, common symbols whose meanings are agreed upon (Zaslove, 2008, p. 179). If a country features multiple cultural nations, the nations are bound to self-segregate and diverge, undermining that country's cohesion and the capacity for consistent government decision-making. Additionally, there are some beliefs that are fundamentally incompatible. The Quran's passages that endorse the veiling and beating of women, for instance, are incompatible with Western conceptions of women's rights. Such incompatible beliefs cannot be tolerated within the nation's borders, as tolerance is merely the weakening of the nation's own convictions, a vulnerability to cohesion that can serve as the basis for its destruction. Perhaps a global culture could emerge, but FRPs appear hostile to this idea, either because it could only come about via some foreign cultural imposition, not organically, or because they genuinely value cultural diversity on an international scale. They do sometimes criticize multiculturalism and globalization by arguing that blending cultures destroys them and their admirable differences, making segregation a necessity for their survival—though this argument might just be clever positioning to defend against accusations of xenophobia (Betz & Johnson, 2017, p. 72).

Although they might have a preference for relative cultural stability over dynamism, this does not mean that they are entirely resistant to change, or that they are com-

mitted to maintaining the cultural status quo if it includes ideas that it considers self-defeating. Some cultures might be naturally superior to others. A xenophilic culture that is enamored with other cultures, such that it invites the members of another culture to live with it and displays a preference for them over its own members, is liable to destroy itself and is therefore inferior. FRPs thus might seek cultural change themselves, but within bounds and as necessary. As for norms that do not present a threat to the culture's existence, FRPs might accept or even embrace some diversity, but only as long as this diversity genuinely enriches the culture and does not introduce serious contradictions that threaten a culture's coherence. The FPÖ, for example, recognizes that "The indigenous ethnic groups of the Burgenland Croats, Slovenians, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks and the Roma are historical minorities in our country and as such both enrich and are an integral part of Austria and our nation" (Freedom, 2011, p. 5). Cultural change should also come from within the culture, as change due to foreign influences is unnatural and risks reducing distinctions between cultures, making them less exclusionary and meaningful.

Security assumes another place of importance, seemingly as an end in and of itself. Security is naturally important to protecting the lives and wellbeing of a people and their culture. There seem to be four tiers to security. The first has to do with the state's international security, the ability of the state to ensure that other states do not present a threat, which FRPs support via their defense policies. The second has to do with protecting the nation from clear outsiders that came to and reside within the country, namely non-integrated immigrants, who feel no solidarity with the nation and might seek to destroy it, and are therefore responsible for terrorism and crime. Restrictive FRP immigration policies contribute to this kind of security. The third has to do with protecting the nation from people that were once members of it, but have essentially abandoned it through some corruption or degeneration by failing to uphold their duties to other members, and thus pose a threat to it. This group might include mainstream elites and delinquents, like drug users. It may or may not include those that commit crimes in the name of a vigilante quest to defend the nation, by harassing or terrorizing resident out-groups. FRPs support this tier via their strict law and order policies, their anti-corruption reforms, their support for traditional values, which seek to strengthen the nation against degeneration, and their populist rhetoric, which outs the mainstream elites as the corrupt traitors that they are thought to be. The fourth tier has to do with existential threats to the nation, nonhuman threats that would ensure its destruction in the long-term, making its members and their children vulnerable to losing their nation. Support for the growth of families counters one such threat, namely the demographics crisis.

Security is intimately intertwined with national cohesion. A form of government that was authoritarian toward but accepted by its own people may increase the security of both, but in the West, such a government might struggle to find acceptance due to its incompatibility with longstanding Western values, and would thereby disrupt cohesion, making authoritarianism insecure. This could be why FRPs remain some distance from the extreme right: attempting totalitarianism would currently be coun-

terproductive. If FRPs genuinely seek security above other ends, they might try to gradually build up a cultural acceptance of authoritarianism, but security concerns might also legitimately compete with other ends, or be merely a means to other ends itself. For instance, cultural cohesion could face challenges in an insecure environment. If a nation cannot physically protect itself from outsiders, who could corrupt a portion of the nation's members with their own ideas or present barriers to interaction between the nation's members, it would be difficult for it to maintain high cohesion in the long term. Security and cohesion are thus necessary—though not sufficient—for each other.

