

**‘A New Electoral Winning Formula?’ Beyond the
Populist Radical Right: Center Right Party
Electoral Success, ‘Strategic Emphasis’ and
Incumbency Effects on Immigration in the 21st
Century**

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary center right parties in Europe are often known for their ideological focus on ‘bread and butter’ issues such as the free market economy and law and order, alongside their promotion of traditional institutions and values in society. However, the strategies they use to emphasize the immigration issue are less discussed in academic literature, as are the issue’s electoral implications for this party family in different economic contexts across the 21st century. The central research question of this dissertation investigates the electoral success of center right parties and how they are able to prosper electorally from emphasizing immigration in different economic contexts, often at the expense of populist radical right parties. The dissertation focuses on center right parties rather than the center left, as the center right is spatially and ideologically closer to the populist radical right on a number of issues.

This dissertation tests an original aggregate level theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ that features a dynamic game of party competition. The theory argues that immigration is not an issue ‘owned’ solely by populist radical right parties, but one that can also help today’s center right parties to prosper electorally. This theory proposes a discussion of the relative electoral success of center right parties in two different economic contexts, showing how in certain situation they can perform better electorally than the radical right when they emphasize immigration, as opposed to adopting specific positional stances on immigration. The central story in this dissertation is not about spatial positions in the form of anti-immigrant sentiment driving electoral success for center right parties. Rather, it is about issue salience and the emphasis that center right parties place on immigration in their party strategies that determines their electoral fortunes in the 21st century.

This theory is then tested in three separate empirical chapters (Chapters 5, 6 and 7), which draws on the ParlGov dataset on European national parliamentary elections that has

been merged with the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey on party positions. The Chapel Hill Expert Survey data is also utilized. Chapter 7 comprises a case study analysis of four research cases derived from the results of the large N comparative analysis in Chapter 5.

Chapters 5 and 6 set out an original contribution to knowledge in two different economic contexts, demonstrating through statistical models the electoral success of the center right. The findings show that when they emphasize the immigration issue, center right parties tended to perform better than populist radical right parties in different contexts, in times of economic crisis (2008–13) and particularly in times of economic stability (1999–2007). Drawing on a research design consisting of four case studies (Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland and France), Chapter 7 investigates qualitatively how center right parties' emphasis on immigration affects their electoral success in economic bad times and how in some cases, this strategy allows them to perform better electorally than the populist radical right. However, the case studies show that there are restrictions to center right party electoral success. For example, when center right parties are (i) incumbents and (ii) do not emphasize immigration; this allows the populist radical right to achieve electoral success at their expense. 'Challenger' center right parties (specifically non-incumbents and those in opposition) tended to perform better electorally and further underlined incumbency–punishment patterns in the context of greater voter volatility.

The dissertation argues that there may be a 'new electoral winning formula' in the 21st century, whereby specific center right parties profit electorally through strategically emphasizing the immigration issue, rather than on traditional issues such as law and order alongside the free market that the center right tend to be more historically associated with. These findings have implications for contemporary party politics, in showing the potential for center right parties to perform electorally well on the immigration issue and has important implications for the state of contemporary liberal democracy across Europe.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The 2008–13 Economic Crisis, its Effects on the Populist Radical Right in Europe and a Resurgent Center Right?

In order to understand the electoral success of the center right in the 21st century around the issue of immigration, the story of this dissertation starts out with the 2008–2013 economic crisis that hit a number of European countries. This chapter sets the scene for the dissertation and begins by exploring the electoral effects of the 2008–13 economic crisis in Europe, in seeking to further our understanding of the empirical relationship between the recent economic crisis (2008–13) and its impact on support for the populist radical right.¹ It has become received wisdom among some academics and political commentators that economic downturns tend to lead to a ‘political earthquake’ that result in substantial increases in electoral support for radical right parties across Europe (see Ellinas, 2013; Mudde, 2013a). This theory has become known as the ‘economics breeds extremism theory’ and can be traced back to the inter-war period: Goodwin (2014) shows the shortcomings of ‘the Weimar myth’ that asserts that the Great Depression led to Hitler and Mussolini’s rise to power.

This chapter finds that the recent economic crisis did not lead to a substantial increase in electoral support for the radical right across Europe. Whilst the radical right advanced electorally in recent years in a number of countries, most notably in Finland, Austria, Hungary, Greece, the Netherlands and France, just as many contradictory cases exist. Countries such as Portugal, Ireland and Spain which were worst hit by the economic crisis and subsequent Eurozone bailout did not see any substantial rise in support for the radical right at the ballot box. Drawing on national parliamentary election data, this chapter makes an original contribution in finding that following the recent economic crisis, center right parties performed better electorally than populist radical right and center left parties.

¹ The labels ‘populist radical right’, ‘radical right’ and ‘far right’ will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. Chapter 2 will examine party classifications in more detail and outline why the label ‘populist radical right party’ is chosen as the main classification for this party family in the dissertation.

The fact that economic factors do not appear to drive electoral support for the populist radical right motivates the primary focus of this dissertation. This chapter demonstrates that when emphasizing immigration in their party strategy, center right parties performed better electorally than populist radical right parties. The main argument put forward in this chapter is that radical right parties did not perform as well as expected in the recent economic crisis is because center right parties have strategically sought to capitalize on immigration, thus directly competing with the populist radical right on this issue dimension.

From these preliminary empirical results, the central research question of this dissertation is generated: it seeks to further our understanding of competition on the immigration issue between populist radical right and center right parties, primarily in how center right parties are able to exploit this issue and achieve electoral success. The main theoretical story in this dissertation argues that the electoral success of center right parties depends on how far they can emphasize the immigration issue. How far they succeed in doing this depends largely on the emphasis placed on immigration, alongside factors such as incumbency and different economic contexts (times of economic crisis and economic stability).

1.1 The Comparative Picture: The Rise of the Populist Radical Right?

To paraphrase Karl Marx, there is a specter haunting Europe. In this dissertation, this specter takes the form of insurgent populist radical right parties, with this party family gaining prominence in recent years across Europe and seeking to shake up the political establishment. The march of the radical right is one of the enduring political phenomena of our times, one that has been documented extensively by political scientists (see Hainsworth, 2000; Mudde, 2007; Eatwell, 2008; Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou, 2014). There are numerous examples of radical right parties that have gained electoral support since 2000, particularly in Western Europe, in countries such as Austria, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Greece,

Italy, and Switzerland (see Mudde, 2013a).

Within this general picture of increased support for radical right parties, there have also been wide fluctuations. Drawing on empirical analysis from 1980 to 2011, Cas Mudde (2007: p. 3) downplays the rise of the radical right, arguing that ‘[d]espite some striking high and recent results, the alleged [radical right] “wave” is clearly not lapping (equally) at the shores of all West European countries. In fact, [radical right parties] are represented in the national parliaments of just half of the seventeen West European countries.’ To what extent has there been a comparative electoral rise in support for contemporary radical right parties across Western Europe? Drawing on data for (i) average electoral results from national parliamentary elections and (ii) radical right party involvement in coalition governments, across three decades (1980–89, 1990–99, 2000–9), Mudde (2013a) notes that there has been a steady increase in electoral support for the contemporary far right in Western Europe across the three decades.

Firstly, the data shows that there has been an increase in electoral support for populist radical right parties from 1990–99 (+3%) and a more gradual increase (+1%) from 2000–09. Secondly, the number of far right parties that have been involved in coalition governments (most notably in Austria, Denmark, and the Netherlands) has increased, up from one in the period 1990–99 to seven in 2000–9 (Mudde, 2013a).

A number of existing accounts in the literature seek to explain the electoral rise of the contemporary radical right. Various explanations have been put forward, ranging from the importance of the immigration issue, the possibility of a protest vote indicating wider dissatisfaction with mainstream parties, to declining macroeconomic conditions that may amplify and increase electoral support for radical right parties (see Arzheimer, 2009; Mudde, 2014a, 2016; Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2015).² This chapter begins by considering the

² This literature is discussed more comprehensively in Chapter 3.

role of economic factors.

1.2 Economic Factors

In autumn 2008, national economies were hit hard by the global financial and economic crisis that began in the United States after the collapse of Lehman Brothers. This first phase was characterized by the bursting of a housing bubble and the subprime mortgage disaster, developing into an economic crisis by September 2008. The economic slowdown began in Europe in the second quarter of 2008 and Europe experienced the sharpest contraction in growth in the first quarter of 2009 (Kickert, 2012: p. 300). The second phase of the economic crisis began in late 2009 and ended in early 2013. By spring 2010, Europe had entered full-blown crisis, with Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain seeing levels of public debt skyrocket and a dramatic increase in unemployment levels, alongside a severe contraction in GDP. The third phase of the economic crisis began in early 2013, with a continuation of the economic and political consequences of the first two phases (see Kriesi and Pappas, 2015). It is likely that the post-2008 economic crisis has increased voters' anxieties over immigration and threats to national identity, and fueled economic competition over scarce resources (Goodwin, 2014). In some views, these declining economic conditions are also likely to have created a fertile political climate for radical right parties to emphasize their core ideological appeals of nativism and protecting the dominant 'in' group, espousing authoritarian policies on law and order and employing populist rhetoric in attacking mainstream political parties and politicians (see Mudde, 2007).

The link between economics and radical right-wing support has received considerable attention in recent times (see Mudde, 2016; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas, 2015; Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou, 2014; Fukuyama, 2012; *The Economist*, 2012). The empirical connection between economic downturns and far right support has also attracted attention in the fields of history and macroeconomics (see Payne 1996; Giuliano and Spilimbergo, 2009; Mian et al.

2010). As Goodwin (2014: p. 16) notes: '[f]ollowers of radical and extreme right parties often believe that a crisis will bring them to power. As the old economic and political order breaks down they will be propelled into office by insecure and anxious voters, who are looking for parties that project discipline, strength and a nationalist ethos.'

Mudde (2014a; 2016) has coined the term 'economics breeds extremism' which is a theory that links together declining economic conditions with electoral increases in support for radical right parties. The 'economics breeds extremism theory' dates back to the inter-war period in the 1920s and 1930s when it was used by some political commentators to explain the electoral rise of fascism in Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy. Eminent historians such as A. J. P. Taylor (1961: p. 103) outlined the importance of the inter-war economic crisis, in asserting that '[o]nly the Great Depression put the wind into Hitler's sails.'

However, as Mudde notes (2014a; 2014b) this theory is highly questionable in terms of its conceptual claims and its explanatory power. Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou (2014) also note that it is not even clear whether there has been a systematic electoral increase in support for populist radical right parties in the recent 2008–13 economic crisis. As Goodwin (2014: p. 20) notes, '[m]uch of this marked a continuation of older thinking about the rise of fascism in interwar Germany and Italy.' Furthermore, scholars such as Eatwell (2008) argue that the 'economics breeds extremism' theory shows a clear misunderstanding of European history. For instance, Italy was not faced with a severe economic depression or economic shock at the time Mussolini assumed power as Prime Minister in 1922 (see Goodwin, 2014). Recent research has also called into question the strength of the economics argument that led to the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany, with empirical evidence suggesting a weak correlation between declining economic conditions and electoral support for this party (King et al., 2008).

This section argues that much of the ‘economics breeds extremism’ theory has become largely conflated with the ethnic competition theory that is often applied by political scientists to understand the electoral rise of the radical right in contemporary Europe. The ethnic competition theory argues that competition over scarce economic resources between different social groups is likely to increase hostile inter-group attitudes (see Tajfel, 1971; Pedahzur et al., 2004: p. 6). Ethnic in-groups may perceive ethnic out-groups as a threat to economic resources (Blumer, 1958; Bobo, 1983). According to this theory, radical right parties present a propagandist ideology, using fear as a vehicle through scapegoating out-groups such as immigrants, blaming them particularly during times of economic dislocation (see Lubbers and Scheepers, 2000; Arzheimer, 2009; Lucassen and Lubbers, 2011; Ford et al., 2012; Goodwin et al., 2011).

1.3 The post-2008 economic crisis

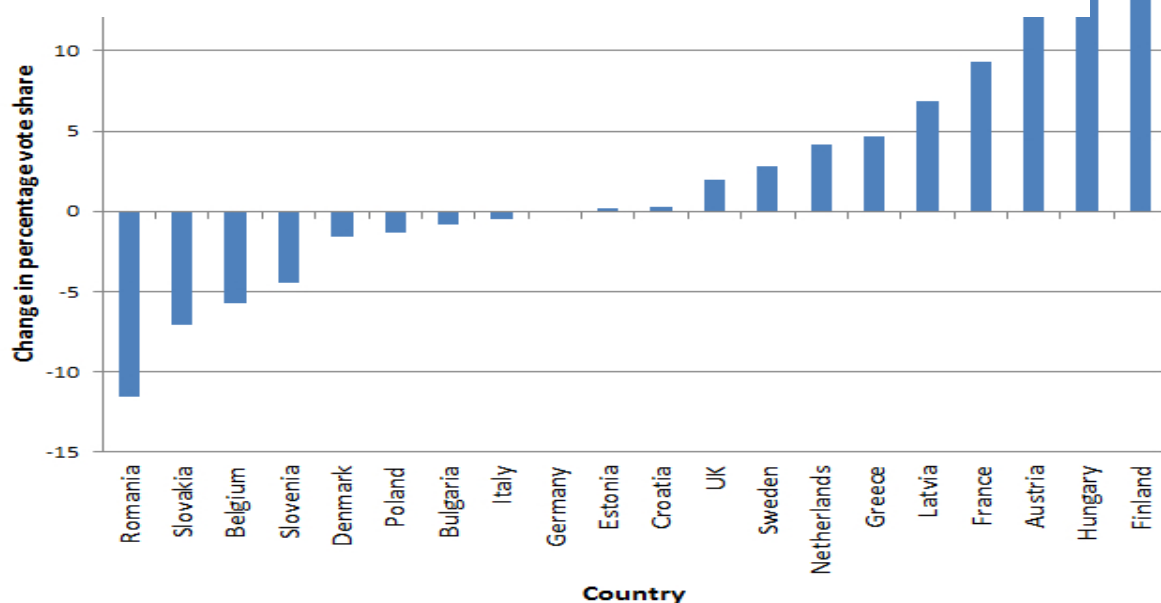
In order to empirically examine whether the radical right has benefited electorally from the post-2008 economic crisis, this section draws on national parliamentary election data. Figure 1.1 below depicts the variations in electoral support for populist radical right parties across Western and Central-Eastern Europe in national parliamentary elections, before (2005–8) and during (2009–13) the current economic crisis.

