

## **The European Radical Right in Comparative-Historical Perspective**

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Abstract: This paper seeks to explain the variation in the success of radical right political parties across ten European political systems over the last several decades. I argue that such parties succeed over the long term only when they both 1) build on pre-existing nationalist organizations and networks and 2) face a permissive rather than repressive political environment. These hypotheses are tested on the cases of Denmark, France, Italy and Sweden. By adding factors such as historical legacies, party organization, and interactions between mainstream parties and far right challengers to the study of radical right parties, we can better understand their divergent trajectories. Ideas about the legitimacy of the radical right also influence the reaction of mainstream challengers to them, and represent a promising topic for future research.

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## Introduction

It has now been nearly a quarter of a century since the French National Front (FN) began its rise by capturing 9% of the vote in the city of *Dreux*, a struggling suburb of Paris. Since then, the FN's transformation from fringe party to major political force has been duplicated by many other radical right (also referred to as far right) parties across Western Europe. In fact, many of these parties have exceeded the success of the FN by winning political power, becoming members of national governments and transforming party systems in the process (Bale 2003). They have consolidated themselves in party systems in the following states or regions: Austria, Belgium-Flanders, Denmark, France, Italy and Norway.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, however, other radical right parties that appeared poised to follow a similar successful trajectory have fizzled. This has been the case in Belgium-Wallonia, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

Why have these parties succeeded in some states and failed in others? This puzzle has sparked a great deal of research in recent years, yet an answer to it has proven elusive. One set of explanations for this cross-national variation focuses on electoral institutions. At the most basic level, one cannot deny that single-member districts in the United Kingdom weaken support for third parties, including radical right ones like the British National Party (BNP). But what about most electoral systems in Western Europe that, while possessing important differences in terms of district magnitude and effective thresholds, use some form of proportional representation (PR)? Elisabeth Carter (2002)

has challenged the argument (Jackman and Volpert 1996; Givens 2005; Norris 2005) that electoral systems really matter for far right support in elections, and this scholarly debate is sure to continue. But looking broadly at some cases at least calls into question the importance of variation in electoral rules. Is it really possible that Sweden's four percent threshold explains the non-success of the Swedish far right while the success of the Danish People's Party can be attributed in large part to Denmark's two percent national threshold? Or that Austria's four percent threshold creates dramatically larger opportunities for the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), while Germany's five percent hurdle stifles far right parties? While I do not deny the importance of electoral rules, I submit that they alone cannot provide a compelling explanation for the dramatically different trajectories of radical right parties in PR systems.

A second family of explanation focuses on socioeconomic variables, such as immigration and unemployment. Clearly, some threshold of immigration appears to be necessary for the genesis of radical right parties since anti-immigrant appeals have been central to parties in every single case except, arguably, for the Italian MSI/AN. In countries that have not experienced significant immigration until recently, such as Spain, Portugal, and Finland where the average immigration rate from 1990-2002 was under 2% (see table one), radical right parties have not emerged, although they may in the near future.

(Table 1)

Quantitative studies, however, have thus far failed to produce a scholarly consensus about the importance of socioeconomic variables in determining electoral support for the far right. Some scholars see immigration as a significant factor (Golder 2003; Knigge 1998) while others downplay its importance (Norris 2005; Kitschelt 1995). There is a lively debate about whether unemployment increases support for radical right parties (Dülmer and Klein 2005; Jackman and Volpert 1996) or whether the effect of unemployment is negative or insignificant (Knigge 1998; Lubbers et al 2002). Again, looking at longer term trajectories rather than snapshots of elections should give grounds for skepticism about the significance of these variables. Some states and regions with relatively low unemployment figures over the last two decades, such as Austria and Norway, have generated strong far right parties, while others with high average levels of unemployment, such as Germany and Belgium-Wallonia, have failed to. Some states with a high number of immigrants over the last decade (see the average number of immigrants from 1990-2002), such as Sweden and the Netherlands, have produced only “flash” far right parties, while those with a comparatively low percentage of immigrants, like Italy and Norway, have not. Again, while some immigration appears necessary for radical right parties to form, the actual number of immigrants may be unrelated to the success of radical right parties. Cases such as Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK suggest that while immigration may be a necessary element for radical right success, it is not a sufficient one.

A third category of explanation eschews sociological correlates, such as immigration and unemployment, and electoral rules in favor of party agency. The most influential comparative study on the radical right to date, Herbert Kitschelt's *The Radical*

*Right in Western Europe* (1995), hypothesized that right populists succeed only when they build a "winning-coalition" of workers threatened by post-industrialization and middle-class professionals who champion economic neo-liberalism. But this hypothesis has been challenged by events since the late 1980s and early 1990s, the period from which Kitschelt drew his data. As far right parties turned increasingly to issues of immigration and welfare-chauvinism (defending the welfare state for nationals against abuse by foreigners) and drew overwhelmingly working-class voters, they jettisoned most of their neo-liberal elements. Thus, a cross-class coalition may no longer be a vital element for the success of the new far right (Betz 1996; Mudde 1999; Schain 1997; Ivarsflaten 2002), although there have been recent attempts to modify Kitschelt's initial theory (McGann and Kitschelt 2005; Veugelers and Magnan 2005).

The goal of this article is not to critique these arguments further but rather to offer an alternative explanation for the puzzle of cross-national variation in the far right's trajectory over the last several decades. Whereas most studies of the far right look at the characteristics of individual voters (the "demand side"), like Kitschelt and others I focus on the "supply side"—on the characteristics of far right parties themselves and their interaction with the broader political environment (Mudde, forthcoming; Art 2006a; Givens 2005; Meguid 2005; Norris 2005; van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2005; Bale 2003). My central claim is that while far right parties can emerge (and have emerged) in any state with significant immigration, they only succeed when they 1) build on pre-existing national organizations or networks and 2) face a permissive rather than a repressive political-cultural environment. Both of these conditions must be met for radical right parties to consolidate themselves in the party system.

(Table 2)

This article develops this theory and provides evidence from four cases: Denmark, France, Italy, and Sweden. I chose these cases because they occupy the four cells on the 2 by 2 matrix above, because three of the cases (France, Italy and Sweden) exhibit significant change in the political repressiveness variable (they occupy different cells at different time periods), and because one can understand the trajectories of radical right parties in all of the other cases with reference to these four. Furthermore, Denmark and Sweden allow for a most similar case study design, given the multiple shared characteristics of the two states. By putting factors such as historical legacies, party organization, and interactions between mainstream parties and far right challengers (Meguid 2005, Givens 2005; Bale 2003) back into the study of the far right, we can better understand patterns of success and failure. By taking temporality seriously, this paper represents the first attempt to provide a comparative-historical analysis (Mahoney and Rueschmeyer 2003) of the European radical right. Finally, this article also focuses our attention on a crucial but under-researched variable in the literature on the radical right: the ideas that mainstream actors hold toward far right challengers. In cases where norms against cooperation with the radical right are deeply embedded in political culture, the *cordon-sanitaire* (defined below) has been airtight and highly effective. While I do not explore the origin of those norms here, I submit that this is an important topic for future research.

