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Providing an overview of right-wing radicalisation in Europe

Right-wing Populism can be understood as a specific antagonistic concept of the world that stress a supposed antagonism between “a corrupt elite” and “the morally pure people” (Mudde; Kaltwasser 2017) It can be theorized as “thin ideology” that needs to be fed by different, stronger ideologies. Right-wing populism is fed by features of far-right ideologies mainly national-völkisch-authoritarian beliefs and an ideology of inequality that differs social groups and their dedicated members into those of more and less value.

Right-wing extremism is a severe far right ideology with a political dimension and a social dimension that mirrors an ideology of inequality strongly related to the support of and readiness to violence. Right-wing extremism has an attitudinal (ideological) dimension as well as a behavioural dimension.

The European dimension

In the recent elections for the European Parliament together far-right parties achieved greater success than ever before, amassing around a quarter of the votes cast. In France, Italy, Hungary, and Poland, right-wing parties even became the strongest party in terms of percentage points, even though they were still unable to win the majority of all votes in these countries.

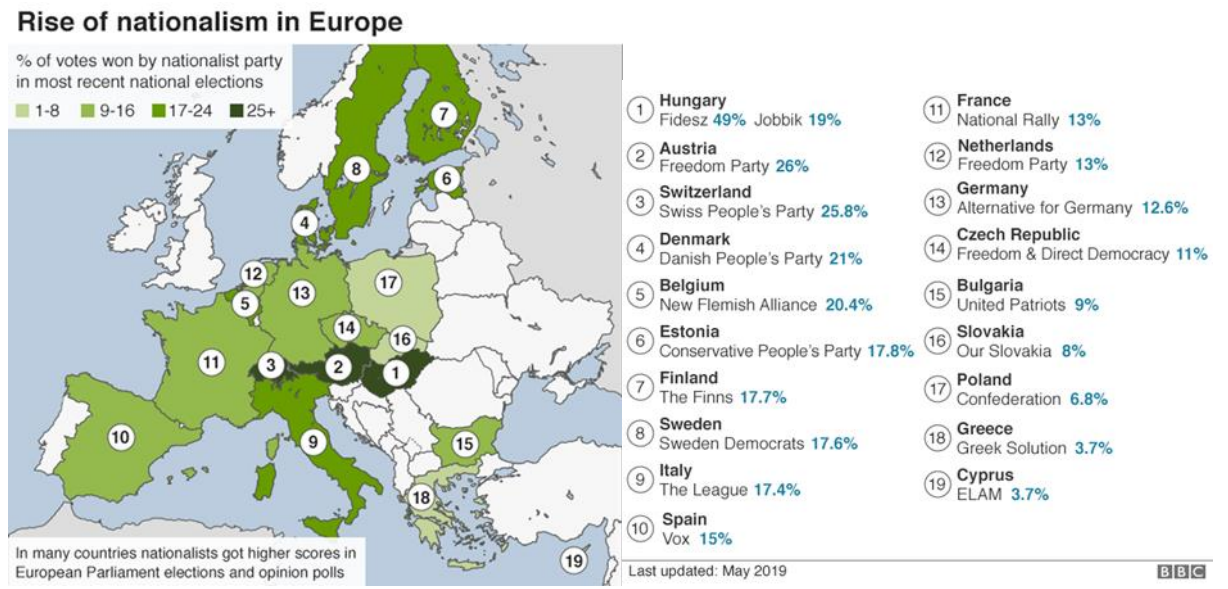


Fig. 1: Electoral success of right-wing parties presented by the BBC.

Developments

Right-wing extremist currents, groups and parties now increasingly flow into one another through ideology, actors and actions, or even merge into multi-organization umbrella groups. Nevertheless, some differences remain, for instance over the relationship to Russia. In addition to the parties of the



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far right, there are organized groups of the hard-right-wing extremist scene in Europe.- The most well-known and well-connected in Europe is the Blood and Honour network.

Settings on migration and asylum seekers

The results of the European Social Survey point to a comparatively high level of acceptance of immigration in the northern European countries (above all Sweden, Norway, and Finland); medium acceptance in the other western European countries; while rejection of immigration is particularly widespread in eastern European countries (including Hungary and the Czech Republic). This actually confirms several studies that show more negative attitudes where there is little contact and experience with immigration.

Group-focused enmity

Surveys on hate crimes are still inconsistent within the EU. The police statistics of several countries do not show any possible hate motivation for criminal and violent acts. This makes a direct comparison of the rate of discrimination and hate crimes impossible.

Nevertheless, recent studies and surveys have identified group-focused enmity elements (see for example Zick/Küpper/Berghan 2019). Xenophobia, ethnic racism, anti-Semitism, Muslim hostility, sexism, homophobia, as well as the devaluation of disabled and homeless persons are the main group-focused enmity elements. A long-term study in Germany furthermore added the devaluation of Sinti and Roma, asylum-seekers, transsexual or transgender, long-term unemployed persons, as well as the demand for established privileges over new arrivals in general

Anti-democratic and right-wing attitudes

In 2004, the EU funded SIRENE project investigated right-wing attitudes in the population (Flecker et al. 2004). The experience of being at the mercy of economic development opened the door to right-wing populism. Furthermore, it was supported by the influence of a strong competitive orientation (working place etc.). Any change in working life, whether positive or negative, can increase the feeling of insecurity and prejudice towards immigrants and thus the tendency towards parties of the far right. Right-wing populist attitudes were primarily defined by xenophobia, racism, and nationalism, including authoritarianism and social Darwinism. The strengthening influence of a feeling of social injustice and being deceived by the hard-working population on right-wing populist attitudes was confirmed.

Generally, the research emphasized the feeling of political powerlessness, insecurity and fear of social decline as well as the opposition of "evil elites" against the "good people".

In 2019 an online survey of almost 24,000 respondents from twelve EU Member States investigated extent of populism (Kaltenwasser/Verkamp/Wratil 2019). It found a clear connection between populist attitudes, dissatisfaction with European democracy and Euroscepticism and concluded that a lack of representation of issues by parties can increase the tendency to populism.

CHAMPIONS - Cooperative Harmonized Action Model to Stop Polarisation in Our Nations

The main objective of the project is to develop collaboration models for establishing working groups between first-line-practitioners. The offline approach is supported by collaborative online tools, practitioner trainings and digital services.

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