The national parliamentary election data in Figure 1.1 shows contrasting results for the electoral fortunes of radical right parties. The five countries with the highest percentage change in electoral support are Finland (+15%), Latvia (+7%), France (+9%), Austria (+13%) and Hungary (+15%) (see Mudde, 2013b). The election results for Finland and Greece appear to provide some form of evidence for the ‘economics breeds extremism theory’, with Greece in particular experiencing higher levels of unemployment, inflation rates and severe contraction of GDP in the economic crisis period. However, Figure 1.1 also shows that while eleven countries have seen an increase in radical right support, nine

countries have not. Support has declined substantially for the radical right in Belgium, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, and has also declined slightly in Denmark, Poland and Bulgaria.

If we look at the broader electoral picture for populist radical right party support across Europe in the economic crisis period, we can see clearly that the ‘economics breeds extremism theory’ is not borne out. Only ten of the twenty-eight EU member states (i.e. 36%) elected far right Members of Parliament (MEPs) in the 2014 European Parliament elections (Mudde, 2014c), demonstrating the widespread variation in electoral support for parties of the radical right. Furthermore, countries such as Ireland, Spain, and Portugal who were hit worst by the post-2008 economic crisis have not seen a rise in electoral support for populist radical right-wing parties.

Figure 1.1: Change in percentage vote share for Populist Radical Right Parties in Elections before and during the economic crisis

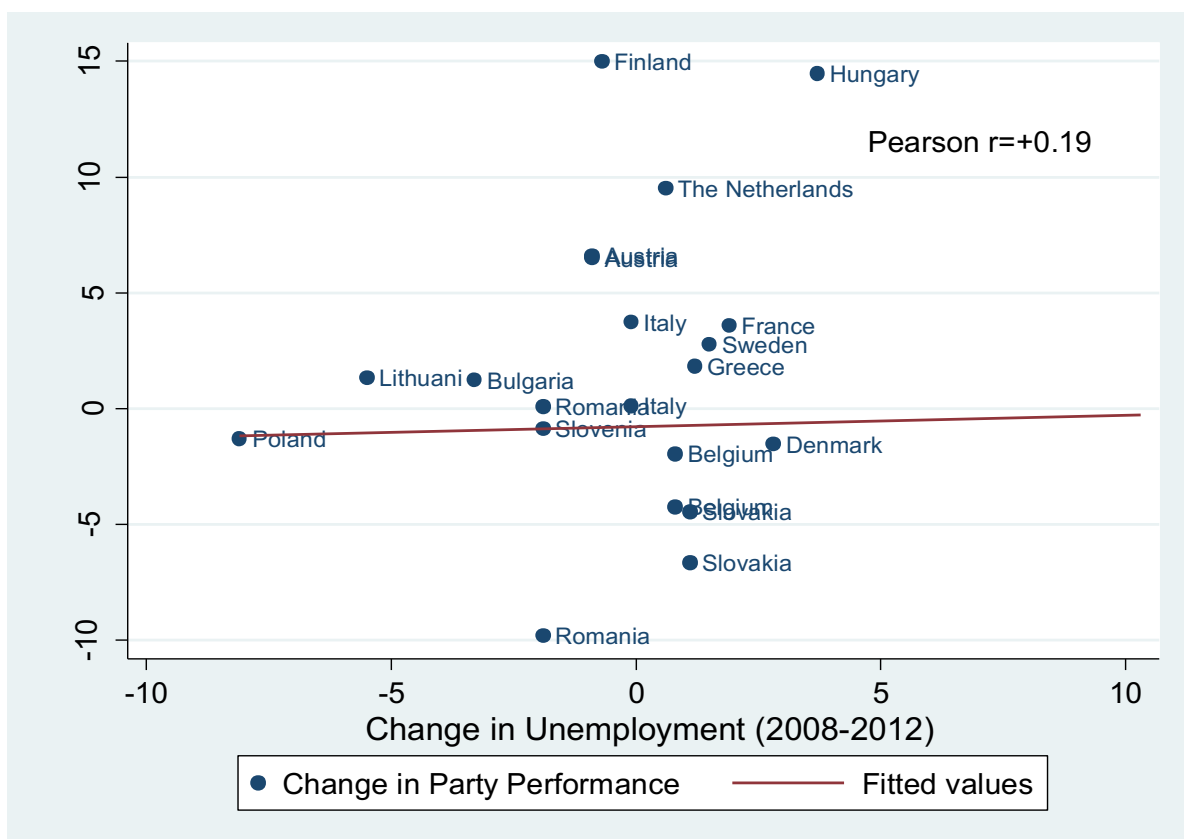


Source: Mudde (2013b)

Drawing on original national parliamentary election data from the last election before the economic crisis and the first election after the economic crisis, Figures 1.2 and 1.3 further show the variations in the empirical relationship between macroeconomic conditions and aggregate level vote share for radical right parties. The scatterplot in Figure

1.2 shows a positive, but fairly moderate correlation ($r=+0.19$) between the change in unemployment (2008–12) and the percentage change in vote share for far right parties (2005–12) in the context of the economic crisis. Substantively speaking, this means that the populist radical right performed marginally better electorally in countries where the unemployment rate increased. In addition, Figure 1.3 explores the link between populist radical right party support and rates of GDP growth. Surprisingly, higher levels of GDP growth coincided with an increased percentage vote share for radical right parties, yet this was extremely weak ($r=+0.04$). This is a counterintuitive finding in suggesting that some populist radical right parties performed better electorally when macroeconomic conditions were less severe.

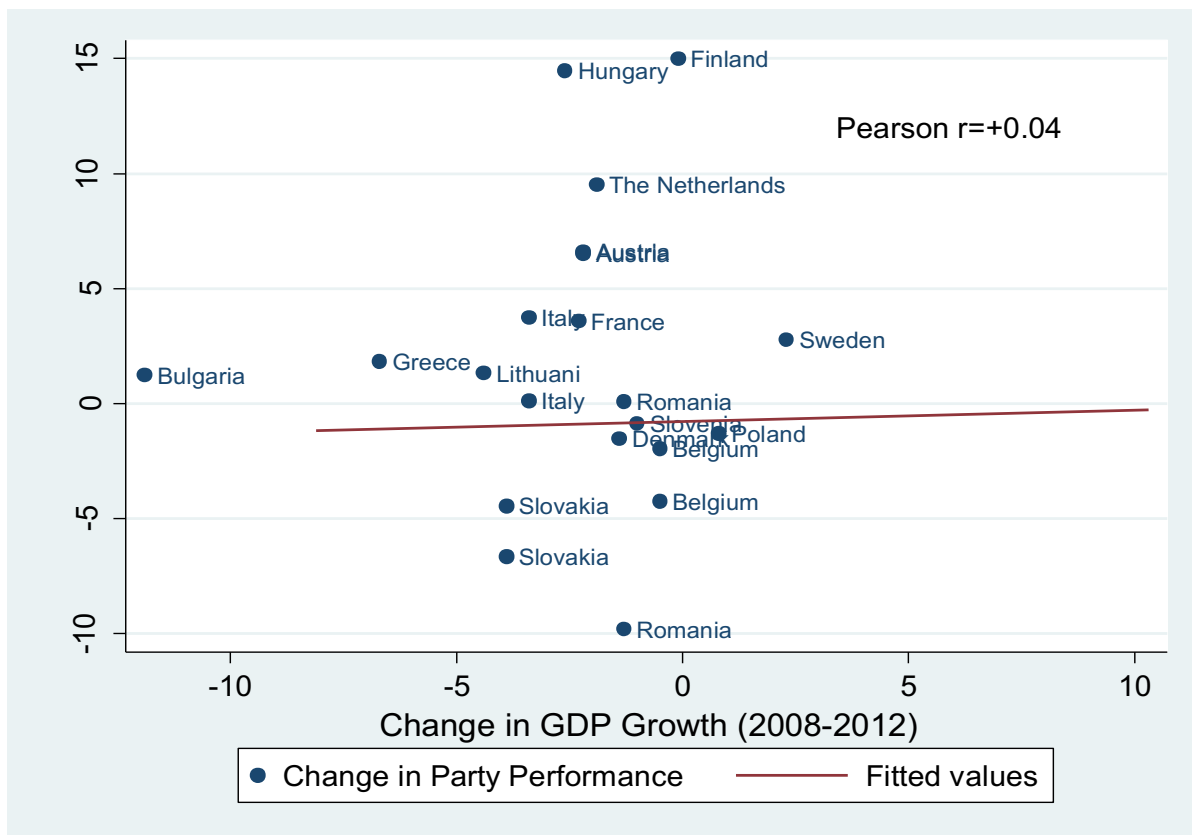
Figure 1.2: The Unemployment Rate and Voting for Populist Radical Right Parties in National Parliamentary Elections



Source: Author's own figures

Notes: National Parliamentary Elections (2005–2012)

Figure 1.3: Change in GDP Growth (2008–12) and Voting for Populist Radical Right Parties in National Parliamentary Elections



Source: Author's own figures

Notes: National Parliamentary Elections (2005–12)

Which factors might then account for the failure of radical right parties to benefit more from the post-2008 economic crash? This section puts forward two arguments which seek to explain this puzzle. The first argument is based on a valence model of economic competence. Valence issues can be defined as those where voters base their judgments on which parties are most competent and best able to deliver on certain issues (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015: p. 2). The theory holds that during times of economic crisis, voters are more likely to trust established mainstream center left or center right political parties that can provide credible economic solutions through underscoring their economic competence (see Ivarsflaten, 2005).

Populist Radical Right parties by and large are not known amongst voters for effectively outlining policies that can redress and resolve economic downturns; their central message is focused more on socio-cultural rather than socio-economic dimensions of issues (Goodwin,

2014). Scholars such as Ivarsflaten (2005) argue that a lack of economic competence is a central reason why radical right parties are not likely to benefit from times of economic crisis. Goodwin (2014) extends Ivarsflaten's argument in questioning the basis of the 'economics breeds extremism' model, suggesting that voters are unlikely to switch their vote to radical right parties during an economic crisis, primarily because these parties are not trusted to be competent in managing the economy. However, whilst economic competence may be a factor in explaining why radical right perform less well than expected in times of economic crisis, it is not always the case that mainstream center right and left parties are trusted to manage the economy or deemed as competent on this issue by voters, especially with incumbents tending to be punished in times of crisis (Hobolt et al., 2012; Tilley et al., 2011).

1.4 The role of Center Right Parties

The second explanation of why populist radical right parties do not benefit more from times of economic crisis, one that I argue has been more overlooked in the political science literature, is the role that mainstream center right parties can play in reducing the electoral impact of the radical right (see Bale, 2008). Cas Mudde (2014c) has argued that radical right party success during an economic crisis depends largely on whether this party family is able to 'own' the immigration issue; and also that in the Western European context, radical right and mainstream center right parties are likely to mobilize ideologically around the socio-cultural issue dimension. Mudde hypothesizes that issue ownership on the socio-cultural issue dimension (namely immigration and nationalism) is key in explaining party competition between the radical right and the mainstream center right. Immigration has traditionally been seen as an issue which radical right parties not only emphasize but can claim to 'own' (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Bale, 2008; Mudde, 2007).

However, recent empirical studies have shown the degree to which center right parties can seek to counteract the electoral threat of the radical right by reducing its electoral space

on the immigration issue (Pardos-Prado, 2015; Pardos-Prado et al., 2014; Bale, 2008). It is also important to note that post-2000; radical right and center right parties have formed coalition governments together, most notably in Austria and more recently in the Netherlands. This further shows that both party families may appeal ideologically to a similar voter base and that the immigration issue is likely to provide a central party strategy for mainstream center right parties from which they can make significant political capital, especially in times of economic crisis (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015; Bale, 2008).

To explore how different party families have fared during the economic crisis, Table 1.1 depicts bivariate correlations of the change in vote share for each party family between 2005 and 2012. Table 1.1 suggests that in electoral terms, the ‘winners’ of the economic crisis were center right, rather than populist radical right parties. The empirical results show that center right parties achieved the best electoral results in national parliamentary elections (+2% points) during the economic crisis and performed considerably better than radical right parties (+1% points). The table also highlights how center left parties were the main electoral ‘losers’ from the 2008 economic crisis (-4% points) and highlights a general decline in social democratic parties across Europe in this economic context.

Table 1.1 also draws on the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey data of party positions from 2007/2008 which has been merged with national parliamentary election data from ParlGov (see Döring and Manow 2015). This allows the chapter to assess how important the salience of immigration was in determining different party families’ electoral performance during the economic crisis. Table 1.1 draws on the Pearson r correlation coefficient which enables us to examine the relationship between the salience of immigration and electoral success for different party families. The salience of immigration issue is measured on a 1–7 scale, with a value of 1 meaning that the issue did not feature at all in a political party’s manifesto and a score of 7 indicating that the issue was very

important. Thus, higher and more positive scores on this variable imply that making immigration an important issue in a party's manifesto allowed it to increase its share of the vote during the economic crisis.

Table 1.1 shows that when making immigration an important issue in their party strategy, center right ($r=+0.37$) and populist radical right parties' correlations ($r=+0.46$) were also particularly strong, with a strong positive correlation. Evidently, both party families prospered electorally from this strategy during the economic crisis period. Whilst the far right performed marginally better on the immigration issue, the correlations also show a general trend, with center right parties that emphasized immigration having a strong correlation. Center right parties also performed considerably better electorally on this issue than center left parties did ($r=+0.08$, $p>0.05$). One possible explanation for this weak correlation may be due to center left parties' association with the promotion of freedom of movement throughout the 21st century and the party not being trusted on the immigration issue by working class voters (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015; Ford and Goodwin, 2014).