## **Definitions, the Dependent Variable, and Case Selection**

Attempts to define the radical right party family produced a “war of words” in the mid 1990s (Mudde 1996; Mudde forthcoming). Although this definitional debate persists, a consensus has emerged that radical right parties are both nationalist, in the sense that they seek to dramatically restrict or roll-back immigration, and occupy a policy space on the extreme right of the spectrum in their respective states, as an expert survey conducted by Marcel Lubbers has demonstrated (Lubbers 2000). Using the above definition means that several parties that have often been labeled radical right need to be re-coded, at least for certain time periods. For example, the Progress Parties in Denmark and Norway do not qualify as radical right parties until they adopted the immigration issue in the 1980s (Rydgren 2004). Similarly, the Austrian Freedom Party should be coded as radical right only after Jörg Haider captured control of it in 1986 and shifted it in a nationalist direction.

In the literature on radical right parties, "success" has been defined and operationalized in several different ways. Success can mean a particular share of the vote in a particular election, an average of vote-share in elections over a specified time period, the number of seats a party wins, or the influence it has on the policies and discourse of other political parties. In this article, I define success differently-- a radical right party is defined as successful if it has captured over ten percent of the vote in two successive national parliamentary elections. Specifying the dependent variable in this way better captures the extent to which far right parties have consolidated themselves (or failed to

consolidate themselves) in party systems. Table one presents those cases I have coded as successes, and those I have coded as failures.

(Table 3)

Why does this represent the universe of cases for my argument? Since I do believe that the Irish and British electoral systems effectively stymie small parties, comparing them with PR systems would not be a fruitful comparison. I do, however, include France in the analysis since its two round majoritarian system is different from a pure first-past-the-post system. Second, countries that have experienced little immigration over the last two decades, including Finland, Portugal, and Spain, are not included since an anti-immigrant stance is a defining feature of far right parties. Third, European micro-states with populations under 1 million people are left out of the analysis. Fourth, Greece (along with Portugal and Spain) is excluded because its transition to democracy only occurred around the time when radical right parties were appearing. Fifth, and finally, Switzerland is excluded because of its idiosyncratic consociational system.

### **The Argument**

This article offers a “supply-side” explanation for the success and failure of the radical right, and one that focuses on broader political and cultural context in which such parties emerge. I argue first that the "building blocks" for radical right parties consist of pre-existing nationalist organizations, and that the strength of these building blocks has varied across the universe of cases. Second, I claim that the reaction of existing political

parties to radical right challengers has been consequential for the development of the latter, and that these reactions have also varied across time and place. In so doing, my argument dovetails with those who claim that the reaction of political parties, and particularly the conservative "border parties," to fascist challengers in the interwar period were critical to the survival or non-survival of democracy (Linz 1978; Capoccia 2005). Below I explore these two hypotheses in more depth.

**Hypothesis One:** *Pre-existing nationalist organizations and networks are necessary for right-wing populist parties to succeed.*

I define a nationalist organization as either a formal organization, which could include a political party, an intellectual movement, or an interest group, or an informal network of individuals devoted to nationalist ideology. It is crucial to note up front that radical right parties are conceptually distinct from the nationalist organizations on which they build. In all of the cases under examination, nationalist organizations either existed, failed to develop, or were destroyed long before the immigration issue became politically salient in the 1980s. In many of the cases, nationalist organizations held ideas that are properly labeled fascist. While I concur with the scholarly consensus that radical right parties should not be labeled neo-fascist, we should not go to the other extreme and downplay the important links between nationalist networks and radical right parties.

The presence and nature of a nationalist organizations matter for two basic reasons. First, and most importantly, such organizations provide a core of committed activists and candidates for radical right parties (Klandermans and Mayer 2005). They provide the organizational resources that small parties need to consolidate themselves in party systems. In some cases, radical right parties have attracted *voters*, but their inability

to attract members and viable candidates after an initial electoral breakthrough have rendered them “flash parties.” In contrast to scholars who view a nationalist subculture as a mixed blessing for radical right parties because they limit the strategies available to them (Kitschelt 1995), I view them as a necessary condition for success (as defined above). This line of argument has been forwarded by scholars of the far right (van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2005; Mudde and von Holsteyn 2000), but has not, to my knowledge, been developed or tested rigorously.

Second, the prior existence of a nationalist subculture means that right-wing populist parties will not be viewed as completely novel political actors when they emerge. Even when they adopt xenophobic and populist elements, voters and observers may not view them as new parties but as part of a nationalist tradition: in short, the brand already exists. For example, when Jörg Haider captured control of the FPÖ in 1986 from the liberal wing of the party and immediately proceeded to steer it in a nationalist direction, one commentator wrote: “a turn rightward? Certainly, that cannot be denied. But was it not in realist a return to where this party has always stood in the political landscape?”<sup>2</sup> In other words, popular perceptions of right-wing populist parties will be different, I hypothesize, in states with a nationalist subculture than in states that lack one. In the former, far right parties will be considered “normal” while in the latter they may be perceived as “pathological” or dangerous. This hypothesis has received some support from empirical studies of voters (van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2000).

West European states differ markedly in the extent to which nationalist organizations both pre-dated and survived the Second World War. In Austria and Italy, the remnants of fascist political movements reconstituted themselves as political parties

within several years after the end of the war. In Flanders and France, nationalist subcultures and social networks persisted for decades before they were amalgamated into right-wing populist parties in the late 1970s and 1980s. In Denmark and Norway, anti-tax populism and anti-EU movements that raised the salience of nationalist politics mutated into anti-immigration parties in the 1980s. In the other cases under examination, nationalist subcultures were either integrated into the political mainstream, destroyed, or never existed. In Germany, the far right subculture was gradually integrated into the democratic fold by the two “catch-all” parties (the CDU/CSU and the SPD) and by the liberal-national FDP. In Wallonia, the far right carried the stigma of Flemish nationalism and was repressed after the war. Both the Netherlands and Sweden lacked strong nationalist organizations both before and after the war.

**Hypothesis Two:** *A permissive political environment must be present at the moment of its electoral breakthrough for radical right parties to succeed.*

By political environment, I mean in this article the strategies that other political parties adopt toward right-wing populist challengers. The most basic choice mainstream parties face is whether they will rule out cooperation with the far right, or whether they will keep their options open. When political parties follow the former strategy, a “*cordon sanitaire*” is erected around the far right. As scholars have recently noted (van der Brug and van Spanje 2004; Kestel and Godmer 2003), cordons have varied widely in their degree of application. Some have been applied only at the national level; some have not been adhered to by all political parties; some have been so vigorously debated that their continuation is perpetually in doubt.

To measure the strictness of the cordon-sanitaire in different contexts, Wouter van

der Brug and Joost van Spanje thus conducted a survey that asked 266 political scientists to rate the severity of the cordon-sanitaire, as of 1999, on a scale from one to ten (table 2). The “strictness” measure captures the number of political levels (local, state, and national) to which the cordon applies, the number of parties adhering to it, and the degree to which it is enforced. The tightest cordon receives a score of ten. Using this survey, I define a repressive political environment as case in which the strictness of the cordon greater than 5, and a permissive political environment in which it is less.