The actual practice of the contents of culture occupies a third place of importance, and could also constitute an end in and of itself. FRPs seek to execute policies that support traditional cultural norms, as long as the practice of these norms does not substantially threaten security or cohesion. Across Western Europe, this means protecting—or at least being perceived to protect—liberal freedoms, like free speech. It also means maintaining democracy and the popular will as the legitimate basis for governance. Other cultural elements particular to certain countries, like religious traditions, inform policy too. However, only members of the nation may enjoy these freedoms in full. People may be free to practice whichever religion they choose, so long as that religion is not incompatible with the national culture or a threat to national cohesion. Anyone may say hateful things about resident out-groups or foreign cultures, but if a member of a resident out-group says something hateful about the nation or national culture, they are likely to encounter restriction or retribution.

Just as with security, however, it is difficult to discern whether the practice of culture is an end in and of itself, or a means to other ends. The practice of culture is also intertwined with cohesion: an unpracticed or unshared culture would not be a culture, and active practice strengthens boundaries necessary for definition, and thereby cohesion. The practice of culture thus contributes to security, as it makes it easier to identify outsiders and strengthens internal solidarity. It would be almost impossible for an individual to coexist with others without some common culture, as there would be an inability to communicate and mutual mistrust per the Hobbesian state of nature. But security is also necessary to the practice of culture—if some threat suppressed cultural practices, the culture would likely die out over time. FRPs could view their cultural practices, or particular practices, as intrinsically good and have a wish to embrace them to the greatest extent possible, but recognize a need to safeguard them from corruptive influences and threats to livelihood—much like how extremist parties in post-World War II Germany were banned, placing limits on popular participation in order to ensure the survival of democracy. FRPs could conceive of a need to limit freedoms in order to be able to enjoy their cultures at all in the long term, making illiberal measures a security-based means to enjoy an otherwise liberal culture.

Determining the true motivations and potential trajectories of FRPs if given long-term power requires consideration regarding which of these ideals are actually held as ends. Unfortunately, any of these three ideals could be ends in and of themselves. Co-

hesion might be intrinsically good because it has a positive epistemic effect: a shared culture allows individuals to have knowledge of each other, and knowledge might be intrinsically good. Security could be intrinsically good if self-preservation is considered to be intrinsically good, whether at the collective or individual level. Cultural practices could be intrinsically good via the logic of a supporting code of morality. It does not seem that the pursuit of cohesion is realistically mutually exclusive with the pursuit of either culture or security at the level of societal organization, as the pursuit of either without cohesion would entail a rejection of society in favor of an individual way of living. Therefore, whether or not it is an end is a fairly irrelevant question for the purpose of discerning motivation and predicting trajectory. The pursuit of culture and the pursuit of security, however, might conflict. Total security might require the cessation of certain cultural practices, while a total commitment to cultural practice might entail self-destruction. The question of ends thus essentially reduces to a question of whether one's life is considered to be worth living intrinsically, without regard to cultural contents; worth living only so long as particular cultural practices persist, even if they cannot be presently practiced; or worth living intrinsically, but with particular cultural contents enhancing it significantly.

In the first case, culture is meaningless except as a means of protecting the individual, and perhaps their legacy. If they gained power, FRPs would be more likely to shift government in an authoritarian direction once they convince society that this change is worthwhile, assuming that they consider this type of government and illiberal norms to be inherently more secure. They would be neo-fascist authoritarians at heart, prompted by fascism's unpopularity to adopt their current opportunistic positions.