Whilst these results are bivariate correlations and do not contain control variables in a multivariate regression analysis, they do provide important preliminary empirical evidence to support the dissertation's theoretical argument that populist radical right parties did increase their vote share, but did not perform as well as expected in the recent economic crisis, conceivably because of center right parties' 'strategic' use of immigration. Party competition by its nature is complex and there are considerable cross-national variations across Western and Central-Eastern Europe in regards to the dynamics involved (see Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). Though factors such as incumbency effects are not included in the correlations above, it is likely that anti-incumbency effects will also be observed in this economic context amidst greater voter volatility. In turn, this provides a further dynamic in understanding populist radical right and center right party competition

on the immigration issue. In line with theories of protest voting (see Lewis-Beck, 1986; Alvarez et al., 2000; Duch, 2008; Hobolt et al., 2012), mainstream parties on both the left and right are likely to be punished by voters for being in government at the start of the economic crisis and held accountable at the ballot box. These factors are also likely to play important role in determining party competition in the recent economic crisis period and further underline patterns of electoral volatility, thus providing electoral opportunities for the populist radical right to prosper from. However, the preliminary results presented above do suggest that mainstream center right parties also have the capacity to challenge populist radical right parties on the immigration issue during times of economic crisis.

Table 1.1: % Vote Share Change for Political Parties in the Economic Crisis Period (2005–2012)

Party Ideology	Mean Vote Share Change (2005–2012) %	Salience of Immigration (Pearson’s r correlation)	Observations (N)
Radical Left	+0.4	+0.05	34
Center Left	-4	+0.08	84
Center Right	+2	+0.37	71
Radical Right	+1	+0.46	20

Figures have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Source: Author’s own figures

Notes: National Parliamentary Elections (2005–12)

1.5 Dissertation Structure

In order to examine the electoral success of the center right around the immigration issue and how this party family can take the issue away from the populist radical right, the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 builds on this chapter in examining party classifications, in outlining why the label ‘populist radical right’ is chosen instead of alternative labels. This chapter also lays the groundwork for the dissertation in discussing the features that

distinguish the populist radical right party family from mainstream center right parties. Chapter 3 then provides a literature review that outlines the gap in the academic literature and provides the rationale for the focus of the dissertation; in seeking to fill the gap in the literature by investigating party competition on the immigration issue between center right and radical right parties. Chapter 4 devises an original theoretical framework in examining the dynamics of party competition between contemporary center right and populist radical right parties in the 21st century. This theory highlights differences and identifies patterns during times of economic crisis and also during more economically prosperous times. The theory examines three distinct types of situations that underline the dynamic game between center right and radical right parties in different economic contexts. This theoretical framework is then tested in three interrelated empirical chapters and enables us to examine the electoral success of center right parties and their strategic choices on immigration in different economic contexts.

Methodologically, Chapters 5 and 6 provide an aggregate level comparative test of the theory in economic bad (2008–13) and good times (1999–2007). Chapter 5 draws on the ParlGov (see Döring and Manow 2015) dataset on European national parliamentary elections that has been merged with the Whitefield–Rohrschneider Expert Survey on party positions. This allows the theory to be tested in times of economic crisis. Chapter 6 draws primarily on the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) that spans more economically prosperous times. These expert surveys allow the dissertation to identify correlations and patterns, thus enhancing the external validity of the theory. However, these expert surveys are snapshots in certain time periods and due to data limitations, both chapters are unable to make direct causal inferences (internal validity) across time about how center right party electoral success plays out. Chapter 7 seeks to build on this limitation by drawing on a qualitative analysis that features four case studies that are generated from the main empirical findings in Chapter 5

and examine party competition between both party families in the context of economic bad times.

Chapter 7 allows the dissertation to illustrate more systematically the internal validity of the theoretical framework. The case studies are structured around a thematic comparison (salience of immigration, crisis; incumbency) that allows the theoretical framework to be tested under four different situations that underline the dynamic game between center right and populist radical right parties on immigration. The case study provides added value to the theory in examining center right and populist radical right party competition dynamics around the emphasis placed on immigration in the crisis period. Chapter 8 concludes the dissertation by discussing the main empirical findings and the implications that these have for the contemporary party politics literature in Europe.

1.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the empirical connection between the post-2008 economic crisis and electoral support for the populist radical right is not as strong as expected, with widespread variations across Europe. This chapter argued that party competition is crucial in understanding the varying electoral fortunes of the radical right in the period since 2008. The primary argument that forms the dissertation is that the economic crisis has not led to the systematic rise of the far right as we would have expected, primarily because in specific cases, mainstream center right parties have capitalized on immigration, thus directly competing with the far right and profiting electorally from this issue.

The central purpose of this dissertation will therefore be to test this argument empirically, investigating how center right parties across Europe seek to exploit economic conditions, good and bad, for their own electoral purposes, through seeking to emphasize the immigration issue; which in some cases allows them to take the issue away from populist radical right parties. The research puzzle of this dissertation will be further complemented by

examining the effects of incumbency and how this impacts on the dynamics of party competition between center right and populist radical right parties, particularly in influencing the center right's electoral success in economic good and bad times across the 21st century. This dissertation will also enable us to better understand the patterns of party competition that drive the relationship between center right and populist radical right parties on the immigration issue, and more broadly, the nature of electoral competition in contemporary Europe.

Chapter 2

Party Classifications: The Populist Radical Right and Center Right Party Families

Before addressing the main findings in the literature in Chapter 3, it is important to first define the nature of the two party families on which this dissertation focuses. This chapter reviews the literature on populist radical right parties in detail, in justifying why the label ‘populist radical right’ is chosen instead of alternative labels. The chapter then proceeds by discussing important ‘borderline’ cases that have been contested in the literature. The chapter offers a briefer discussion of the center right party family literature and of the classification for both party families that this dissertation adopts. Drawing on CHES data from 1999–2014, the chapter shows empirically that there are ideological similarities between center right and radical right parties on their issue positions towards immigration. From a spatial perspective, both the center right and radical right are closer spatially on the immigration issue than center left parties are. The chapter concludes by theoretically outlining the features that distinguish the populist radical right party family from mainstream center right parties in Europe.

2.1 ‘Populist Radical Right’ or ‘Extreme Right?’

The populist radical right can be seen as a heterogeneous party family (see Mudde, 2007; Arzheimer, 2009). A multitude of different classifications have been identified for this party family in the literature. More than a decade ago, Mudde (2002: p. 11) identified around 26 definitions that characterized this party family in the literature, with no less than 58 different features mentioned at least once. Arzheimer (2012: p. 37) notes the ‘staggering number of labels and definitions [that] have been applied’ in the literature on the contemporary radical right. These labels have ranged from ‘New Right’, ‘Radical Right’ and ‘Extreme Right’ to ‘Populist Right’ (see also Arzheimer, 2012).

The early 2000s literature on this party family tended to favor using the label ‘Extreme Right’ to define this party family. Cas Mudde’s (2002) study sought to create some

order from the chaos within the literature on the terminology surrounding the far right family. Mudde argued in favor of three key features – namely nativism, populism, and authoritarianism – as a parsimonious approach to defining and classifying contemporary far right parties across Europe.

At the same time, an ‘anti-immigration’ classification was used by scholars such as Fennema (1997) and Van der Brug et al. (2000). As the name implies, a key feature of the anti-immigration classification was the central focus of nativism, protecting the ‘in-group’ in opposition to the ‘out-group’. Scholars working in the anti-immigration literature tended to divide their party categorizations into ‘protest’ and ‘racist’ parties. However, a shortcoming with this classification is that this typology included nativism or anti-immigrant ideology as a key feature of the this party family, when we know that there are a number of other key features such as authoritarianism and populism that must be taken into account (see Mudde, 2002; Adorno et al., 1950). This anti-immigrant schema appeared frequently in the literature in the 1990s and early 2000s, but has more recently fallen out of popular use amongst scholars. Thus, the anti-immigrant label is arguably too narrow as it assumes that anti-immigrant sentiment is the central ideology of this party family and does not sufficiently take into account other core ideological features such as Euroscepticism (see Mudde, 1999; 2007).

Elisabeth Carter’s (2005) research has outlined the heterogeneous nature of this party family and labeled these parties as being ‘Extreme Right.’ Carter noted that there are a number of different key features that different types of extreme right-wing parties adopt in their party ideologies. In order to provide a semblance of order in classifying the extreme right-wing party family, Carter (2005) grouped extreme right-wing parties into five different sub-groups that form the extreme right-wing party family: Neo-Nazi Parties, Neo-Fascist Parties, Authoritarian-Xenophobic Parties, Neo-Liberal Xenophobic Parties and Neo-Liberal Populist Parties.

The first sub-group comprises ‘Neo-Nazi Parties’ and political parties which hold a radically xenophobic ideology and adhere to classical racism while also rejecting existing democratic institutions. ‘Neo-Fascist Parties’ form the second category and are not inherently xenophobic or racist, but reject existing democratic institutions outright. Thirdly, ‘Authoritarian-Xenophobic Parties’ are defined by their combination of a radically xenophobic ideological stance on the socio-cultural dimension with an advocacy of a bigger role for the state on the socio-economic dimension. ‘Neo-Liberal Xenophobic Parties’, Carter’s fourth category, are radically xenophobic on the socio-cultural dimension, but do not seek to overthrow existing democratic institutions, instead demanding reform of the existing system, through more democracy and less state intervention. ‘Neo-Liberal Populist Parties’ constitute the fifth group and are demarcated by not being overtly xenophobic or racist on the socio-cultural dimension, while seeking more democracy and less state intervention on the socio-economic dimension. Similarly to Neo-Liberal Xenophobic Parties, Neo-Liberal Populist Parties seek to work within the democratic confines of the political system, by demanding reform of the existing system. However, whilst Carter’s typology is conceptually clear, it has not been operationalized by many scholars in the literature. Furthermore, this typology cannot be empirically tested using expert surveys such as the CHES, as such surveys tend not to adopt this more fine-grained approach in subdividing the far right party family.

Mudde (2007: pp. 18–24) built on his earlier work in suggesting that the key feature that typified the radical right party family is nativism in the form of an ideological belief that ‘states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the “native” group’ (Arzheimer, 2012: p. 37). This key feature applies to far right parties not just in Western Europe, but in Central-Eastern Europe as well. Mudde further notes that this party family can be split into two distinct subgroups that comprise ‘Radical Right’ and ‘Populist Radical Right’ parties that

have different features. Parties of the 'Radical Right' seek to combine nativism and authoritarianism as central to their party ideology, whereas the 'Populist Radical Right' utilizes populism in order to get their message across to voters. An important point to outline is that Mudde (2007: p. 24) departed from his original classification (2000) in arguing that a key feature of 'Extreme Right' parties is their anti-democratic ideology. Many contemporary scholars also tended to use the term 'Radical Right', as defined by Rydgren (2007), who classified radical right parties as those that displayed a general suspicion towards the liberal democratic state, while not seeking to overthrow the democratic system.

2.2 The Mudde Party Classification: 'The Populist Radical Right Party Family'

The first feature of populist radical right party family is a nativist ideology, where ethnocentric ideals and values are espoused which border on nationalistic and xenophobic sentiment. The nativist ideology also asserts the importance of the dominant ethnic in-group in society, arguing that this group 'should be exclusively inhabited by members of the native group ("the nation"), and the non-native elements are [seen as] fundamentally threatening to the homogenous nation-state' (Mudde, 2014b: p. 99).

The second feature of the populist radical right family is the advancement of populist ideals. According to Mudde (2014b), populism is an ideology that this party family uses to separate society into two groups: a homogenous and an antagonistic group. The homogenous group are the 'pure people', whilst the antagonistic group are seen as the corrupt political elite, or political establishment. Most importantly, populism can be seen as the overall expression of the general will of the people (see Mudde, 2014b: p. 99). Radical right parties frequently deploy populist rhetoric when outlining the notion of the 'corrupt political elite' in supranational institutions such as the European Union through a 'hard' Eurosceptic strategy, as well as in domestic politics. Nonetheless, these parties still seek to work under the democratic system and this sets them apart from the majority of neo-fascist and neo-Nazi

parties in the early post-World War II period that fall under the ‘Extreme Right-Wing’ label.

The third feature that sets the contemporary radical right family apart from other contemporary party families in Europe is its authoritarian ideology, with these parties displaying a strong emphasis on law and order throughout society (Mudde, 2002; 2007; Arzheimer, 2009). These parties have traditionally placed strong emphasis on a hierarchically ordered society where ‘infringements of authority are to be punished severely’ (see Mudde, 2014b: p. 99).

Drawing on Mudde’s (2007) theoretical framework, the dissertation argued that this party family can be seen under the broad umbrella term of the ‘far right’ label, with ‘populist radical right’ and ‘extreme right-wing parties’ falling under two distinct sub-groups. The terms ‘populist radical right’, ‘radical right’ and ‘far right’ will be used interchangeably throughout this dissertation. This label is primarily chosen in this dissertation because ‘Populist Radical Right Parties’ has become the most widely accepted label in the literature and methodologically speaking this allows the dissertation to be consistent with the existing literature (see Mudde, 2007; 2016; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Rydgren, 2007). I do however acknowledge that ‘populist radical right’ and ‘extreme right-wing’ parties have ideological differences. On the one hand, populist radical right parties accept the democratic process and seek to become democratically elected through elections. However, populist radical right parties tend to challenge the more ‘liberal’ conception of democracy such as pluralism and minority rights.

On the other hand and in contrast to the radical right, extreme right-wing parties tend to be deeply skeptical of the democratic process and seek alternative means to achieving power other than through elections. Extreme right-wing parties also tend to be outwardly xenophobic and anti-Semitic in their core ideology. Contemporary examples of extreme right-wing parties include the Golden Dawn Party in Greece (XA), the British National Party in the

United Kingdom (BNP) and the National Democratic Party in Germany (NPD). In regards to populist radical right parties, this sub-group has tended to adopt party modernization strategies, such as rebranding their ideology, largely to appeal to a wider section of voters. A primary example of this is the transformation of the Front National (FN) under Marine Le Pen through distancing themselves ideologically from outright xenophobic and anti-Semitic language, such as was seen during her father Jean-Marie Le Pen's leadership of the FN (see Mudde, 2014b).

However, for the sake of parsimony and in order to increase the generalizability of the empirical findings in this dissertation, 'populist radical right' and 'extreme right-wing parties' will be grouped together under the 'far right' party banner in the empirical analysis that forms the bedrock of this dissertation. Existing expert surveys such as the Whitefield–Rohrschneider and CHES adopt this methodology and this same methodological technique will be adopted throughout this dissertation that enhances the external validity of the dissertation through expanding the sample size of parties and also ensures consistency.