While this survey provides the first measure of cordon sanitaires across countries, it is not without problems as an indicator for the variable of “political environment” in my analysis. Obviously, it only provides only a snapshot of the cordon’s strictness as of 1999. It is critical to note that while it probably has not changed much in some states, it has in others, and I note such changes in section four. The expert survey also does not include judgments about the strictness of the cordon in relation to the Norwegian Progress Party and the Swedish Democrats. I provide evidence below that the cordon against the former has been quite weak (similar to that in Denmark), while that against the latter has been extremely strict (similar to those in Germany, the Netherlands, and Wallonia).

(Table 4)

I hypothesize that the strength of the cordon influences that of the far right through the following three mechanisms. Like Terri Givens, I believe that strategic voting limits the success of radical right parties (Givens 2005). A strict cordon signals to voters that far right parties will not become members of coalitions or shape legislation directly.

Under these conditions, a vote for a permanently ostracized political party will be "wasted" similar to a vote for a small party in a first-past-the-post system (Cox 1997). Studies of far right voters have determined that they are not purely expressive voters, or protest voters, and care about the ability of their party to influence politics. Thus, when cordons are rigidly enforced, support for far right parties will decline. In cases where a cordon is weak or not existent, support for the far right will increase.

An important caveat to this hypothesis, and one consistent with most comparative-historical explanations (Pierson 2004), is that sequencing matters. In cases where a cordon is erected *after* a far right party has consolidated itself in the political system, the cordon is unlikely to decrease vote support for the far right, and in fact might even increase it. The fact that a cordon is applied after the radical right party gains strength sends a signal to voters that other parties recognize it as a threat. This recognition means that votes for the far right have had a tangible political effect, and far right voters will thus not see another vote for the party as "wasted."

The second mechanism operates through incumbency. When far right parties become members of local or state governments, they acquire a certain recognition and legitimacy in the political system. Efforts by politicians to keep such parties out of national office became increasingly difficult, and hypocritical, when the far right is cooperating with their party brethren at the local and/or state level. Looking at the history of far right parties over the last decade, one sees that the successful ones have followed a strategy of winning local and regional victories before cashing in at the national level. Conversely, when far right parties have been blocked at the lowest levels of government, they have never been able to succeed at the national level.

The third, and often overlooked, mechanism is elite recruitment. A strong cordon dramatically affects a party's ability to recruit the type of politicians that might help it succeed. Simply put, why would ambitious politicians agree to work on behalf of a party that is permanently shut out of office? Many scholars have remarked that failed radical right parties have suffered from organizational problems and the lack of capable leadership. I submit that this is a product of a repressive political environment in which far right parties become magnets for individuals with little political experience and competency. When a cordon is weak or non-existent, however, joining a radical right party can be an attractive option for political entrepreneurs. Inner party mobility can be much greater in such parties than within traditional Social Democratic or Christian Democratic party organizations.

With these hypotheses in mind, I now turn to four case studies: Italy, France, Denmark and Sweden. Recall that I chose to present these four cases because they occupy different cells on the 2 by 2 matrix, because they exhibit change on the political repressiveness variable over time, and because the latter two cases allow for a structured-focused comparison. The four cases also possess variation on the dependent variable (success or failure of radical right parties), although they were not chosen according to this criterion.

### **Italy:**

The MSI was founded in 1946 by the survivors of Italy's postwar *epurazione* (purge) who remained committed to fascism. Their adherence to Mussolini clearly put

them on a collision course with the antifascist parties and with the antifascist narrative that became the founding myth of the postwar Italian republic (Ginsborg). Yet, as the fight against communism quickly replaced the fight against the remnants of fascism as the overriding imperative for the dominant Christian Democrats (DC), the MSI perceived an opportunity to become a relevant actor in the political system. Indeed, the DC did cooperate with the MSI at the local (although not at the national) level, particularly in the South. In 1953, the MSI received 5.8% in the general election, up from only 2% in 1948. In cities such as Naples, Bari, and Catania, the MSI governed together with other small conservative parties. During the 1950s, the DC adopted an accommodating approach toward the MSI. In 1952, the two parties formed a joint “anti-Communist” list for the 1952 Rome municipal elections. Although there was still no formal cooperation on the national level, the MSI supported two DC governments in 1957 and 1959. In 1960, the DC government *required* the support of the MSI to take office, marking the first time in postwar Europe that a government came to power thanks to the extreme right (Ignazi 2003).

But the very success of the MSI’s “insertion strategy” (*inserimento*) produced a more repressive political environment for it. To thank the MSI for its votes, the DC government under Tambroni allowed the MSI to hold its national congress of 1960 in Genoa. The city had been a center of antifascist resistance, and the MSI’s planned congress provoked leftist parties and activists to take to the streets. Rioting soon spread from Genoa to other cities, leading to several deaths, the banning of the party congress, and the fall of Tambroni’s government. The DC would never attempt accommodation again.

Although the MSI was thus effectively shut out of national politics from 1960, it persisted as a well-organized, professional political party. Party membership increased dramatically in the 1950s, despite the fact that the recruitment process was highly selective (Ignazi 2003). It also developed a strong youth organization. With a foothold in local governments in the South, the MSI used its incumbency to deliver patronage (as did all other parties). The fact that the MSI, reconstituted as the AN in 1995, had a strong organization and deep roots in southern Italy allowed it to take advantage of a rapid change from a repressive to a permissive political environment.

The implosion of the Italian political establishment following *Tangentopoli* (“Bribesville”) in 1992 provided the crisis that the MSI needed to escape from its isolation. It was one of the only existing parties untouched by the corruption scandals, and this fact alone probably would have brought it some support. But in order for the MSI to have any hope of survival under the new majoritarian electoral system, it would need to find potential coalition partners or at least parties willing to enter electoral stand-down deals. The political environment would have to become permissive for the MSI to take advantage of the crisis.

It was Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon who formed his own party Forza Italia (‘Go Italy’) in 1993, that overturned the MSI’s status as a pariah party within a matter of months. His first important action was to express support for Gianofranco Fini, the ambitious young leader of the MSI, who was a candidate for the mayor of Rome in November 1993. Berlusconi’s endorsement “If I were in Rome I would certainly vote for Fini” made headlines across Italy.<sup>3</sup> Although Fini did not win the elections, he placed a strong second, winning 47% of the vote. Alessandra Mussolini, the granddaughter of the

*Duce*, also posted a remarkable showing, winning 43% in the second-round of the mayoral election in Naples.