In the second case, security is only tolerated as a necessary restriction on the practice of a national culture in order to ensure its survival. They would not move society in much more of an authoritarian direction than they are currently proposing, as the further abrogation of certain practices in the name of mitigating risk would be abhorrent. If FRPs achieved a satisfactory degree of national cohesion and were guaranteed the security of their society from international threats, they might even lower some of the restrictions on freedoms that they are currently proposing and reduce the state's role in society. They would essentially be insecure culturalist soft-libertarians or traditionalists, driven by xenophobic fears that their way of life is under siege to enact authoritarian measures for its preservation.

If both security and cultural practices are equal intrinsic ends, however, then it is more difficult to judge where the parties might move or compromise. Their actual policies in the long term would probably remain close to their current proposals. They would increase governmental power somewhat and exclude outsiders in order to protect the core nation, but they would not seek to fundamentally alter the culture more than it needs to be altered in order to protect itself, making their current character an earnest and relatively longstanding one.

Considering the diverse backgrounds of these parties, it is difficult to say where they truly lie as a group without involving some bias. Individual parties and members likely vary. Their current proposals could be interpreted to support either culture or security as an end due to their mutual entanglement, as both are stressed significantly. The fact that immigration seems to be their primary issue does not resolve this problem. Maintaining a somewhat ambiguous position on their true goals is probably to their advantage, as it allows them to attract a larger, more diverse group of voters, all of whom think that the parties are really fighting for their interests.

It is also possible that the parties consider other ends to be important. Some do advance a comprehensive economic program, though others only offer more paltry economic solutions. The same can be said for their designs for social welfare programs. If issues of economic efficiency and wealth inequality are considered to be worthwhile ends, then it appears to be assumed that national cohesion will naturally lead to them, as the proposed policies for these goals typically involve ousting corrupt elites and immigrants. Economics could be intertwined with security as a means or end—a strong industry is a prerequisite for a strong military, and an economy is inefficient without law and order to protect the accumulation of wealth—and thereby could be intertwined with cultural practice. However, it seems that, in some cases, FRPs clearly prefer supporting cultural tradition over economic efficiency, as in the case of their support for traditional but uneconomic industries. This does not imply that security must be less important than culture, as culture could simply be perceived as a more vital means to security than economics. Wealth inequality could also be a means or an end, as FRPs do support transfer payments. Wealth inequality might be intertwined with social cohesion, as people would be more likely to hold similar interests and concerns if they possessed similar levels of wealth, and people would be more likely to voluntarily help those that are worse off if they felt a sense of solidarity with them. It seems unlikely that wealth inequality is the ultimate end of FRP policy, though, as FRPs consider inequality to be a natural fact of life (Mudde, 2017, p. 5). If either of these are ends, they therefore appear to be of secondary importance.

Why They Are Here and Where They Will Go: Reasons for Support and Future Prospects

There are multiple theories that have been offered to explain why FRP parties have enjoyed the success that they have. Some theories seek to explain how a particular party rose within its national context, aided by certain cultural norms that gave credence to the far right or populism, but such explanations are unsatisfactory. They fail to explain why the phenomenon of FRPs is as widespread as it is.

One popular explanation tends to be that FRP party supporters are the so-called losers of globalization. The traditional work of these people has been made obsolete by technological development, made uncompetitive by free trade, or outsourced overseas, where labor is cheaper, causing resentment toward the mainstream system, free trade, and white-collar elites, who profit at their expense (Margalit, 2019, p. 152). Addition-

ally, they perceive immigrants to be a source of economic distress, as immigrants are thought to be taking their jobs, or jobs that they could have taken, for significantly lower wages. While they have suffered under these changes, the political mainstream has ignored their plight, having refused to enact policies that would redistribute the overall societal benefits of free trade and immigration to ensure the wellbeing of these people. Together, these animosities, insecurities, and resentments produce feelings of xenophobia and anti-establishmentarianism, fueling support for far-right ideology, and thus the successful parties. They were further inflamed by the financial crises of the late 2000s, as the credibility of mainstream economic policymakers was damaged and austerity policies provided another basis for economic anxiety (Margalit, 2019, p. 152).