2.3 'Borderline' Cases

Drawing on the recent 2014 CHES dataset, Table 2.1 below outlines a number of notable parties in Europe that are classified as populist radical right parties by country experts and have achieved parliamentary representation in recent years. Radical Right parties such as the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), the Front National in France (FN) and Flemish Interest (VB) in Belgium have been around for a considerable period of time (see Hainsworth, 2008; Mudde, 2014b). There are also newer and more insurgent radical right parties, such as Golden Dawn (XA) in Greece and Jobbik in Hungary that have appealed more to an 'extreme right-wing ideology' than a 'radical right' one. However, of the radical right parties listed in Table 2.1, there are a number of 'borderline' and contested parties in the literature (see Mudde, 2014b) that are important to take into account and are these are discussed more

comprehensively below. It is important to discuss these cases as their inclusion will have an impact on the external validity and robustness of the empirical findings in this dissertation.

These ‘borderline’ cases include parties such as Northern League (LN) in Italy, the Alliance for the Future of Austria Party (BZÖ), the Finns Party (PS) in Finland³ alongside the Law and Justice Party (PiS) in Poland and Fidesz in Hungary. Parties such as the LN in Italy have been considered as regionalist and far right parties, in focusing on defending Northern Italian traditions and creating a federal state. However, in line with a majority of scholars (see Lubbers et al., 2002; Van der Brug et al., 2005; Art, 2011; Betz, 2005; Rovny, 2013), the LN can be classified as a populist radical right party as the party’s ideology has traditionally emphasized nativism and a vehement opposition towards immigration.

I also treat BZÖ as a populist radical right party in line with the majority of the existing literature (see Luther, 2009; Duncan, 2010; Ennsner, 2012) as the party focuses on a nativist ideology and has tended to compete with the other far right party FPÖ. The PS Party in Finland has been seen by some academics as an ‘anti-European populist’ party (see Mudde, 2013; 2014b), however the party has tended to focus on nativism, through strong opposition towards immigration and how it undermines the notion of Finnish identity and traditional values (see Art, 2011). Thus, I see this party as belonging to the radical right label as the Finns Party has tended to exhibit the three core criteria, of nativism, populism and authoritarianism that comprise populist radical right parties. Furthermore, the Finns Party is also considered as a populist radical right party by country experts in the CHES (see Bakker et al., 2015). The PiS Party in Poland has tended to be traditionally associated more with the conservative right than with the populist radical right. However, the party has shifted ideologically on the socio-cultural issue dimension in the last few years, particularly in its discourse on immigration (see Pytlas, 2015). Thus, in accordance with existing expert

³ The name ‘True Finns’ was previously used by the party. However, since August 2011, the party began using the name ‘The Finns’. This dissertation refers to this populist radical right party as ‘The Finns’ throughout.

surveys such as CHES (see Bakker et al., 2015), this dissertation treats PiS as a populist radical right party in this dissertation and not as belonging to the mainstream center right. Two such parties that fall under the ‘anti-European populist’ label comprise the Alternative for Germany Party (AfD) and the Italian Five Star Movement (see Arzheimer, 2015). Following Mudde (2014b), I do not include these two parties under the label of populist radical right as their primary focus is on Euroscepticism and has not focused predominantly on nativism. In addition, the rise of both parties also occurred after 2013 and this time period is beyond the scope of the dissertation.

An additional ‘borderline’ case is that of the now governing party in Hungary, Fidesz. Fidesz’s party classification is generally considered by the majority of academics as a ‘conservative’ party that falls under the center right ideology, yet the party’s ideology has changed across time and incorporated more nationalistic discourse and rhetoric (see Mudde, 2014b). In recent years, under Viktor Orbán’s leadership, Fidesz has frequently emphasized maintaining control of borders and creating a strong Hungarian state (see Pytlas and Kossack, 2013; see Rovny, 2016; Rovny and Polk, 2016). Euroscepticism is important to Fidesz, but only in terms of how Euroscepticism is seen to undermine the nation-state in Hungary. However, in comparison to Jobbik, Fidesz tends to be seen as more ‘moderate’ in their ideology. Thus, in accordance with the majority of the academic literature and the party classification of expert surveys such as CHES (see Mudde, 2014b; Bakker et al., 2015), this dissertation will treat Fidesz as a center right party and not as belonging to the radical right party family. The radical right party Jobbik has similarly emphasized nationalism, through irredentist policies, in seeking to recover former lands and territories that were taken away from Hungary after World War I. Furthermore, Jobbik’s ideology has focused on hostile opposition to minority rights that has been aimed primarily against out-groups such as the

Roma and Gypsy communities (Pytlas and Kossack, 2013).⁴

Table 2.1: Notable Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe

Country	Party Name	Party Abbreviation
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	FPÖ
	Alliance for the Future of Austria	BZÖ
Belgium	Flemish Interest	VB
Bulgaria	National Union Attack	NSA
Denmark	Danish People's Party	DF
Finland	The Finns	PS
France	Front National	FN
Greece	Golden Dawn	XA
Hungary	Movement for a Better Hungary	JOBBIK
Italy	Northern League	LN
Latvia	National Alliance	NA
Netherlands	Party for Freedom	PVV
Poland	Law and Justice	PiS
Sweden	Swedish Democrats	SD
UK	United Kingdom Independence Party	UKIP

Source: CHES (2014)

Like other party families across Europe such as the center left, the radical right party family is heterogeneous, particularly in regards to socio-economic policy stances (see Mudde, 2007; Rovny, 2013). Some radical right parties such as the FPÖ and the PVV in the Netherlands have tended to emphasize more neo-liberal economic policies, through

⁴ Jobbik effectively replaced the other radical right party MIEP (The Hungarian Justice and Life Party) at the 2010 Hungarian National Election.

supporting a free market economy and low taxation. In contrast, parties such as the Front National in France have historically emphasized protectionist economic policies (see Rovny, 2013). The Front National has also sought to present a chauvinistic welfare programme, through ensuring that socio-economic policy is directed to the ethnic ‘in-group’. In addition, state protection in specific areas of the national economy against foreign competition has been important to a number of contemporary radical right parties in Europe (see de Lange, 2007). Table 2.2 further underlines the heterogeneity of the radical right party family and depicts the average score of parties on the left-right ideological position variable across time from 1999–2014. Scores of 0 imply that a party is left-wing, whilst 5 denotes a centrist position and 10 corresponds to the absolute right-wing of the political spectrum.

The second variable included in Table 2.2 is the average score of parties on the left-right economic position variable. Scores of 0 imply that a party adopts a left-wing economics approach, with 5 denoting a centrist position and 10 corresponding to being economically right-wing. Table 2.2 shows that populist radical right parties tended to score around 8 on the expert survey in regards to their left-right ideological position, whereas there is considerable variation by left-right economic position. Radical right parties in Belgium, Austria, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom tended to be much more economically right-wing. In contrast, radical right parties across Central-Eastern Europe in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia tended to be much more left-wing on the economic dimension.

Table 2.2: List of Populist Radical Right Parties in the CHES 1999–2014 Expert Survey⁵

Country	Party Name	Party Abbreviation	CHES Average Left-Right Position (1999–2014) 0–10 Scale	CHES Average Left-Right Economic Position (1999–2014) 0–10 Scale
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	FPÖ*	8.7	5.8
	Alliance for the Future of Austria	BZÖ*	8.3	6.8
Belgium	Flemish Interest	VB	9.6	7.5
	Front National	FN	9.6	8.6
Bulgaria	National Union Attack	NSA	5.4 (2014)	1.4 (2014)
Czech Republic	Dawn-National Coalition	USVIT	7.7 (2014)	5.3 (2014)
Denmark	Danish People's Party	DF	8.0	5.6
	Progress Party	FP	9.3 (1999)	8.9 (1999)
Finland	The Finns	PS*	5.6	4.4
France	Front National	FN	9.6	6.7
Germany	The Republicans	REP	9.2 (1999)	7.2 (1999)
	German People's Union	DVU	9.8 (1999)	7.2 (1999)
	National Democratic Party of	NPD	10 (2014)	5.3

⁵ CHES Additional Notes:

*The following populist radical right parties have CHES Average scores that differ from 1999–2014:

Austria- BZÖ: 2006–2014
 France- FN: 1999–2010
 Finland- PS: 2006–2014
 Greece- LAOS: 2006–2014
 Hungary- Jobbik: 2010–2014
 Italy- AN: 1999–2010
 LN: 2006–2010
 Latvia- TB-LNNK: 2002–2006
 NA: 2010–2014
 Poland- PiS: 2002–2014
 Slovenia- SNS: 2002–2010
 Slovakia- SNS: 2002–2014
 Sweden- SD: 2010–2014

	Germany			
Greece	Popular Orthodox Rally	LAOS*	8.8	5.5
	Golden Dawn	XA	9.8 (2014)	2.9 (2014)
Hungary	Hungarian Justice and Life Party	MIEP	9.7 (2002)	4 (2002)
	Movement for a Better Hungary	JOBBIK*	9.6	4.2
Italy	Brothers of Italy-National Alliance	AN*	7.8	5.1
	Northern League	LN	8.7	7.3
Latvia	For Fatherland and Freedom	TB-LNNK*	8.4	6.5
	National Alliance	NA*	8.0	5.5
Netherlands	The Pim Fortuyn List	LPF	8.4 (2002)	8.1 (2002)
	Party for Freedom	PVV*	8.9	6.0
Poland	Law and Justice	PiS*	7.9	3.2
Romania	Greater Romania Party	PRM	7.1	3.3
Slovenia	Slovenian National Party	SNS*	5.9	4.8
Slovakia	Slovakia National Party	SNS*	8.2	4.4
Sweden	Swedish Democrats	SD	8.1	5.5
UK	British National Party	BNP	9.9	5.9
	United Kingdom Independence Party	UKIP	8.4	8.2

2.4 The Center Right Party Family in Europe

By comparison with the literature on the populist radical right, the classification of center right parties has tended to be less contested. However, as with all party families in Europe, the core ideology of center right parties varies considerably across countries. Girvin (2005) outlines the ideological pragmatism of center right parties and how this party family has ‘defined itself historically in terms of its reservations to modernity since the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution’. A similar approach is adopted by Heywood (2012), who notes how, historically, center right parties began in the twentieth century as bourgeois parties and have evolved in adapting to significant political change. Generally speaking, contemporary parties of the center right in Europe tend to comprise Conservative, Christian Democratic, and market liberal parties (see Bale, 2008).

Contemporary Conservative parties tend to be focused on preserving established traditions and institutions, seeking to maintain the status quo and hierarchical social orders (see Heywood, 2012). Historical examples of notable European Conservative parties include the UK Conservative Party, which achieved high levels of electoral success throughout the twentieth century (see Bale, 2012). The Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) in France has also emphasized a nationalist ideology of Gaullism, seeking to build and maintain a strong French nation-state.

Other notable Conservative parties in Central-Eastern Europe include Hungary’s Fidesz, which has traditionally held similar perspectives on issues such as law and order to both UMP and the UK Conservative Party (see Heywood, 2012). The New Flemish Alliance (N-VA) in Belgium has focused on Flemish nationalism, seeking independence for the Belgian region of Flanders and the protection of Flemish culture and the Dutch language. The party has also focused on a conservative ideology, in seeking to maintain traditional institutions within society (see Beyens et al., 2015).

Similarly to Conservative parties, Christian Democratic parties have tended to emphasize traditional values such as the family while also supporting the Church. Notable examples of Christian Democratic parties include Germany's Christian Democratic Union Party (CDU), the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), Ireland's Fine Gael, the Netherlands' Christian Democratic Appeal Party (CDA) and the People's Party in Spain (PP). Many Christian Democratic parties have also been affiliated with the center right European People's Party grouping (EPP) in the European Parliament (Gehler and Kaiser, 2004). Under German Chancellor Angela Merkel's leadership, the CDU Party in Germany has advocated Christian democratic values, pro-Europeanism and an economic liberal conservatism that emphasizes the importance of free market economics (see Kalyvas, 1996; Kalyvas and van Kersbergen, 2010; Heywood, 2012).

Market liberal parties in Europe are also often seen as belonging to the center right party family. Generally speaking, market liberal political parties tend to advocate neo-liberal economics and minimal government intervention in the economy. At the same time, they also tend to place importance on traditional issues such as European security and law and order. Contemporary examples of market liberal parties include the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy in the Netherlands (VVD), which has tended to emphasize classical neo-liberal economics, arguing that the market should be left completely to the private sector, with minimal government intervention (see Keman, 1996; Anderweg and Irwin, 2014). Other contemporary market liberal parties include the Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD), the Liberal Party of Denmark (Venstre/Left), the economic right-wing of the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP) and the more economically right-wing liberal factions within the National Coalition Party (KOK) in Finland.

2.5 Comparing the Contemporary Center Right and Populist Radical Right Families

Populist radical right parties and mainstream center right parties are not too dissimilar ideologically speaking. Both party families have tended to place a strong importance on maintaining traditional values and institutions in society, alongside being tough on socio-cultural issues such as immigration and crime (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Van der Brug et al., 2002; Lubbers et al., 2002). Both party families also share similarities on the European integration issue, with a number of contemporary center right parties holding ‘hard’ Eurosceptic positions that makes them share ideological similarities with populist radical right parties (see Bale, 2008; Ford and Goodwin, 2014). Scholars such as Pardos-Prado (2015) and Bale (2008) note that from a spatial perspective, the center right are much closer ideologically to the populist radical right than other mainstream party families such as the center left. Table 2.3 below further demonstrates this argument by drawing on the average party positions (1999–2014) of center right, center left and radical right party families across time on immigration policy through the CHES. The mean score of center right parties on immigration is 5.8 and is higher than the center left score of 3.7. The radical right party family has an average score of 8.9 and shows the general opposition of this party family towards immigration. From a spatial perspective, radical right parties tend to hold more restrictionist policies on immigration, yet spatially center right parties’ position on this issue are not too dissimilar and are spatially closer than the center left.