The next step in the so-called “customs clearance” (*Sdoganamento*) of the MSI occurred when Berlusconi entered into an electoral coalition with Fini’s newly founded *Alleanza Nazionale* (AN). After his success in Rome, Fini sought to revamp the public’s perception of the extreme-Right and succeeded in convincing party delegates to dissolve the MSI in favor of the AN, which Fini described as “a common home of all the right.” (Bull and Newell, 1995) Although interviews with the party rank-and file suggest that the neo-fascists had changed in name only, Berlusconi announced that he was forming an electoral alliance (The Freedom Alliance) with both the AN and Umberto Bossi’s Northern League to contest the 1994 parliamentary elections. After nearly fifty years of isolation, the Italian extreme-Right had come in from the cold.

Berlusconi’s near monopoly of the Italian private television, which gives him the ability to “swamp the television screens with endless political commercials,” was another critical factor in legitimating the AN (Statham 1996). Fini and Bossi were presented as politicians like any other, and their electoral alliances with Berlusconi brought them favorable news coverage at virtually no cost. In the event, the AN received 13.5% of the vote in the 1994 elections, nearly tripling its total from two years earlier and earning five places in Berlusconi’s cabinet. Although the AN’s first foray into government was to be short-lived (Berlusconi’s Freedom Alliance lasted only nine months), the party, and Fini in particular, profited enormously from the experience. By early 1995, public opinion polls showed that Fini had become the most popular politician in Italy. Since then, Fini has changed his party fundamentally, charting a course away from fascist nostalgia

toward something akin to Italian Gaullism. It is thus an open question whether the AN still belongs in the same party family as the other parties treated in this article. The crucial point, however, is that the AN/MSI had consolidated itself in the party system before it severed its links with fascism.

While the AN has crossed the 10 percent threshold in national parliamentary elections, the Northern League (Lega Norda) has seen its vote share fall from 8.7% in 1992 to 3.9% in 2001. It thus does not meet the requirement of a "successful" radical right party. One reason for this, however, is that the League is entirely a Northern Italian phenomenon, and thus does not expect to capture a large share of the national vote. If Italy had separate party systems like Belgium, the League would certainly qualify as a success. Its recent downturn, moreover, is related to the rise of the AN, which has been drawing votes from it.

### **France**

The extreme Right has been an enduring component of France's political system for several centuries (Sternhall 1978) and did not disappear with the fall of the Vichy regime. France experienced the vanguard of the radical right in the form of the Poujadiste movement of the 1950s (Hoffman 1957). But it was the Algerian conflict, and particularly the exodus of one million French settlers following Algerian independence in 1962, that revived the French extreme right. The National Front would be forged in 1972 from these various elements by Jean-Marie Le-Pen, a veteran of Vichy, Poujadism, *and* the Algerian settler movement. Even two decades after its founding, individuals from these networks would form the core of the National Front's membership. According to a

study of the FN in Isere in 1992, one quarter of the party's members had belonged to the Nationalist Right before Algerian independence, a further quarter joined between 1962 and 1968, and one half after the left came to power in 1981. Overall, one quarter of the party's members had lived in Algeria (Ivaldi 1994).

The FN remained a marginal force in French politics until a rise in immigration handed it its signature political issue. But the FN never could have escaped from the ghetto had it not been for a favorable political environment, and cooperation from parties on both the left and right. The French Socialists decided to fan the small party in order to weaken their rivals on the right. When Le-Pen complained in 1982 that he was not receiving adequate media attention, socialist president Francois Mitterrand convinced the leaders of France's three public television chains to increase their coverage of the FN (Mayer 1998). Mitterrand's intervention helped the far right reach a larger audience than it ever had before. Most importantly, in 1986 Mitterrand's government changed the electoral rules for the 1986 presidential and parliamentary elections, replacing the two-ballot majoritarian system with proportional representation. The FN, which had won 9.7% of the vote, gained 35 seats in the National Assembly. This gave it political legitimacy and bolstered its national profile (Schain 1987).

The French right also flirted with the FN throughout the 1980s. During the by-elections in the city of Dreux in 1983, in which the FN managed its first electoral coup, the center-right formed a joint list with it in order to defeat the left. As Nonna Mayer notes, "the highly controversial electoral alliance provided the National Front with the political legitimacy and visibility it had craved (Mayer 1998)." It also was critical in the transformation of the FN from "a party of agitators" to a "coalition of notables of the old

traditional right, and right and extreme right organizations (Schain 1987).” While the party was only able to find 65 candidates for the cantonal elections of 1982, by 1986 there were over 2,000 names on the party list.

Following the 1986 national elections, mainstream rightist parties struck various tacit and open deals with the FN at the regional level (Marcus 1995; Minkenberg and Schain, 2003). National level conservative politicians took different positions on the legitimacy of the FN. While Jacques Chirac, the mayor of Paris, ruled out any deals with Le Pen, other politicians, such as Charles Pasqua and Raymond Barre were more ambiguous. Pasqua noted in 1988, for example, that the mainstream right shared the same values as the FN, a quote that appeared to legitimate the latter.<sup>4</sup> Conservative voters were also torn about how best to respond to the FN. Even after Le Pen had referred, in 1988, to the gas chambers as a “minor detail” in the Second World War, nearly one-third of mainstream right sympathizers supported electoral deals with the far right (Marcus 1995).<sup>5</sup>

Although the FN appeared headed for the political wilderness after a fierce rivalry between Le Pen and his second-in command, Bruno Megrét, split the party in the late 1990s, Le Pen returned triumphantly in 2002. Le Pen’s second place finish in the first round of the 2002 presidential elections ended Lionel Jospin’s political career. Nearly two decades after its initial breakthrough, the FN is still a potent force in French politics.

French political elites now universally rally against and denounce the FN. As Lubber's survey makes clear (see table 3), a strict cordon-sanitaire is now in effect. This has not, however, led to a significant decrease in the electoral support of the FN. The reason for the FN's persistence in the face of a repressive political environment, I hypothesize, is the fact that the party had created a

loyal base of voters and a strong organization-- indeed an entire subculture--during the 1980s. Studies consistently demonstrate that "once an FN voter, always an FN voter." Like communist parties in France and Italy from the late 1940s to the 1970s, the FN can sustain itself in an inhospitable political environment.

The French case demonstrates the importance of sequencing: the cordon is only effective if it is enacted before the party has made a significant electoral breakthrough. The only other case with a strong nationalist organization which shifted from a permissive to repressive political environment is Flanders, and the trajectory of the Vlaams Block (renamed Vlaams Belang) has been similar to that of the National Front. Flanders possessed a relatively strong nationalist network, particularly in the city of Antwerp where thousands of wartime collaborators who had fled the countryside for the protective anonymity of the city had founded numerous organizations devoted to right-wing political causes and to Flemish nationalism. When language issues threatened to divide Belgium in the 1970s, there thus already existed a large, organized, and regionally concentrated nationalist subculture to provide the foundation for the Vlaams Block. During the formation of the VB in the 1980s, one expert notes that "the political parties displayed all the stability of a weathervane with respect to the VB" during this period (Swyngedouw 1998, 72)." An initial agreement by all parties represented in parliament to forego any cooperation with the VB was signed in May 1989, but abrogated one month later by three parties (Swyngedouw 1998). Although a strict cordon sanitaire has prevailed since 1991, this initial period of relative permissiveness gave the VB the opportunity that it needed.