Recent academic scrutiny, however, has revealed that these theories only posses modest explanatory power (Margalit, 2019, p. 153). If the parties succeeded among the losers of globalization, then there should be a stronger pattern of support among lower class and unemployed populations—but these trends are fairly weak. Furthermore, no FRP party emerged in Ireland, Spain, or Portugal in the wake of the financial crises of the late 2000s, even though these countries were some of the hardest hit; instead, a leftist populist party, Podemos, emerged in Spain, while in Greece, Syriza, another populist left party, gained power in government (Lochocki, 2018, p. 22). More detailed analyses of voter attitudes and preferences have revealed that, while macroeconomic factors like jobs lost to trade do play a role, they fail to explain the vast majority of the FRP vote (Margalit, 2019, pp. 156-157). One study analyzing survey data from 24 countries between 2002 and 2014 found that economic insecurities and their indirect effects on political trust and immigration attitudes were only associated with 4.3 - 7.4% of the overall FRP vote (Margalit, 2019, p. 158). Another suggested that people are more likely to oppose immigration when it is framed in the context of shifting population demographics, rather than more purely economic contexts (Margalit, 2019, p. 163). There appears to be increasing evidence that FRP voters oppose immigration for primarily cultural reasons, such as the loss of social status by less-educated natives due to growing ethnic diversity, urbanization, and access to higher education, which have contributed to the displacement of traditional values by a greater acceptance of more diverse lifestyles, religions, and cultures, while evidence pointing to economic motivations has been challenged by significant scrutiny (Margalit, 2019, p. 165).

Another stronger explanation deals with the supply side of political parties. Timo Lochocki explains how, across multiple national contexts, the movements of mainstream parties created room in the electorate for FRPs to emerge, due to how they framed national discourse. Essentially, FRPs are the unintended result of mainstream parties attempting to tip the balance of the manageable diversity within their movements in their favor (Margalit, 2019, p. 154). After suffering from some crisis that decreases its support, a center-right party begins to politicize right-wing identity politics—xenophobia—to mobilize conservative voters. This makes issues of immigration salient. Due to movements on the center-left that make the social democrats successful, the center-right drops its right-wing messaging to join a liberal discourse on identity poli-

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tics. The right-wing identity issues, however, remain salient among voters. Dissatisfied that the center-right is no longer appealing to their interests—interests that they had once mobilized—they turn to FRPs, who provide the best political messaging that appeals to these interests (Margalit, 2019, pp. 155-158). These political movements are still only necessary conditions, however.

There are also some modern developments that might be considered permissive or contributing factors. De-industrialization and declining religious observance in the West dating back to the 1960s likely weakened the traditional bases of support for both the center-left and center-right, creating room for alternative politics, especially as a centrist consensus developed around a cosmopolitan, business-friendly vision of Europe (Mudde, 2016, pp. 26-27). The emergence of the internet has caused mainstream media to lose its traditional role as a gatekeeper of information (Mudde, 2016, p. 27). Declining subscriptions and ad-revenue-based income models have forced mainstream media to produce sensationalized stories, which could contribute to distrust of the mainstream. Alternative media, which could be more likely to support FRPs than the mainstream, might have simultaneously found greater success in reaching audiences in recent years due to the popularization of the internet (Mudde, 2016, p. 27).

International currents could also have an effect. The ways in which FRPs frame conflict with Islam, as some longstanding conflict between Europe and the Near East, appear reminiscent of Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis, which argued that distinctions based on historical, cultural and religious identities would become more important in shaping international relations after the Cold War, as political ideological divisions had been rendered less meaningful by the fall of communism (Huntington, 2017, pp. 34-35). Perhaps citizens of European countries are looking for new answers to questions about identity since this collapse of left-right distinctions as a basis for difference, and have discovered the cultural issues promoted by FRPs to be compelling (Betz & Johnson, 2017, p. 72). Still, an FRP movement framing conflict and identity in this way is not necessarily indicative of an entire state moving in that direction. There may be more compelling evidence, though, in the form of Eurobarometer polling, which has consistently seen EU citizens place immigration as their largest concern in recent years, although it is beginning to lose ground to climate change (European Commission, 2019).