However, what sets both party families apart are nuances on two issue dimensions. The first is a nuance on the socio-cultural issue dimension, namely the radical right’s ideological focus on nativism in espousing hostile opposition towards ethnic-out groups such as immigrants in society. Center right parties tend to focus less on anti-immigrant positions and adopt more moderate positions on the issue compared to the radical right (see Mudde, 2010). The center right party family will still play up and regularly emphasize the

immigration issue, but in a more ideologically palatable manner than the radical right do (see Pardos-Prado, 2015). A second and more fundamental ideological difference between both party families is rooted on the socio-economic dimension. As discussed more comprehensively above in this chapter, center right parties by and large tend to espouse free market economics; whereas populist radical right parties have been known to adopt both neo-liberal free market and state interventionist economics in a number of countries (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Mudde, 2007).

Table 2.3: Positions on Immigration (By Party Family)

Party Family	Immigration Position (CHES Average) 1999–2014 0–10 Scale	Number of Observations (N)
Center Right	5.7	246
Center Left	3.7	147
Radical Right	8.9	58

Notes: 0–10 Scale (CHES)

0 = Strongly opposes tough policy, 10 = Strongly favors tough policy

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the divergent terminology in the political science literature concerning contemporary populist radical right and center right party families. It showed that the definitions of the radical right party family have been hotly contested in the academic literature. In order to classify the contemporary populist radical right party family, this dissertation draws on Cas Mudde’s recent theoretical work (2007; 2014b) in defining this party family according to three core criteria of nativism, populism and authoritarianism. Drawing on recent party competition literature, the chapter defined center right parties as including Conservative, Christian Democratic and market (but not social) liberal parties. The chapter also showed that the mainstream center right party family is also considered diverse in its ideology and shares some ideological similarities on the immigration issue with the populist radical right party family. Now that both party families have been classified, the next

chapter examines the gap in the party competition literature on populist radical right and center right parties' approach to the immigration issue in Europe and highlights the dissertation's original contribution.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

This chapter examines the diverse academic literature on the populist radical right. It briefly outlines the three waves of academic scholarship on the populist radical right, and examines the ‘demand-side’ (voters’ characteristics) and ‘supply-side’ (party competition effects) aspects of the scholarship on the radical right to date. It argues that we know much more about the types of people that vote for the radical right, the key socio-demographic and attitudinal characteristics that explain voters’ propensity to support the far right, and the ideology and strategies that radical right parties adopt, than we do about the effects of party competition and the way in which mainstream parties, particularly those on the center right, can affect and limit the electoral success of populist radical right parties.

This chapter argues that few studies have systematically examined the type of competition that populist radical right parties can face from mainstream center right parties in different economic contexts, both in economic good and bad times. This dissertation therefore seeks to fill this lacuna in the party competition literature by investigating competition on immigration between both party families. From a party politics perspective, this will enable us to understand more about the strategic choices that center right parties can devise on immigration and how this can allow the center right to emphasize the issue and prosper electorally, conceivably at the expense of populist radical right parties. This chapter also briefly considers the electoral performance of contemporary center left parties on the immigration issue, outlining briefly the rationale for why this dissertation focuses on examining both center right and populist radical right parties.

3.1 Micro-level factors: Voting for the Populist Radical Right

Scholarship on the populist radical right is generally understood to consist of three ‘waves’ (see Mudde, 2002; 2017). The first wave has been seen as lasting from 1945 until 1980, with the majority of studies focusing on historical analysis of fascist and neo-fascist parties between the pre-war and post-war periods. The second wave of academic scholarship is considered as lasting from 1980 to 2000, in which scholars sought to understand why certain types of voters tended to vote for radical right-wing parties such as the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ), the French National Front (FN), and the German Republicans (REP). The third wave of scholarship began at the start of the present century and has led to a growing field of scholarly research on the populist radical right. This research has tended to examine the reasons for the varying electoral fortunes of the contemporary radical right in Western and Central-Eastern Europe (see Mudde, 2017). The present chapter focuses primarily on this burgeoning third wave of scholarship as there has been a substantial increase of academic scholarship on the populist radical right during time period.

The literature on populist radical right party support is diverse and spans a myriad of disciplines, with political scientists, historians, sociologists, and psychologists all having developed a wide range of theoretical explanations for electoral support for the radical right (Winkler, 1996). These explanations may be divided into two categories, the first concerned with the individual or ‘micro’ level, the second examining the aggregate or ‘macro’ level. The individual-level literature on the radical right has analyzed the types of voters that support radical right parties and more importantly, the reasons and attitudinal characteristics that lead them to do so (Lubbers et al., 2002; Arzheimer, 2009; Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015).

Socio-Demographic Factors

In a recent extensive review of the literature on the radical right, the political scientist Kai Arzheimer (2012a) has outlined how the individual-level literature has focused on socio-demographic factors and the political attitudes held by voters who support the radical right. In contrast, the aggregate-level literature has examined party competition and the positions that populist radical right parties hold on key issues, alongside the effects of such parties' strategies on their electoral success (Arzheimer, 2009; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Lubbers et al., 2002; Kitschelt, 1995) and the way in which they compete with mainstream party families (see Bale, 2008; Bale, Hough, and van Kessel, 2013; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie, 2005). Arzheimer (2012a) has also shown that scholars contributing to the aggregate-level literature on the radical right have also focused on factors such as economic conditions and immigration levels that are key determinants of radical right party support.

Individual-level studies in France, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Germany have analyzed the effects of socio-demographic factors on the radical right vote (Mayer and Perrineau, 1992; Goodwin 2010; Swyngedouw et al., 2009). The empirical research has confirmed that the social profile of the radical right in Western Europe tends show white, male, lower income, and younger voters in the 18-29 category (Norris, 2005; Mudde, 2007; Arzheimer, 2009). In terms of social class, a core characteristic of the radical right electorate has been its appeal towards the working classes which some scholars have referred to as the 'proletarianization' of the radical right (Arzheimer, 2012) or the 'left behind voters' thesis' (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015). Ford and Goodwin (2014) argue that there has been a long-term pattern of partisan dealignment in the United Kingdom, where voters have shifted away from traditional left-wing parties such as the Labour Party, due to fears over socio-cultural issues such as immigration.

Ford and Goodwin's (2014) research showed that working class voters felt threatened by the influx of immigrants and that this resulted in the radical right party UKIP prospering electorally in recent years, in picking up discontented voters. Remarkably, this pattern has been shown on a cross-national level, in Western European countries such as France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Traditional social democratic parties in these countries used to be characterized by their strong working class support base, yet this long-term pattern of social class voting has declined significantly in recent years, with populist radical right parties profiting from this sharp decline in the working class vote (see Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015).

Scholars such as Norris (2005) have identified the strong gender divide that is present amongst populist radical right supporters and linked this to the authoritarian ideology of radical right party programmes. Empirical evidence across Europe has shown that female voters are far less likely to vote for the radical right than their male counterparts. The authoritarian and hierarchical nature of contemporary radical right parties is often cited by scholars as the key explanation for this gender divide in the radical right electorate (see Perrineau, 1997; Swyngedouw, et al., 2009; Goodwin, 2010). Another remarkably consistent pattern in the radical right voting behavior literature has shown that educational attainment is a key predictor of radical right support. Cross-sectional studies conducted on a number of radical right parties, such as Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest in Belgium), the French Front National (FN) and the British National Party (BNP) have confirmed that voters with lower levels of educational attainment are highly correlated with voting for the radical right (Swyngedouw et al., 2009; Hainsworth, 2000). The one exception is the Freedom Party of Austria which has consistently polled highly in first order elections amongst the professional managerial and university educated classes (see Luther, 2000; Hainsworth, 2008).

Attitudinal Factors

The majority of empirical studies in the radical right voting literature have analyzed the attitudinal characteristics of radical right voters. The attitudinal characteristics of radical right voters towards immigration, dissatisfaction with the European Union, dissatisfaction with national governments, and a range of other issues have been explored; with radical right voters tending to hold negative attitudes towards all these issues (see Scheepers et al., 1990; Lubbers et al., 2002; Arzheimer, 2006; Rydgren, 2008). Academic studies have also examined the anti-Islamist rhetoric that parties such as the British National Party and movements such as the English Defence League have deployed, with other research exploring rival drivers of Anti-Muslim sentiment (Goodwin, 2013, McLaren, 2011). Recent academic research has also shown how the United Kingdom Independence Party has drawn a wide range of its support from the working classes and dissatisfaction with the center left Labour Party, particularly around the immigration issue (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015).

Broadly speaking, the consensus in the academic literature is that in line with ethnic competition and protest vote theories, populist radical right voters hold anti-immigrant positions, are staunchly Eurosceptic, and tend to hold lower levels of political trust in national governments (Lubbers et al., 2001; Lubbers et al., 2002; Arzheimer, 2009; Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015; Kriesi et al., 2015). Numerous statistical models have shown the effect of the social disintegration theory in highlighting the strong effect of political attitudes when controlling for the effect of socio-demographic variables in statistical models (Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Swyngedouw, 2007). Cross-sectional research conducted by opinion pollsters such as YouGov and Ipsos Mori on the British National Party in the United Kingdom has shown that a specific set of political attitudes tend to be the central drivers of support, with anti-immigrant sentiment and intolerant racial perceptions core drivers of support (see Goodwin et al., 2010; 2012; 2014). Similar to socio-demographic

factors, attitudinal research on the contemporary radical right has shown a remarkable degree of consistency about the types of voters that vote for this party family, that sets it apart from mainstream center right and center left parties in Europe.

Recent literature has also analyzed the interplay of attitudinal and socialization models (Avdeenko et al., 2013). The latter type of empirical study has shown the strong relationship between generational influence amongst fathers and sons in transmitting political attitudes. These scholars showed that the formative years of childhood can be shaped crucially when young children are exposed to anti-immigrant rhetoric (Avdeenko et al., 2013: pp. 4–13). In turn, this anti-immigrant sentiment is likely to cause a young male to develop further antipathy towards immigrants during adulthood. The implications of this finding are important in showing how the transmission of right-wing attitudes during childhood can have a profound effect during adulthood (Avdeenko et al., 2013).

Therefore, we know extensively about the ‘demand-side’ level, i.e. the types of voters that vote for radical right parties across Europe. At the socio-demographic level, we know that younger, male, lower educated, and working class voters are much more likely to vote for radical right parties. At the attitudinal level, we know that voters who are more politically dissatisfied with national government, hold lower levels of political trust, alongside voters who are Eurosceptic are much more likely to vote for radical right parties (see Lubbers et al., 2002; Givens, 2005; Arzheimer, 2009; Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015). The next two sections of this chapter examine a more under-researched area in the radical right literature that comprises party competition and the primary focus of this dissertation.

3.2 Macro-level factors: Populist Radical Right Party Electoral Success

Now we have examined the main findings in the voting behavior literature as to why some voters are more likely than others to vote for populist radical right parties, we can move on to

examining the ‘macro-level’ literature. Such scholarship often argues that populist radical right parties perform better electorally when they hold more authoritarian stances on socio-cultural issues, such as immigration, while emphasizing free-market economic positions (Kitschelt, 1995). This groundbreaking model, which has become known as the Kitscheltian model, outlined an ‘electoral winning formula’ for populist radical right parties which sought to explain the electoral success of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the French Front National (FN) in the 1980s and 1990s (see Kitschelt, 1995; Pardos-Prado, 2015). However, the Kitscheltian model has recently been challenged by de Lange (2007) and Bornschieer (2010), who argue that holding neo-liberal economic positions is likely to be detrimental for radical right electoral performance as this will turn away working class voters.

Recent literature on the radical right has examined party competition between center left and radical right parties over working class voters. Arzheimer (2013) challenges the Kitscheltian model (1995), arguing that radical right parties can steal disenchanted working class voters away from mainstream left-wing parties in Europe by having tough policies on immigration. Arzheimer’s (2013) issue-based position account builds on Bale’s (2003: pp. 70–74) findings in demonstrating that radical right parties can seize a large proportion of the working class vote, due to the center left losing touch with its traditional voter base. Arzheimer also notes that center left parties face a significant dilemma on the immigration issue: whether to toughen up their rhetoric on immigration to counteract the threat of far right, or to de-emphasize the immigration issue in order to try and defuse it (see Bale et al., 2010: pp. 413–414). Arzheimer (2013: p. 86) also notes that ‘[t]his “proletarianization” is the result of the interplay between a long-term dealignment process and increasing worries amongst the European working classes about the immigration of cheap labour.’

In contrast to Kitschelt’s (1995) original model, de Lange (2007) adopts a case study based approach in arguing that a new type of ‘electoral winning formula’ exists that accounts

for radical right party electoral success, where such parties adopt center left economic positions while also emphasizing both immigration and nationalist issues at the same time. Drawing on party positions of the French Front National (FN), the Flemish Interest Party (VB) in Belgium and the Dutch List Pim Fortuyn (LF), de Lange (2007) showed that specific radical right parties make use of this new ‘electoral winning formula’, but others do not. Other scholars have followed suit by arguing for a new ‘electoral winning formula’ for radical right parties that includes a more centrist economic position that can appeal to a broader section of voters (see also Carter, 2005; Ivarsflaten, 2005; Rovny, 2013).

Nonetheless, previous literature has also shown that populist radical right parties are perceived by voters to lack economic competence (Ivarsflaten, 2005; Mudde, 2007). It therefore does not make sense for populist radical right parties to play the economic card and emphasize economic policies, as they are likely to not be trusted on this issue by the majority of the electorate, who are more likely to trust established parties on both right and left of the political spectrum (Rovny, 2013). In Western Europe, increased electoral support for radical right parties has often been associated with a focus on the socio-cultural dimension, in the form of anti-immigrant sentiment and nationalism (Arzheimer, 2009; Mudde, 2016). In addition, recent literature also suggests that populist radical right parties perform better electorally when capitalizing on nationalist sentiment during times of economic crisis (see Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou, 2013; Vasilopoulou and Halikiopoulou, 2015).