## Denmark

Denmark, like the rest of Scandinavia, lacked a far right subculture both before and after the Second World War. How, then, was Denmark able to produce a successful radical right party in the form of the Danish People's Party (DF)? The answer is that this new party was forged from two nationalist organizations, one a political party and the other a citizens' movement, that provided the new party's core cadre.

The Danish Progress Party (FP) was formed as an anti-tax party by the renegade tax lawyer Mogens Glistrup in 1972. Drawing on popular discontent with recent tax hikes, the party gained 15.9% of the vote in the "earthquake" election of 1973. The PP also benefited from the European Community referendum of 1972. Although Denmark, in contrast to Norway, voted for EC membership, a flurry of grassroots organizing against membership had mobilized voters and turned Danish nationalism into a salient political issue (Anderson and Bjorklund 2000, 129). The FP was one of only several parties to position itself against EC membership, along with the small Danish Communist Party and the newly formed Center Democrats, and cashed in as a result (Kitschelt 1995, 131).

Until the number of asylum seekers increased dramatically in the mid 1980s, the PP made little mention of immigration. Even in the late 1980s, immigration tended to be a "flash" issue that waxed and waned with media attention (Anderson and Bjorklund, 210). It was thus not until the early 1990s that immigration became a permanent, salient, issue for the Danish electorate. It was also not until the same period that the Progress Party, and the Danish People's Party, made it their defining one. Thus, since the PP lacked the anti-immigrant appeals that are one of the central properties of radical right

parties, it is incorrect to classify the party as such. The first truly radical right party in Denmark is thus the Danish People's Party, and a new citizens movement from the 1980s played a central role in its genesis and success.

The Danish Association (*Den Danske Forening*) was a radical right intellectual movement that played a central role in shaping the public debate about immigration. The founder of the Danish Association, Soren Krarup, is now an influential parliamentarian for the DF, and there has been a large degree of cross-over from the intellectual interest group to the political party. Although no longer as politically salient as in 1980s and 1990s, the very success of the Danish Association in setting the political agenda and providing the human capital for the DF has led to its reduced influence in Danish politics. As one of the founders of the DA noted, "there is now no need for the Danish Association because we have the Danish People's Party."

The origins of the Danish Association lie in the reaction to a new law on Asylum that was passed by the Danish parliament in 1983 and that guaranteed the right of asylum seekers to have their cases heard. Although asylum applications were yet to reach the magnitude of the late 1980s, the Reverend Soren Krarup from the province of Jutland warned that the new law would lead to "national suicide." With his cousin Jesper Langballe, also a priest from Jutland, Krarup founded the Committee against the Refugee Law in 1984. According to Langballe, Krarup paid 25,000 Krone to run an advertisement in the Jutland Post against the immigration policy. Sparked by the massive response to his initiative, Krarup collected signatures against the 1983 law, and was able to amass 45,000 within only two weeks. Recognizing the potential for forming a formal

association from the informal network he had helped create, Krarup founded the Danish Association from the corpus of the Committee against the Refugee Law in 1987.<sup>6</sup>

Membership figures for the DA are a matter of dispute. Langballe claims that the group had perhaps 10,000 to 20,000 members at its height. An expert observer of the DA puts the number at 3,000 (Karpantschhof 2002). Whatever the actual figure, the movement's political salience was far greater than its size would suggest. From the beginning, the DA embarked on a massive campaign of letter writing to the print media. Soren Krarup alone wrote over 200 articles in *Ekstrabladet*, the tabloid paper with the highest circulation rate in Denmark (Karpantschhof 2002). Many other members of the DA have sent scores of letters to the editors of local and national newspapers. In addition to this coordinated campaign, the DA also produces its own magazine *The Dane* and distributes thousands of flyers, posters, and bumper-stickers. In sum, it is hard to disagree with the 1997 assessment of Ole Hasselbach, the chairman of the DA at the time, that the association "had achieved its goal as regards bringing the topic of immigration into the public and political debate as a crucial problem to Danish society (Karpantschhof 2002)." The majority of other politicians and specialists that I interviewed in Denmark came to this conclusion as well.

In addition to agenda-setting, the Danish Association also provided the Danish People's Party with capable politicians, as well as a set of discursive frames. Krarup, Langballe, and Soren Esperson are only the most well-known of former members of the DA who have become parliamentarians for the DF. It is impossible to estimate the number of DF party members who were influenced by the nation-wide network of subgroups that the DA created, but suffice to say that the cross-over from the intellectual

movement, or association, to a formal political party was significant. In terms of discourse, it is remarkable the extent to which DF politicians have directly adopted the phrases of the DA. For example, when Kjaersgaard claimed that the Danish government was uninterested in the fate of several thousand homeless Danes and asked "who will build asylum-cities for them," she was clearly borrowing this line from a DA flyer that read "there are 30,000 homeless Danes. When will there be asylum-cities built for them" (Karpantschhof 2002). As Rydgren demonstrates (2004), the discourse of the DA has been adopted, often word-for-word, by members of the DF.

The DF was founded by Pia Kjaersgaard and three other members of parliament from the Progress Party in 1995. The inner-party squabbles between fundamentalists and pragmatists had contributed to a steady erosion of electoral support, and a battle over the party leadership in the summer of 1995 essentially split the party in half. Kjaergaard was able to take nearly one third of Progress party members with her (Anderson and Bjorklund 200, 197). Within several years, the DF had replaced the PP as Denmark's major far right party. The DF belong squarely within the radical right party family (Rydgren 2004). It pursues the ethno-nationalism of the Danish Association, and its anti-immigrant policies are the functional equivalent of those of radical right parties in other states. At the same time, the party has jettisoned any remnants of neo-liberalism and has supported increased public expenditure. The party identifies immigration as a threat to the welfare state, and has adopted a rhetoric of "welfare chauvinism." According to DF member Mogens Camre, "the influx of people from abroad will destroy the welfare state: Denmark has become an insurance company where all are compensated without ever having to pay the insurance premium (quoted in Rydgren 2004). Such sentiments are

directed at the core constituency of the DF, which, like RR parties across Western Europe, is less-educated and working class (Givens 2005). As one observer notes, the social profile of the DF "is as close to the Social Democrats as it can come."<sup>7</sup>

When Kjaersgaard founded the Danish People's Party, she stated that the DF would promote the same policies as the Progress Party. Thus while the PP had already begun to shift with the increased emphasis on immigration in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Kjaersgaard was able to bring an existing organization along with her, before moving it in a nationalist direction. Her strategy was similar to that of Jörg Haider in Austria, who seized control of the liberally oriented FPÖ before transforming it from within into a proto-typical radical right party (Art 2006a).

The DF thus built on preexisting nationalist organizations. But it could never have prospered had it not been for a permissive political environment. As Rydgren (2004) notes, "the political environment has put practically no constraints on the Danish People's Party." As the expert survey (table 4) indicates, the cordon-sanitaire against the DF was very weak as of 1999. Since 2001, the cordon has effectively ceased to exist at all as minority governments have been openly reliant on the cooperation of the DF. As Pederson and Ringsmose (2005) note, "in a parliamentary system that rarely sees a majority government this is as close a party can come to incumbency without actually getting into the ministerial offices."