There is considerable debate surrounding the future prospects of FRP parties. When they originally emerged as a considerable political force, many thought they would be a flash in the pan, a radical movement that had nowhere to go and would quickly die (Betz & Johnson, 2017, p. 68). For some parties, such a collapse in the near future might still be probable. The AfD, for example, could be torn apart by internal divisions. The PVV also appears to be vulnerable, facing new challenges within the far right from the Forum for Democracy party.

Overall, however, many of these parties seem to have significant staying power. Some have characterized them as single-issue parties focused on immigration, but perhaps the Greens are a more apt compassion. Both FRPs and Green parties appear to place the bulk of their focus on narrow popular issues—immigration and environmental policies, respectively—while also offering broader, somewhat ideological programs. At the present, though, the wider program offered by FRPs has seemingly failed to catch on with voters, and their ideology remains rather diffuse without stronger, more coherent ideals or texts to rally around. Nevertheless, a future proper analysis of this comparison could yield some insights.

As FRPs continue to gain in some countries, it will become more difficult for the mainstream parties to keep them at a distance. Shunning and condemning them has failed to stem their rising support, and the creation of anti-FRP coalition governments is likely to inflame the conditions in which they thrive (Mudde, 2016, p. 30). If FRPs do enter government, they might face a considerable problem: having succeeded in supplanting the mainstream elite at the head of the state, their populist rhetoric might lose its potency—they are now the elite, and they are now accountable for the state's failures (Mudde, 2016, p. 30). No party has found itself at the head of a coalition yet, though, so whether or not this theory will hold is uncertain. The supply side of political parties suggests another problem that these parties might face. If the mainstream center-right readopts right-wing identity politics positions, namely anti-immigration stances, they might be able to regain support from wayward voters. The multitude of factors that could affect FRP support, combined with uncertainties about how well they would actually govern, makes their future uncertain.

Concluding Remarks

Ultimately, FRP parties are a fairly diverse set. They have different backgrounds in terms of their ideological development and electoral success, and their internal characteristics are varied, although centralized parties with strong leaders are fairly common among successful parties—though they may also face significant instability. They seem to have had moderate success in attracting voters from different demographic cleavages, but they are still defined by a popular perception of them as anti-immigrant parties. Their policies and guiding ideologies are more united and fairly complex, albeit somewhat rough and unclear. Their most important policy issue is immigration, followed by policies regarding traditional values and law and order, as informed by their ideological emphasis on national cohesion based on a cultural identity, security, and cultural practice. They tend to agree on these policy areas, but particular national contexts are still grounds for some difference. When it comes to foreign and economic policies, the parties appear to diverge more, which could challenge their ability to cooperate with each other. There is still an ongoing academic debate as to why these parties have been successful, although cultural arguments appear to be winning out over purely economic ones.

The future of these parties is still uncertain, but the same might not be true about the policies that they support or the societal attitudes behind them. Already, there is evidence of FRP parties moving the mainstream to the right; even before the refugee crisis, mainstream conservatives like Angela Merkel, Nicolas Sarkozy, and David Cameron had publicly discussed problems with immigration, a topic that was the exclusive domain of the far right for a time (Mudde, 2017, p. 609). Even without formal power, FRPs could have a significant effect on the political course of a country: one might consider the effect that UKIP had in pressuring Cameron to issue the Brexit referendum. The greatest prospects for FRPs may lie in their ability to shift the mainstream, a diffuse body that is generally open to compromise once a view gains enough popularity out of a desire to form the largest coalition. When studying far-right trends, the success of the actual parties might be a poor indicator of the actual success of far-right sentiments within a society: instead, the attitudes of voters and the actual policies enacted by governments might provide a better basis.

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