Recent evidence of this is provided in French politics, where under Marine Le Pen, the Front National (FN) have sought to blur their positions on traditional socio-economic issues and instead play to their strengths by emphasizing hostility to immigrants and opposition to Islam (Mondon, 2014). Thus, insurgent far right parties have effectively de-emphasized and blurred their position on socio-economic issues, in order to emphasize socio-cultural issues such as immigration and nationalism (see Rovny, 2013). Recent research has shown evidence

for this dual process, whereby populist radical right parties have performed better electorally when there is an interplay between economic and political crises (see Kriesi and Pappas, 2015). Radical right parties may also exploit economic insecurity by scapegoating and emphasizing nationalist appeals that has direct electoral implications for this party family. In line with theories of ethnic competition, ethnic in-groups may scapegoat ethnic out-groups during economic downturns, using out-groups such as immigrants as rhetorical devices to channel economic frustrations (Arzheimer 2009; Ford and Goodwin, 2010; Goodwin et al., 2011). The next section of this chapter brings the ‘macro-level’ literature together in reviewing the literature on scholarship that has examined party competition dynamics between the center right and populist radical right parties.

3.3 Party Competition: Center Right and Populist Radical Right Parties

The party competition literature on how mainstream parties can restrict and prevent the electoral success of far right parties has been under-researched in the literature. As the preceding sections have demonstrated, the literature on the contemporary far right has tended to focus primarily on the ‘individual’ level (see Arzheimer, 2009; 2012; Lubbers et al., 2002; Mudde, 2010). Whilst scholarship at the ‘individual’ level has shown important findings, the party competition level allows comparisons to be drawn, where mainstream parties can be seen to compete with far right parties on key socio-cultural issues such as immigration. One important factor that explains why populist radical right parties do not perform as well as expected is the response of mainstream parties, such as the center right and center left.

Odmalm and Bale (2015) argue that the popular narrative in the academic community is that populist radical right parties mobilize around the immigration issue. However, they add that the literature often neglects the role that mainstream parties can play when they too mobilize around the immigration issue, both within and outside periods of economic crisis, and the impact this can have on their electoral success. Previous studies in the party

competition literature have shown variations in how the immigration issue ebbs and flows as a central issue for center right and even center left parties in their electoral campaigns (see Cornelius et al., 1994; Thränhardt, 1995; Pellikaan et al., 2007). Recent literature has also demonstrated how center left and social democratic parties may potentially be punished by voters on the immigration issue, as it is likely to impact on their core working class base of voters (see Bale et al., 2010 and 2012; Arzheimer, 2013; Givens and Luedtke, 2004). Scholars such as Pardos-Prado (2015) have argued that mainstream center right parties do not face the same difficulties on this issue as the center left do, as they are seen as the best placed party family that can restrict the electoral success of radical right parties as their positions on immigration are spatially closer to the far right than the center left party family. It follows that the overall party competition between center right and far right parties has generally been under-researched in the literature (Pardos-Prado, 2015). Mudde (2014b) argues that the key to radical right party success is issue ownership on socio-cultural issues such as immigration, in tapping into working class resentment. However the immigration issue is likely to cut across the middle classes in society that generally form the core electorate of center right parties in Europe (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014). Recent empirical research has also suggested that mainstream center right parties have the potential to reduce the electoral threat of populist radical right parties, by adopting more restrictive positions on immigration and achieving ideological convergence (see Bale, 2008; Bale, Hough, and van Kessel, 2013; van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie, 2005).

Issue Based Voting Models on immigration

Pardos-Prado (2015) also recently demonstrated how mainstream center right parties can more successfully compete on the immigration issue from a spatial (issue position) perspective when immigration party positions correlate with economic and cultural dimensions of party competition. However, the party competition literature has tended to

explore the role of issue positions (Pardos-Prado, 2015; Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie, 2005) and valence models⁶ (see Mudde, 2014b) rather than the emphasis (issue salience) that the center right can place on the issue and how this influences their electoral fortunes.⁷ This is a crucial distinction to make, as these three competing models (issue positions, issue salience, and valence) on immigration are likely to combine in explaining whether or not center right parties perform electorally better on the immigration issue than populist radical right parties. Furthermore, the literature is not clear on whether it is electorally beneficial for center right parties to adopt hardline stances on immigration, or emphasize the importance of the issue more in their campaign strategies (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015). Simply put, this lacuna in the literature prevents us from examining whether center right parties benefit more electorally from adopting specific positions, such as anti-immigrant positions, appearing competent as the best party to handle the issue, or through emphasizing and raising the salience of the immigration issue amongst voters. This dissertation aims to fill this important gap in the literature, enabling us to understand more about the choices that center right parties can make on immigration and how under certain conditions they can benefit electorally from this issue and perform better than the populist radical right.

3.4 Contextual and institutional factors

Literature on macro political factors has found a consistently strong relationship between ethnic contextual variables and populist radical right party support. The majority of empirical studies have found that higher levels of immigrants and/or ethnic minorities at the country level tends to increase support for the radical right (see Knigge, 1998; Lubbers et al., 2002; Arzheimer et al., 2003; Golder, 2003; Arzheimer et al., 2006; Arzheimer, 2009; Werts, 2010; Cochrane et al., 2014; Werts et al., 2012). Other empirical studies have shown similar effects

⁶ Valence models are often defined as the party best able to manage immigration, or seen as most competent on this issue amongst voters.

⁷ The distinctions between these three issue based voting models will be analyzed in more detail in the next chapter that outlines the theoretical framework of this dissertation.

at the level of lower geographic contextual units, such as regions and municipal districts (Lubbers et al., 2001, Rojon, 2012; Della Posta, 2013; Stephan, 2015).

We also know from various studies that radical right parties' success depends on a range of political and institutional factors. Such factors include the impact of differing electoral systems, which may hinder or promote the translation of votes into seat shares. One notable example is the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system used in the United Kingdom, which has restricted the electoral success of the United Kingdom Independence Party. However, in so-called 'second order' elections, such as the 2009 and 2014 European Parliament elections, proportional representation (PR) significantly helped the United Kingdom Independence Party electorally (see Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015). Empirical research has also found that the adoption of electoral thresholds in some countries is also likely to restrict radical right party support (see Norris, 2005; Carter, 2005; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006). Additional 'supply-side' research on the radical right has also shown the strong impact of party leadership and the nature of media coverage on levels of support (see Norris, 2005; Mudde, 1999; 2007; Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart, 2007; 2009).

Methodology

As discussed in Chapter 1, contradictory evidence surrounds the connection and subsequent empirical relationship between economic conditions and radical right party support (see Halikiopoulou and Vlandas, 2015; Halikiopoulou and Vasilopoulou, 2014). It has often been hypothesized that economic crises lead to a systematic shift in electoral support for radical right parties (Mudde, 2014b). This can largely be charted back to the interwar period in the 1930s where the 'Weimar myth' or 'economics breeds extremism' thesis first took hold. Scholars such as Arzheimer (2012: p. 6) note that: '[t]hese explanations assume that changes at the macro-level (a declining economy) bring about changes in individual preferences, which lead to (aggregate) changes in individual political behavior, i.e.

an increase in electoral support for the extreme right [radical right]'. However, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, declining economic conditions do not directly lead to a substantial increase in electoral support for populist radical right parties. Instead, there are a number of theoretical explanations for the lack of consensus on the link between economic conditions and radical right party support. The next section provides a more detailed explanation of these reasons.

It is important to consider methodological factors as one explanation for the weak link between economic conditions and radical right party support. These factors are wide-ranging and include elements such as the timeframe and operationalization of variables that different researchers have used in their studies. Firstly, a number of studies have drawn on different time periods in examining the impact of economic downturns on radical right party support. For example, Knigge (1998) models aggregate level support for the radical right through Eurobarometer surveys in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, West Germany, Denmark, and Italy between 1984 and 1993. Knigge finds positive effects, suggesting declining economic conditions create a favorable climate for higher levels of radical right support. In contrast, Jackman et al. (1996) investigate the political and economic conditions that favor the success of far right parties from 1970 through to 1990.

Building on these empirical findings, Funke et al. (2016) show the importance of distinguishing between different types of economic downturns in assessing populist radical right party support. This study drew on aggregate level models and covered an extensive time period consisting of the past 140 years. Moreover, recent studies such as Arzheimer (2009) have drawn on pooled Eurobarometer surveys from 1980 to 2002 in examining a range of political and economic factors that drive support for the populist radical right. More recent empirical studies have deployed different time periods, drawing on pooled cross-national European Social Survey data (ESS) from 2002 to 2008, to examine the relationship between

economic downturns and electoral support for the radical right (see Werts, 2010; Werts et al., 2012).

When it comes to operationalization, studies have drawn on different empirical measures such as rates of unemployment, inflation and GDP when examining the impact of economic downturns on populist radical right party support (see Arzheimer, 2009). The different operationalization of macroeconomic factors by different studies has arguably led to widespread variations. As Pardos-Prado (2015: p. 353) succinctly notes: ‘The effect of these [macroeconomic conditions], however is not always consistent across space and time, and it seems to be dependent on a complex set of [statistical] interactions.’ Simply put, empirical research at the cross-national level suggests that populist radical right parties benefit from higher levels of unemployment and increased levels of immigration (see Arzheimer, 2009: p. 262). However, higher levels of unemployment do not generally by themselves increase radical right party support. When unemployment and immigration levels at the country-level are both high and combined together as interaction variables in statistical models, research indicates that support for the radical right will increase (see Golder, 2003; Arzheimer, 2009; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006; Norris, 2005). A core explanation that accounts for this diversity in empirical findings is that scholars have focused on different time periods, operationalization, and countries under investigation. Therefore, this methodological diversity has arguably accounted for widespread variations between different sets of macroeconomic conditions driving radical right party support across Europe

Original Contribution: Party Competition

The contextual level literature has also demonstrated that increased support for populist radical right parties has occurred both in economic good times and in times of economic stability (see Mudde, 2014b) that further adds to the puzzle. It is also puzzling that no clear academic consensus has emerged in the literature surrounding different economic contexts

and how mainstream parties such as the center right can frame their party strategies in response to radical right parties and exploit different economic conditions for their own electoral gains. The literature on populist radical right parties has often treated these parties in isolation from other types of party families, such as the mainstream center right and center left. Mudde (2014b) has noted how there has been an astonishing amount of research post-2000 on the populist radical right, but at the same time much less has been written about other types of party families in Europe. Party competition by its nature is highly complex and the growth of far right parties in the 21st century inevitably means that mainstream parties on the center right and left have had to devise coherent strategies to counteract the electoral threat of this insurgent party family. Whilst immigration is the key issue dimension that populist radical right parties mobilize around, this chapter argues that it is often forgotten how the socio-cultural issue dimension of immigration is also interlinked with the ideology of the mainstream center right. The immigration issue is linked to other key issues such as keeping taxation low, maintaining law and order alongside national security that is likely to appeal to a core base of the center right electorate (see Bale, 2008). Therefore, there is a distinct rationale for mainstream center right parties to focus their electoral appeals on key issues such as immigration, as it can conceivably allow them to restrict the electoral success of the radical right party family and boost their own electoral fortunes.

Building on the previous point, a shortcoming of recent party competition scholarship (see Bale, 2008; Van der Brug et al., 2005; Mudde, 2010; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Bale) is that these studies have not directly tested how mainstream center right parties can play up the immigration issue in different economic contexts, such as in economic bad times and in times of economic stability alongside the electoral implications that this poses. The dissertation therefore seeks to add a missing piece to this puzzle, in focusing on (i) party competition around the immigration issue, alongside examining the dynamics of competition between

mainstream center right and the radical right in (ii) different economic contexts across the 21st century through their ‘strategic’ use of this issue. This dissertation therefore seeks to add to the existing party competition scholarship on the populist radical right through devising an original theoretical framework. This theoretical framework seeks to understand how mainstream center right parties can prosper electorally from the immigration issue in different economic contexts, and at the same time restrict the electoral fortunes of the populist radical right on this issue dimension.

Methodologically, the theoretical framework in this dissertation seeks to build on the methodological shortcomings of previous party competition studies on the populist radical right (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Van der Brug et al., 2005; Bale, 2008) by examining a larger timeframe that spans two different economic contexts in the 21st century. Firstly, this allows the dissertation to investigate comparative patterns of party competition in economic good (1999–2007) and bad times (2008–2013). This procedure not only expands the number of parties under investigation, but also seeks to enhance the external validity of the dissertation. Secondly, the dissertation supplements the large N comparative test of party competition dynamics on immigration with a standalone case study analysis. This methodological pluralism allows the dissertation to examine both internal and external validity of the theoretical framework, whilst at the same time crucially focusing on party competition dynamics in specific countries across Europe. The next chapter lays out this original theoretical framework, the conditions that underpin it and the core methodology in more detail.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter argued that much of the contemporary populist radical right literature has focused on the types of people that vote for radical right parties, often at the expense of the party competition literature. The party competition literature on the far right has examined the

unique issue stances that populist radical right parties adopt on core socio-cultural issues such as immigration, alongside the ‘electoral winning formula’ that this party family adopts. However, the literature on the ‘individual’ level has been researched much more extensively than in comparison to the party competition side. Put simply, we know much more about the types of people that vote for the populist radical right at the individual level, and about the ‘niche’ and core party ideology that radical right parties adopt in their electoral campaigns, than about how mainstream parties such as the center right can challenge and even restrict the electoral success of far right parties in different economic contexts.

Whilst recent empirical studies have begun to examine the party competition on immigration between the mainstream center right and far right in Europe (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Pardos-Prado et al., 2014) these studies have tended to focus on positional and spatial models. In addition, these studies have tended not to examine the effect that issue salience; more specifically how the emphasis placed on this issue by center right parties can have in restricting the electoral success of the radical right and providing a profitable electoral strategy for the center right. This chapter then argued that a key shortcoming of recent party competition scholarship is that they have not directly examined the effects of party competition in different economic contexts and how this can impact on the populist radical right’s electoral exploitation of immigration. Therefore, it is important to factor in how center right parties can play up the immigration issue in different economic contexts; such as in economic bad times and times of economic stability alongside the electoral implications that this poses. This is an important gap that this dissertation pursues as it allows us to investigate center right party electoral success and how this party family can potentially restrict radical right parties’ support in different economic contexts. My theory which is developed in the following chapter argues that mainstream center right parties are better placed ideologically than the center left to challenge and restrict the electoral success of the far right, in focusing

on the socio-cultural dimension of immigration that can bring considerable electoral benefits for the center right.

Chapter 4

Theory

In this chapter, I build on Chapter 3 by outlining my theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’, which argues that the immigration issue is not ‘owned’ solely by populist radical right parties, but one from which center right parties can emphasize and prosper electorally from. My theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ then offers an argument about the relative electoral success of mainstream center right parties in 21st century Europe and how they are able to perform better electorally than populist radical right parties when emphasizing the immigration issue, as opposed to taking specific positional stances on this issue.