Although neither the Conservatives nor Liberals promised to cooperate with the Progress Party before the 1994 parliamentary elections, Kjaergaard had made the PP more palatable to both parties (Svasund 1998). Her strategy of making the DF an acceptable coalition partner began to bear fruit in the late 1990s as the party was working

together with other parties in municipal councils. After the 1997 municipal elections, the DF counted 8 vice-mayors, which indicated that the party was not at all marginalized at the municipal level (Karpantschhof 2002). Although the Danish Prime Minister, and leader of the Social Democrats, Poul Nyrup Rasmussen tried to marginalize and discredit the DF in 1999 by stating “you'll never be houstrained,” the Danish media and DF politicians immediately noted the high degree of cooperation between the DF and other parties at the local level.<sup>8</sup> Any national level cordon against the DF was demolished in 1999 when Liberal leader Anders Fogh Rasmussen announced in an article published in the DF's party journal (*Dansk Folkeblad*) that cooperation with the DF might be an option (Rydgren 2004). This willingness to enter a coalition with the DF was signaled several times before and during the 2001 national parliamentary elections (Givens 2005, 148). Since the 2001 elections, the party has been the government's permanent supporting party, and there is no longer any talk of a cordon-sanitaire against the DF.

How has the permissive political environment benefited the Danish radical right? First, it has meant that there has been little strategic voting, since a vote for the DF is hardly perceived as a wasted one. Givens (2005) finds little evidence of strategic voting in Denmark, although she argues that this is because the expectation of a minority government means that voters have little incentive to vote strategically: their preferred party may end up having some influence as the ruling party may be required to turn to it to pass legislation. However, the non-existence of a cordon-sanitaire could also be an important reason for the lack of strategic voting. It is likely that both of these mechanisms are at work in limiting the type of strategic voting that has hurt radical right parties elsewhere.

The openness of coalition markets at the local level also allowed the DF to gain media attention and become a party of government at the municipal level. Furthermore, as noted earlier, the justification for a national level cordon was called into question by members of the DF, and of the media, who noted the absence of the cordon at the local level. Eyeing these developments, voters correctly perceived that the erosion of the national cordon was only a matter of time.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the non-existence of a cordon-sanitaire has allowed ambitious and highly capable political entrepreneurs to join the DF. The case of Morton Messerschmidt is illustrative. Messerschmidt answered an advertisement in a local newspaper in 1997 to become a member of the DF. He built up the party's youth organization in his home constituency of Northern Zealand before running an parliamentary campaign in 2001. At the age of 24, Messerschmidt, then a law student, was elected to parliament in the 2005 elections. Such a rapid rise would hardly have been possible in another political party.<sup>9</sup>

Messerschmidt is only the youngest member of what is a strong cohort of young professionals. If the DF voters are overwhelmingly less-educated, this is not the same for the party activists. In the 2005 parliamentary elections, the DF fielded a total of 86 candidates. Of these, 39 either had a university degree or were studying to get one.<sup>10</sup> Thus forty five percent of the sample were educated.. And of the 16 candidates born after 1970, 12 of them were either students or had a higher degree, a strong indication that the average level of education for DF party activists will only increase. The DF has also built a national youth organization, from which younger candidates are drawn, and which will provide a trained cadre in the future.<sup>11</sup>

The development of the radical right in Norway is similar in many respects to the Danish case. Like Denmark, Norway lacked strong nationalist organizations in the immediate postwar period, but anti-tax protest and an (unsuccessful) referendum on EU membership in 1972 produced the Norwegian Progress Party. Like its Danish counterpart, the Norwegian Progress party only began to adopt an anti-immigrant program in the mid to late 1980s. Yet unlike in Denmark, the party did not split but merely moved into the radical right party family. The political environment became relatively permissive as the Progress Party entered parliaments on the local level, and by 2003 claimed 13 mayors. With the conservative party, the leading business organization (NHO), and even the unions on Norway calling for cooperation with the Progress Party, a cordon-sanitaire is clearly no longer in operation.

## **Sweden**

Sweden is similar to Denmark in many respects: they possess similar political traditions, party systems, and universalistic welfare states. As Rydgren notes (2002), socioeconomic factors cannot account for the failure of the radical right in Sweden, for it experienced high levels of immigration (see table one), as well as severe unemployment in the 1990s. The keys to understanding why the Swedish radical right has taken the form of a flash party (New Democracy) or an electorally irrelevant one (Sweden Democrats) lies in the combination of a lack of a pre-existing nationalist network and a repressive political environment.

In contrast to Denmark and Norway, there were no referenda on EC membership in Sweden in the 1970s that led to an increased salience of nationally based political

appeals. When a radical right party entered the political arena in 1991, it came in the form of New Democracy. The party was the creation of two minor celebrities, the Count and writer Ian Wachmeister and the amusement park owner Bernd Karlsson, and promised to inject a bit of whimsy into the staid world of Swedish politics. Their proposal to cut taxes on alcohol was just one part of their 1991 party manifesto that promised "more fun and more money in your pocket (Ny demokrati 1991)." But New Democracy also possessed the core elements of radical right parties, if perhaps in diluted form.

In 1991, New Democracy captured 6.7% of the vote and 25 seats in parliament. Just three years later, however, the party won only 1.2% and no seats. What explains this rapid dissolution? The answers can be found in the party's internal organization, or more precisely the lack thereof. The party never developed a national organization, and the two party leaders opposed efforts to do so (Westlind 1996: 158-9). The candidates were picked by Karlsson and Wachmeister, who preferred to run they would a business, requiring independent local parties to sign a contract before they could use the New Democracy label (Widfelt 1997: 38). The fact that candidates were selected with little consideration for their loyalty to the emerging party led to major defections when the party won parliamentary seats (Rydgren 2006). These defections, coupled with a leadership struggle that soon erupted between Wachmeister and Karlsson, demonstrated to Swedish voters, as well as to other political parties, that New Democracy was a disintegrating party and an unreliable partner. As Rydgren notes, these problems could be insoluble in the absence of "local organizations that could mobilize activists to continue working for the party until the leadership crisis was resolved" (Rydgren 2006: Svasand and Woland 2001:14).

New Democracy thus became a one-hit wonder or “flash party,” a political party that manages a single electoral breakthrough but collapses thereafter. As Karlsson later admitted, the failure to create a national organization was the primary reason for the party's collapse (Karlsson 1994). Certainly, the decision to run the party as a business venture was a tactical mistake, but it is unclear whether the leaders of New Democracy could have done any better given the lack of resources from which to build. Sweden lacked both an vocal citizen's movement like Denmark and pre-existing political populist parties like both Denmark and Sweden. The only nationalist organizations from which to draw candidates and activists were neo-Nazi, and these were certainly not the people that New Democracy sought to attract.

Since the collapse of New Democracy, the Sweden Democrats have been the most important radical right political party in Sweden. They have never come close to New Democracy's 1991 electoral coup, however, and their best result was a mere 1.4 percent in the 2001 elections. The Sweden Democrats are best classified as an extreme right party, as distinct from a radical right party, before the mid 1990s. They recruited overwhelmingly from Sweden's neo-Nazi milieu, and it was only in 1996 that the party introduced a uniform ban (meaning that Nazi regalia was no longer allowed at party functions). Since then, the party has renounced Nazism and has toned down its inflammatory rhetoric. Following Rydgren, by the late 1990s the “Sweden Democrats fulfilled all the characteristics of a full-fledged RRP party, with its reliance on ethno-nationalism, xenophobia, and anti-political establishment populism (Rydgren 2006).”

The Sweden Democrats have been plagued by many of the same problems that ultimately led to the demise of New Democracy. First, the party has been unable to find

enough candidates to stand for seats in municipal or national elections. In the 2001 municipal elections, for example, the party only contested 80 out of 289 municipal races. The party certainly does not have luxury of vetting potential candidates but, in the words of one observer, "needs to take what they can get and can't afford to be picky."<sup>12</sup>

The Sweden Democrats have apparently had great difficulty in achieving mundane organizational tasks. For example, the party nearly missed the deadline to register for the 2002 election, and only a last gasp effort at filling out the requisite forms for all the regional lists in the Stockholm post office allowed the party to compete. Although the party has all the trappings of a legitimate party organization, a group of about 20 people fill all of the various positions, with one person having perhaps three or four "official" titles. "The party is concerned with filling all of these bureaucratic positions," one observer notes, "even if they lack the people with the skills to fill them."<sup>13</sup> It is little wonder that the organization is in perpetual chaos.

The political response to New Democracy and the Sweden Democrats have been dramatically different. The established political parties simply ignored New Democracy in the run-up to the 1991 parliamentary election. They did not rule out cooperation with it, and in fact the coalition government that came to power in 1991 often found itself reliant on the votes of New Democracy parliamentarians. Since a cordon-sanitaire was not in place, Swedish voters did not see a vote for the party as "wasted." This was a necessary condition for their electoral breakthrough.

If New Democracy faced a permissive political environment, the Sweden Democrats have been confronted with a highly repressive one. In 2002, the ruling Social Democrats and opposition Liberals issued a joint press release-- formalizing a policy that

had been in place for years-- pledging to work across party lines to prevent anti-immigrant parties (meaning the Sweden Democrats) from wielding any power in local councils. Coalitions and any forms of cooperation have been ruled. As one SD complains, "no matter what we propose, the proposals are voted down, and no other parties will utter a word." Most of these proposals, as are most proposals in municipal politics, are not deeply ideological but concern such things as the location of traffic lights. But since the Swedish Democrats are considered pariahs, it has been a standing policy to vote down any proposal that comes from them. It goes without saying that no SD politicians have been part of municipal committees, and that all parties have completely ruled out any sort of cooperation with the Sweden Democrat. The cordon against the Swedish radical right is as tight as in any Western European state.

What have been the effects of this repressive environment? The Sweden Democrats had little in the way of human capital on which to build in the first place, and the repressive political environment made recruitment even more difficult. According to one expert, "the party is so stigmatized that no one would join." Without any major successes to build upon, the party has also had trouble with retention, as its activists have become frustrated by their isolation and have founded their own political movements. Given the lack of a nationalist (as opposed to neo-Nazi) network on which to build and a highly repressive political environment, one observer notes that "We are always surprised that they [the Sweden Democrats] have survived another year."

There are many parallels between the Dutch and Swedish cases. Both countries possessed very little in the way of nationalist organizations, yet both were able to produce "flash" radical right parties. Like in Sweden in 1991, a relatively permissive political

environment prevailed before the 2002 Dutch elections, as mainstream parties had not staked out positions toward the newly formed List Pim Fortuyn. The party captured 17% of the vote in the 2002 parliamentary elections, but, like New Democracy, the lack of a party organization contributed mightily to its rapid decline thereafter. The only truly radical right parties in the Netherlands, the fissiparous Center Parties, faced a very strict cordon in the early 1980s, have been handicapped by the lack of a nationalist organizing tradition, and are now defunct (Mudde and Hosteyn 2000).

Before concluding, let briefly mention the Belgium-Flanders case, the only case I have not treated in this article or elsewhere (self reference). In contrast to the Flemish far right, "Francophone extremists...have no distinctive nationalist tradition to appeal to and no notion of national betrayal to play on (Coffe 2005)." Any vestiges of extreme right movements were purged after the war. As a result, the extreme Right in Wallonia has consisted of small splinter groups (Dumont) and when the Belgian National Front was formed in 1983 following the success of their French namesake, the party had little in the way of organizational resources on which to draw (Swyngedouw 1998). The party has also been shunned by Wallonian political parties at all levels since 1983 and is thus "little more than an ad hoc collection of individuals of quite divergent natures (Swyngedouw 1998)."

### **Reacting to the Radical Right**

I have argued that pre-existing organizational resources are a necessary requirement for the long term success of radical right parties. Organizational factors have

been largely ignored in the literature on the radical right (but see Rydgren 2006; Carter 2005), and this article represents an effort to address this lacunae. Yet organization is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for success, since the political environment must be permissive in order for a radical right party to attract voters who might otherwise vote strategically, to capture power on the local level, and to entice political entrepreneurs to join the party. But what explains the diverse reactions of mainstream parties to far right challengers across Western Europe? To answer this question, we must begin by noting that radical parties are not parties like any others, particularly in the context of West European societies that are still haunted by, and indeed increasingly captivated by, the memory of the Second World War. They are analyzed not only in political, but also-- at least in many contexts-- in moral terms. They can be treated as "taboo," or they can be seen as normal and legitimate. With the exception of post-communist parties, no other family of political parties faces a similar situation.

This does not mean that party strategies toward the radical right are shaped primarily by normative concerns. Parties clearly adopt their strategies in line with their own vote-maximizing or office seeking goals. But these calculations, including the decision to construct or not to construct a cordon, are made within in a specific political-cultural context. In places where norms against the far right are well entrenched, cooperating with the far right may be perceived as a costly political strategy because of the expectation of a negative public reaction that competitor parties could then exploit. Parties operating in an environment with less developed norms against right-wing populism have more room for maneuver.

Ideas, in this case ideas about the legitimacy of radical right parties, thus play a

fundamental role in this story of party development. While scholars studying other substantive problems have analyzed how ideas, as opposed to material interests, institutions or structures, have been the crucial independent variable (Berman 1998; Blyth 2002; Parsons 2003; Schmidt 2002), this type of analysis has not been pursued in the study of the radical right. Most students of the far right would, I suspect, agree with the claim that what I have called the “culture of contrition” in (West) Germany has prevented far right parties from consolidating themselves in the party system (self-reference). But since Germany is so often viewed as a special case, the notion that cultural (or ideational) variables could account for the fate of right-wing populism in different national contexts has gained little traction in the literature (an exception is Eatwell, 2003). Yet it is my contention that ideas about the legitimacy of the far right have varied markedly across time and space. In the postwar period, norms against the far right have been strongest in those cases where cordons have been strictest. Uncovering how such norms were created, and how they influence politics, promises to be an exciting new line of research on the European radical right.