My original contribution to knowledge builds on recent findings from the party competition literature (see Bale, 2008; Mudde, 2014c; Pardos-Prado et al., 2014; Pardos-Prado, 2015), and investigates how emphasizing the immigration issue affects the electoral success of both party families, considering in particular center right parties’ ‘strategic’ use of the issue. I investigate these matters in the contexts of periods both of economic crisis and non-crisis, to examine how the impact of the immigration issue on both party families varies according to the wider economic context. This theory has important implications for contemporary party politics, in enabling us to understand the link between different economic contexts, the immigration issue, and the dynamics of party competition between contemporary center right and populist radical right parties in Europe.

4.1 Models of Issue Voting

Before addressing my theoretical model, it is important to outline the three main models of issue-based voting in the existing literature that underpin it. The immigration issue has become a central site for political competition in 21st century Europe (Boswell, 2003; Dennison and Goodwin, 2015; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015). The majority of countries

across the European Union have seen increased levels of migration in the 21st century, with the issue becoming increasingly salient and also a contentious one amongst a large proportion of voters (see Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015). It has therefore become crucial for contemporary political parties in European politics to outline where they stand on this issue to voters and strategically frame this issue so that it can have electoral advantages. In order to examine the importance of socio-cultural issues such as immigration on center right party electoral success and the underlying party competition dynamics with the populist radical right, this section distinguishes three competing models of issue voting: spatial, valence, and salience models in the literature.

Issue Positions

The first model of issue based voting on immigration comprises the issue position/spatial model. At the ‘supply-side’, issue positions often involve two contrasting or opposing views that political parties can hold on an issue such as immigration. At the ‘demand-side’, voters are then likely to react to the opposing views that political parties hold on an issue (Downs, 1957). Evidently the ideological strands that some populist radical right and mainstream center right parties adopt are not too dissimilar to one another. Research has suggested that both party families are much more likely than their center left counterparts to adopt tough policies on immigration (see Bale, 2008; Pardos-Prado, 2015). A slightly more nuanced distinction that is important to make is the issue proximity model. The issue proximity model is interlinked with the spatial model of voting and examines the ideological convergence/ ‘distance’ between different sets of political parties on a particular issue. The central assumption of the issue proximity model is that voters will vote for the party that is closest to their own political stances (see Rabinowitz et al., 1989; Pardos-Prado, 2015).

Valence Issues

A second competing model of issue based voting is the valence model first formulated by Stokes (1963) and seen as a ‘rival’ theoretical model to the original model developed by Downs (1957). Scholars such as Odmalm and Bale (2015: p. 2) note that ‘voters’ ideological preferences may matter less than their judgments about the ability of parties to deliver competently (see Stokes, 1963; Riker, 1996; Green, 2007). Valence issues can therefore be defined as ones where voters base their decisions on judgments about which parties are most competent and best able to deliver. Applied to the immigration context, voters may vote for a particular party based on ‘their ability to limit the numbers coming into the country’ (Odmalm and Bale, 2015: p. 2). Thus, some scholars argue that issue positions may matter considerably less than valence issues, with voters using cognitive shortcuts or ‘heuristics’ to decide which political parties can be considered best to deliver on the immigration issue.

Issue Salience

The third model of issue-based voting on immigration that is often explored in the party competition literature is the issue salience model. There are two central assumptions that form the aggregate level issue salience model (see Budge, 1982; Budge and Farlie, 1983a; Budge and Farlie, 1983b; Budge, 2015). Firstly, the theory assumes that parties compete over issues, in order to acquire and defend their issue ownership.⁸ Secondly, parties may compete over new issues and in competition with opponents, primarily in order to steal issue ownership from their opponents by ‘reframing’ issues (Kaufmann, 2004; Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). Budge (2015: p. 767) also notes that political parties tend to emphasize certain issues that are distinct to other party families and that there is a ‘[c]ontinuing association between certain parties and the topics that they emphasize.’ Thus, in the Budge (2015) model of issue salience, there is a direct link between issue ownership and salience, in

⁸ Issue ownership is generally defined in the literature as an issue which voters associate with specific parties.

that political parties are likely to play up to their strengths, in strategically emphasizing issues that they are considered to perform well on and even ‘own’ from other political parties. This is likely to constitute an electorally beneficial strategy and allows certain political parties, especially ‘niche’ parties to not only emphasize certain issues, but to become known by voters as the party which can best deliver on that issue (see Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). Populist radical right parties across Europe are a direct example of this, placing frequent emphasis on socio-cultural issues such as immigration in their party ideology (see Mudde, 1999; 2007).

4.2 Center Right Parties in Europe: The Immigration issue

Before outlining and developing my original theoretical framework, this section of the chapter provides more of a contextual background about how center right parties have adopted and integrated the immigration issue into their party strategies. This section makes an important argument that the immigration issue is not one that has only recently been adopted by the center right in its party manifestos and party strategy; rather, that there are frequent examples of center right parties adopting differing stances on the immigration issue, with it conceivably translating into electoral success for them (see Bale, 2008).

The center right in Europe has tended to consist of pragmatic ‘office-seeking’ parties that have generally focused ideologically on issues such as law and order, alongside creating a strong and stable state. It is only natural that this party family would focus on immigration, as it is an issue of national importance that could conceivably propel it to office (see Bale, 2008; Heywood, 2012). Therefore, this section argues that center right parties can be electorally successful when competing strategically on the immigration issue and that this strategic use is based primarily on the specific type of economic context faced (economic bad versus economic good times). It remains a puzzle as to why the academic literature has not more fully explored the role that mainstream center right parties can play on the immigration issue

(see Pardos-Prado, 2015). In some countries such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, some center right parties have made the immigration issue central to their electoral campaigns and emphasized the issue (Van Kersbergen et al., 2008). In other countries such as Germany however, the immigration issue has not been seen as important by some center right parties and the issue has even been downplayed (see Cornelius et al., 1994; Thränhardt, 1995; Pellikaan et al., 2007). In comparison to populist radical right parties, center right parties are historically entrenched in Western European party systems, often having the advantage of a higher likelihood of being in government than far right parties, alongside tending to be perceived by voters as economically competent (see Ivarsflaten, 2005; Hanley, Szczerbiak, Fowler, Haughton, 2007; Bale, 2008).

Historically, in terms of socio-economic policy, center right parties in Western Europe have been generally considered to be in favor of keeping taxes low and not interfering with market forces, largely holding neo-liberal economic policies, while also emphasizing the importance of national security (Bale, 2008). This also extends to socio-cultural issues, such as immigration and nationalism. Even before the French Front National came to prominence in France, the French President Jacques Chirac often talked up the issue of immigration. A similar strategy on the immigration issue was also adopted by center right parties in countries which did not have far right parties, such as Spain and Portugal (see Perlmutter, 1996; see Bale, 2008; Heywood, 2012). An additional example of center right parties focusing on immigration was the case in the Netherlands; with the Conservative-Liberal VVD Party (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) adopting hardline stances on immigration in the early 1990s under leader Frits Bolkestein (see Bale, 2008).

A similar approach to immigration was also adopted by the German Christian Democratic Union–Christian Social Union–Free Democratic Party (CDU–CSU–FDP) coalition in the 1980s and arguably enabled them to achieve a considerable degree of

electoral success (Bale, 2008). The positioning and emphasis on immigration by center right parties are therefore not a new phenomenon, and has also been shown to be electorally successful in some countries (see also Cornelius et al., 1994; Thränhardt, 1995; Pellikaan et al., 2007). In effect, mainstream center right parties are likely to frame immigration as central to their ideological programmes as it may lead to electoral rewards.

Party Competition: Competing with Populist Radical Right Parties

The incentive for center right parties to compete with populist radical right parties on socio-cultural issues from a spatial perspective is outlined by Bale (2008: p. 319): ‘Calling for the tightening of borders and sounding off against the evils of multiculturalism might serve to counter the electoral threat of [radical right parties] populists or, by boosting the salience of such issues that parties thrive on, it might increase their vote-share and help the more respectable right to win back or maintain office’ (see also Bale, 2003; Meguid, 2005). The argument that mainstream center right parties can hurt populist radical right parties through adopting more restrictionist positions (i.e. limiting the number of immigrants) has been demonstrated by Van der Brug, Fennema, and Tillie (2005). Van der Brug et al’s (2005) study showed that center right parties can mobilize voters who are concerned with immigration and thus mobilize a large proportion of center right constituencies.

Electoral Dilemma: Issue Positions on Immigration

However, whilst some center right parties have arguably begun of late to emphasize the immigration issue more in their party strategies, there still exists a clear tension in the party ideology of many contemporary center right parties on the immigration issue. From a spatial perspective, Odmalm and Bale (2015: p. 5) succinctly outline this tension and the electoral dilemma that center right parties often face, and how this can potentially impact negatively on their electoral fortunes. On the one hand, competing on and adopting more hardline

immigration stances can lead to electoral rewards for the mainstream right, by capturing voters from far right parties. A contemporary example includes the 2002 French Presidential Election second round run-off, where President Jacques Chirac outperformed the far right anti-immigrant candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen.

On the other hand, adopting hardline immigration stances can create internal party splits on ideology, moreover ‘[crystallizing] a tension between market liberal and culturally conservative wings’ (Odmalm and Bale, 2015: p. 5). Thus, from a spatial perspective, the market liberal wings are likely to prefer a more moderate and supportive stance towards immigration, whereas the cultural conservative wing is likely to advocate a more hardline stance, seeking to place restrictions on the number of immigrants that can enter the country. This is an ideological tension that is difficult for contemporary center right parties to resolve and can paradoxically weaken the electoral success of this party family, with internal party disagreements emerging amongst the core party leadership. A direct example of such a case is the UK Conservative Party which has faced numerous challenges from different sections of its parliamentary party and core leadership throughout the early 2000s on the best way to situate and frame the immigration issue. The 2005 UK General Election was a direct example of a flawed strategy on immigration, with the party’s issue position under leader Michael Howard generally seen as being too restrictive to win over the majority of British voters and playing a role in the party’s poor election performance (see Heywood, 2012).

In contrast to Odmalm and Bale (2015), the theoretical framework that I develop argues that center right parties’ strategy on immigration does not need to depend on a resolution of internal party disagreements on immigration positions, but instead on economic context and knowing when to strategically ramp up and emphasize the issue to voters. Simply put, center right parties’ ideology is largely rooted in pragmatism: they are generally ‘office-seeking’ parties that have adapted effectively to different political and economic situations

throughout the 20th and 21st centuries (see Heywood, 2012). Therefore, the theoretical framework that is outlined later on in this chapter offers a rationale for how center right parties can be electorally successful when competing on the immigration issue, and shows how this is context dependent. In line with their ideological pragmatism (see Heywood, 2012; Girvin, 2005), my argument is that center right parties can play and emphasize (issue salience) the immigration issue at any time, but strategically they can focus on different economic contexts in order to maximize their electoral benefits. Times of economic crisis are likely to reduce ideological tensions within center right parties, with the party hierarchy and leadership realizing the distinct electoral opportunities that such crises can bring by tapping into voters' fears about rising immigration. However, center right parties must also seek to position themselves strategically on immigration during economic bad times, as too much of a hostile stance on immigration may also risk alienating a core section of voters. By focusing on issue salience and emphasizing the issue instead, this party strategy may enable the party to mitigate the electoral threat posed by the radical right in economic bad times.

Secondly, economic good times may also result in internal party disagreements for center right parties about how best to articulate their strategies on immigration. The case of the Conservative Party at the 2005 UK General Election under Michael Howard is a direct example of such a flawed strategy. Nonetheless, internal party disagreements are unlikely to be as much of a hindrance to the electoral fortunes of the center right in economic good times. The theoretical argument offered here is that center right parties will realize that economic conditions are less favorable for the radical right to benefit from and that they therefore pose less of an electoral threat. This in turn may enable the center right to amplify the salience of the issue and sweep up voters who would otherwise be inclined to vote for the radical right, through underscoring their status as an established governing party.

4.3 Center Left Parties in Europe: The Immigration Issue

Recent literature has also argued that center left and social democratic parties, by contrast with center right and populist radical right parties, may potentially be punished by voters on the immigration issue, as it is one likely to affect their core working class support base (see Bale et al., 2010 and 2012; Givens and Luedtke, 2004; Boswell, 2003). This is primarily because center left parties in Europe are often considered to be tainted by their association with immigration and the promotion of freedom of movement (see Bale, 2003; Bale, 2008; Arzheimer, 2013). It is therefore important to factor in historical context and this allows us to understand how social democratic parties have changed in recent years and why they are likely not to benefit from emphasizing immigration as much as center right parties do. Whilst post-World War II social democratic parties traditionally represented the working classes, this party family transformed itself in the 1990s across Western Europe. It shifted from being a 'mass-party' predominantly representing the working classes to a more 'professionalized' and 'office-seeking party' (see Katz et al., 1994). As such, center left parties such as New Labour under Tony Blair and Gerard Schröder's Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) focused much more on attracting the middle classes, in order to capture the median voter and win office (see Quinn, 2004; Bale et al., 2010; Bale et al., 2012).

However, this office-seeking electoral strategy has arguably come at a high cost. A consequence of this electoral strategy was that working class voters felt disgruntled and 'left behind' by wider processes of globalization, and particularly by the center left's perceived abandonment of the working class group which was the traditionally the main social class driver of its support. A large proportion of these disaffected working class voters have now ended up shifting away from center left parties such as the UK Labour Party and Parti Socialiste (PS) in France towards populist radical right parties, such as UKIP and the Front National (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015; Marquand, 2015;

Arzheimer, 2013). Thus, when factoring in how center right and populist radical right parties seek to make political gains from the immigration issue, it is important to remember that the issue is also likely to affect the electoral chances of the center left, particularly as this party family has tended to have a negative association amongst voters on this particular issue of late (see Marquand, 2015).