**Table 1: Immigrant Population in Western Europe**

<b>Country</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Austria(8.3)</b>	5.9	6.8	7.9	8.6	8.9	8.5	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.7	8.8	8.8	8.8
<b>Belgium(8.8)</b>	9.1	9.2	9.0	9.1	9.1	9.0	9.0	8.9	8.7	8.8	8.4	8.2	8.2
<b>Denmark(4.3)</b>	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.8	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.8	5.0	4.9
<b>Finland(1.4)</b>	0.5	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.0
<b>France(6.0)</b>		6.3									5.6		
<b>Germany(8.6)</b>	8.4	7.3	8.0	8.5	8.6	8.8	8.9	9.0	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9
<b>Greece(7.0)</b>												7.0	
<b>Italy(2.0)</b>	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.7	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.6
<b>Ireland(2.9)</b>	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.3	4.0	4.8
<b>Netherlands(4.6)</b>	4.6	4.8	5.0	5.1	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.3
<b>Norway(3.8)</b>	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.1
<b>Portugal(1.9)</b>	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.1	3.4	4.0
<b>Spain(1.6)</b>	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.7	3.1
<b>Sweden(5.6)</b>	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.8	6.1	5.2	6.0	6.0	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.3
<b>Switzerland(18.6)</b>	16.3	17.1	17.6	18.1	18.6	18.9	18.9	19.0	19.0	19.2	19.3	19.7	19.9
<b>UK(3.7)</b>	3.2	3.1	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.4	4.5

Source: OECD Factbook 2005

The figure in parentheses after the country is the average for the years 1990-2002. It should be noted that these figures define immigrants as the percentage of foreign nationals, and not the percentage of foreign born. Several OECD countries use both measures. When immigrants are defined as foreign-born, the rates are nearly double over each year for Sweden and the Netherlands, slightly higher (several tenths of a percentage point per year) for Finland, and essentially unchanged for Denmark.

These figures should be read as one approximation of the immigrant population, and an imperfect one at that. The lack of data for most years for France and Greece makes it difficult to interpret these cases, and the massive amount of illegal immigration to Italy (and increasingly into Spain) means that the true level of immigration is not captured by these figures.

**Table 2: Nationalist Organizations and Political Environment****Nationalist Organizations and Networks**

	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Weak</b>
<b>Political Environment</b>	<b>Flanders</b> (1991-) <b>France</b> (1988-) Italy (1948-1993) Germany	Netherlands Sweden Wallonia
<b>Repressive</b>		
<b>Permissive</b>	<b>Austria</b> <b>Denmark</b> Flanders (1979-1991) France (1983-1988) <b>Italy</b> (1993-) <b>Norway</b>	Netherlands (2002)*  Sweden (1991)

Countries with “successful” radical right parties (over 10% in two consecutive national elections) are in boldface.

\*See note on the LPF in table 3.

**Table 3: The Far Right in Western Europe: Successes and Failures**

Country/Region	Party	Election Results*	Category
Austria	FPÖ	9.7, 17.0, 22.5, 26.9, 10.2	Success
Denmark	DF	-, -, 7.4, 12.0, 13.2	Success
Flanders	VB	1.9, 6.6, 7.8, 9.9, 11.6	Success**
France	FN	9.9, 9.8, 12.4, 14.9, 11.3	Success
Germany	REPS	2.1, 1.9, 1.8, -, 0.6	Failure
Italy	MSI/AN	5.9, 5.4, 13.5, 15.7, 12.0	Success
	Lega Norda	-, -, 8.7, 8.4, 3.9	Failure
Netherlands	Center Parties	0.9, 2.4, -, -, -	Failure
	LPF****	-, -, -, 17.0, 5.7	Failure
Norway	FrP	13.0, 6.3, 15.3, 14.6, 22.1	Success
Sweden	ND	-, 6.7, 1.2, -, -	Failure
	SD	-, -, -, 0.2, 1.4	Failure
Wallonia	FN	0.1, 1.1, 2.3, 1.5, 2.0	Failure

\* Percent of the vote in the last five national elections. A dash (-) indicates that the party did not participate in the elections. The data are from electionworld.com.

\*\* I round the VB's second to last vote total upwards to 10.0, thereby meeting my criterion for success. Given that the VB's voteshare in Flanders is much higher than the national figure, the VB certainly qualifies as a successful party. It is important to note that if the same criterion (regional totals versus national totals) were applied to the Wallonian National Front, the party would still not qualify as a success.

\*\*\* The MSI contested the first two elections listed before dissolving itself and becoming the AN in 1994.

\*\*\*\* Following Mudde (personal communication), I would not classify the LPF as radical right, but space constraints do not permit me to defend this judgment. However, since many scholars have classified the LPF as radical right, I include the LFP's results.

**Table 4: Expert Surveys of the “Cordon-Sanitaire”**

<u>Country (party facing Cordon)</u>	<u>Strictness of Cordon</u>
Austria (FPÖ)	4.3
Denmark (DF)	4.3
Flanders (VB)	8.6
France (FN)	7.5
Germany (REPS)	9.4
Italy (MSI/AN)	1.9
Netherlands (CD)	9.4
Norway* (FrP)	4.3
Sweden* (SD)	9.4
Wallonia (FN)	9.4

\*The values from these cases are not from the expert survey but are my own codings based on secondary sources. Since the cordon against the Sweden Democrats is as tight as any in Western Europe, I give it a score of 9.4. Since the strictness of the cordon against the Norwegian Progress Party has mimicked that in Denmark, I have coded it as 4.3.

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<sup>1</sup> Since Belgium lacks a national party system and political parties contest elections solely in Flanders or Wallonia, I divide the country into two cases.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Presse* (Vienna), 15 September 1986.

<sup>3</sup> *La Repubblica*, 24 November 1993.

<sup>4</sup> *Le Monde* 2 May 1988.

<sup>5</sup> Marcus, *National Front*, 143.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Jesper Langballe and Soren Krarup, Members of Parliament (DF), Copenhagen, May 18 2005. The case studies of Denmark and Sweden draw on a dozen interviews with politicians and journalists in each country conducted by the author in May-June 2005.

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Jorgen Elklitt, Professor of Political Science, University of Aarhus, 23 May 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Morton Messerschmidt, Member of Parliament (DF), Copenhagen, 19 May 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Messerschmidt.

<sup>10</sup> The educational backgrounds (self-reported) of the candidates for the 2005 parliamentary elections can be found at <http://www.danskfolkeparti.dk/sw/frontend/show.asp?parent=1834>.

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Karina Pedersen, University of Copenhagen, 24 May 2005.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Richard Slatt, Editor-in-Chief of *Expo*, Stockholm, 31 May 2005.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Slatt.

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