4.4 ‘Strategic’ Emphasis on Immigration model

The theoretical framework that is developed in this chapter builds on recent academic scholarship by Cas Mudde and Sergi Pardos-Prado. Mudde (2014c) has argued that competition between center right and far right parties in Western Europe is based on issue ownership, particularly around the topic of immigration. Pardos-Prado (2015) draws on a spatial perspective in showing the conditions under which mainstream center right parties can compete on the immigration issue and restrict the electoral success of populist radical right parties. Pardos-Prado (2015: pp. 365–366) shows that ‘the proximity between voter and party immigration positions can strongly mobilize moderate center right electorates and thus limit the capacity of new [populist radical right parties] to monopolize the immigration issue.’

Thus, Pardos-Prado’s spatial findings also demonstrate how center right parties can reduce the electoral impact of populist radical right parties by making immigration – ‘owned’ traditionally by the radical right – more palatable to moderate right voters. Pardos-Prado’s findings suggest that center right parties can bring immigration into their platforms as part of a more moderate ideological strategy versus (an extreme) stance (see Ivarsflaten, 2005; Bale, 2008; Bale et al., 2013).

However, whilst Pardos-Prado’s research exhibits novel findings for the role that center right parties can play in restricting the electoral success of populist radical right parties, the spatial account is much more focused on issue positions and does not systematically test the role played by issue salience on the electoral success of contemporary center right parties.

The next section outlines my original theoretical model that places much more importance on issue salience as opposed to the spatial model outlined by scholars such as Pardos-Prado.

My theory departs from Pardos-Prado's recent study as it hypothesizes that issue salience will play a much more important role in shaping the electoral success of center right parties in the 21st century, rather than the role played by issue positions on immigration, which feature heavily in Pardos-Prado's account. In contrast to Pardos-Prado's spatial driven account, the theory that I develop empirically tests the combined effects of salience and spatial/positional models through a large N comparative research design in Chapters 5 and 6 of this dissertation, alongside a case study analysis in Chapter 7 that complements the main empirical findings.⁹

Exclusion of the Center Left

The 'strategic emphasis' theoretical framework focuses primarily on the dynamics of party competition on the immigration issue amongst mainstream center right and populist radical right parties. Issues such as taxation and European integration are also two such issues that crisscross center right and populist radical right party strategies. However this dissertation concentrates solely on the immigration issue because this is the central issue that radical right parties tend to focus and compete on. There are two primary reasons why the theoretical framework excludes center left parties and does not treat them as central to the dissertation. Firstly, as demonstrated in Chapter 2 of the dissertation, center right parties are closer spatially in empirical terms to populist radical right parties on immigration positions than center left parties often are (see Pardos-Prado, 2015). Center right parties have also been known to adopt dynamic stances on immigration and there are numerous cases, such as in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and France, where center right parties have been 'closer' to radical right spaces and have also made the issue salient in their party manifestos.

⁹ The empirical testing and methodology is outlined more comprehensively later on in the chapter.

As outlined previously in this chapter, whilst some center left parties have engaged with the immigration issue, they have generally seen mixed electoral fortunes on the immigration issue (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014; Marquand, 2015; Van Heerden et al., 2013). Some scholars have also argued that center left parties are more constrained on the immigration issue than center right parties are, due to their internationalist outlook and thus been less willing to emphasize the issue (see Van Heerden et al., 2013; Bale et al., 2010). The second justification for focusing on center right rather than center left parties is that the immigration issue is centrally linked to the core ideology of the center right. The immigration issue is directly linked to key center right issues such as keeping taxation low, maintaining law and order alongside national security that is likely to appeal to a core base of the center right electorate (see Bale, 2008; Bale et al., 2010; Van Spanje, 2010; Pardos-Prado, 2015). Thus, these two justifications provide a clear rationale for why the theoretical framework focuses on the center right and populist radical right party families.

Though center left parties are not central to the theoretical framework, conceivably center right parties will benefit much more than the center left will from emphasizing the immigration issue. Primarily, this is because center left parties across Europe are generally considered to have been tainted by their association with the immigration issue and the overall pursuit of freedom of movement in the early 21st century (see Arzheimer, 2013; Marquand, 2015). Thus, drawing on the ‘left behind voters’ thesis (Goodwin and Milazzo, 2015; Ford and Goodwin, 2014), a similar mechanism is likely at work, with center left parties in Europe not benefiting electorally from the issue largely due to the negative association that this party family has amongst voters on this issue (see Arzheimer, 2013; Bale, 2003).

Theoretical Framework

In the latter part of this chapter, the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework is developed, in highlighting differences and identifying patterns during times of economic crisis and during more economically prosperous times. While examples of strategic framing on issues are not new in the literature, this theoretical framework includes the often under-considered role of center right parties, alongside their capacity to strategically challenge issue ‘ownership’ (here, immigration) and perform better electorally than the far right on this issue.

The emphasis that mainstream center right parties place on immigration is likely to be much more important electorally than the spatial position that these parties adopt on the same issue. Three reasons may account for this. First, voters may not necessarily know about specific policy differences. Second, and linked, there may well be few significant spatial variations in immigration policy between center right and populist radical right parties (see Dolezal et al., 2014; Odmalm and Bale, 2015). This compounds the difficulty that voters might have in distinguishing the policy positions of the two party families. Thirdly, as outlined previously in this chapter, center right parties often face an electoral dilemma in regards to their positioning on immigration; whether to adopt a more hardline stance on the issue, or to adopt more moderate stances on the issue (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015). In order to minimize voter flight to the populist radical right, one such party strategy to get around this electoral dilemma is for center right parties to consider placing greater emphasis on immigration, particularly in economic bad times. Such a timely and strategic emphasis on the immigration issue could potentially undermine the electoral efficacy of the issue of immigration for the far right (see Meguid, 2005). Such ‘strategic emphasis’ could offer a credible and strategic exploitation of the issue at a crucial moment.

The Dynamics of Party Competition: Issue Salience on Immigration

In theoretical terms, the core dynamics of the party competition game are about the center

right party family and how best they can frame the immigration issue that can lead to electoral success. Far Right Parties across Europe by and large tend to always emphasize the immigration issue (make the issue salient) and therefore the center right party family must decide on the type of competition, in knowing when to ramp up and emphasize the issue in their party strategy. In party competition terms, the theory makes the assumption that far right parties will nearly always emphasize immigration as this has typically constituted a key issue of their party strategy. It follows that center right parties must decide strategically when to ramp up or ‘downplay’ and not emphasize the issue. It is therefore important to distinguish two key aspects of the theory, namely how parties emphasize immigration (‘high’ emphasis) as opposed to how parties do not emphasize the issue (‘low’ emphasis).¹⁰ My theoretical framework argues that different levels of ‘strategic emphasis’ are likely to influence the electoral success of center right parties in the 21st century. For instance, center right parties that place more ‘visibility’ on this issue are likely to benefit electorally, with voters conceivably noticing the frequent coverage of the issue in their rhetoric. By contrast, center right parties that remain ‘silent’ or downplay the immigration issue are likely to suffer electorally. This is likely to provide more of an electoral opportunity for the populist radical right to benefit by emphasizing immigration, effectively taking the issue away from the mainstream center right (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015; Bale et al., 2010; Meguid, 2005).

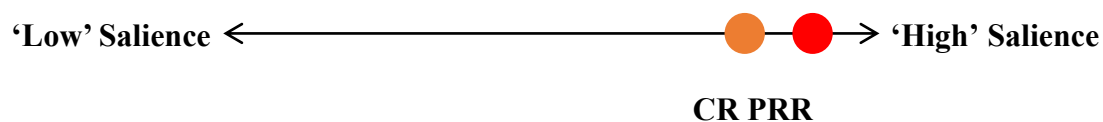
Figure 4.1 below outlines the simplified dynamic game in theory terms between center right and populist radical right parties that underlines the ‘scope conditions’ of the theoretical framework. It is important to note that this model applies more to times of economic crisis, than in economic good times, primarily because party competition is considered to be stronger between the center right and radical right on the immigration issue in times of economic crisis. The first situation of the theory argues that when specific center right parties

¹⁰ I use the terms ‘emphasis’ and ‘salience’ interchangeably throughout the dissertation.

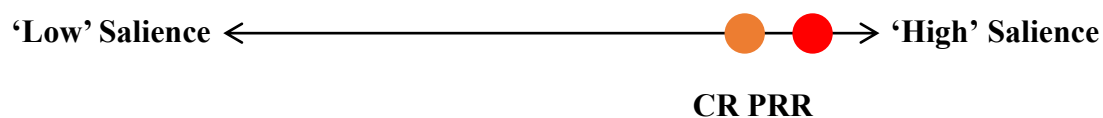
emphasize immigration, they can wrest control of the issue from the radical right and perform better electorally. However, this scenario of ‘strategic emphasis’ may also play out in a more nuanced and complex manner. The second situation provides a different scenario of party competition. It is likely that in some countries, when both center right and far right parties emphasize immigration (party competition is strong); both party families are likely to perform better electorally. However, the third and final situation argues that when specific center right parties do not emphasize immigration, this opens up ‘issue salience space’ for populist radical right parties to emphasize immigration and tap into concerned voters. Thus, this provides an electoral opportunity for radical right parties to prosper electorally, from an emphasis on immigration at the expense of center right parties. These three situations are likely to play out differently according to different economic contexts, particularly when incorporating incumbency patterns into the theoretical framework.

Figure 4.1: The Dynamic Model of Party Competition

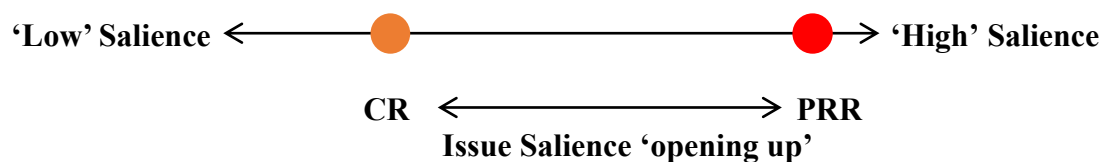
Situation I: Center Right outperforms Populist Radical Right Parties: Center Right Parties emphasize immigration and perform better electorally than the Populist Radical Right



Situation II: Center Right and Populist Radical Right party competition is strong: Both party families emphasize immigration and both perform better electorally



Situation III: Populist Radical Right outperforms the Center Right: Center Right Party do not emphasize immigration and perform electorally worse



Notes: ‘CR’ denotes Center Right Party
‘PRR’ denotes Populist Radical Right Party

4.5 Contexts: economic good times and bad

The ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework focuses on three core factors (salience of immigration; incumbency and economic context) in examining the dynamics of party competition between center right and populist radical right parties. The theory is then tested in two distinct economic contexts throughout the 21st century in national parliamentary elections. This allows the dissertation to examine the electoral success of those center right parties that emphasized immigration in economic bad times (2008–2013) and in better economic times (1999–2007), helping us to understand further the resilience of the center right party family on this specific issue in two distinct economic contexts.

Economic Crisis (2008–2013)

Populist radical right parties may benefit from periods of economic crisis for a number of reasons. First and in line with theories of protest voting, they might benefit from discontent with mainstream center right and center left political parties (see Norris, 2005; Van der Brug et al., 2000; Van der Brug et al., 2005; Werts et al., 2012). Second, and linked, these parties may benefit from the punishment meted out to incumbent parties in government that tends to occur during economic bad times (see Lewis-Beck, 1986; Alvarez et al., 2000; Duch, 2008; Hobolt et al., 2012). However, there are restrictions on the degree that emphasizing immigration can provide an electorally successful strategy for incumbent center right parties in times of economic crisis. Whilst incumbent center right parties that emphasize immigration may be able to distract attention away from the economy and perform better electorally, it is more conceivable that incumbency will play into the hands of populist radical right parties during this economic period. Thus, the theoretical framework argues that in the context of the 2008–2013 economic crisis, it is likely that there will be a wider anti-incumbency pattern and that when a center right party is an incumbent, emphasizing immigration is unlikely to allow the incumbent to achieve electoral success. In contrast, ‘challenger’ center right parties (those

in opposition) are not likely to be constrained as much during this electoral period, compared to incumbent center right parties. This is an important distinction to make, as this type of center right party has the advantage of being in opposition and does not have the hindrance of being in office at the onset of the 2008 economic crisis.

Economic Stability (1999–2007)

By exploring a second context at the outset of the 21st century, this allows the dissertation to examine the effect of immigration on the dynamics of party competition between center right and populist radical right parties when economic times are good, as opposed to when times are bad. The immigration issue is still likely to resonate particularly well with voters outside periods of economic crisis, benefiting center right parties and potentially hindering the populist radical right. Primarily this is because economic good times are likely to reduce the electoral threat of the radical right around immigration and make the issue less of an electoral advantage, as the radical right will not have an ‘out-group’ such as immigrants that they can readily scapegoat and link directly to economic dislocation (see Meguid, 2005; Carter, 2005; Mudde, 2007). At the same time, economic good times should lead to electoral rewards for mainstream parties, particularly incumbents of both the center right and the center left.

Building on from the core assumptions of the theoretical framework, there are five overall hypotheses (H₁-H₅) that will be empirically tested in this dissertation. There are three main hypotheses (H₁-H₃) of ‘strategic emphasis’ during the 2008–2013 economic crisis that will be empirically tested (see Table 4.1). These are as follows:

H₁: In line with theories of protest voting, ‘incumbent’ parties on the mainstream center right and center left will lose out electorally in the crisis period. This provides distinct electoral opportunities for the populist radical right in the context of economic bad times.

H₂: ‘Challenger’ (non-incumbent/opposition) center right parties that emphasize immigration

will perform better electorally than populist radical right parties.

H₃: Center Right Parties (particularly ‘incumbents’) that do not emphasize immigration will perform electorally worse, with populist radical right parties benefiting electorally.

Therefore, there are two hypotheses (H₄-H₅) that will be empirically tested (see Table 4.1) covering the economic good period of 1996 to 2007 are:

H₄: In line with economic good times, ‘incumbent’ parties on the mainstream center right and center left will perform better electorally.

H₅: Center Right Parties that emphasize immigration will perform better electorally than populist radical right parties.

Empirical Testing

Methodologically, the theoretical framework is tested in three interrelated empirical chapters, primarily through expert surveys. Expert surveys have been statistically proven to produce consistent results and be highly reliable, in examining party positions both across Western and Central-Eastern Europe (see Whitefield et al., 2007; Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). Chapters 5 and 6 provide an aggregate level comparative test of the theory in economic bad (2008–13) and good times (1999–2007). Chapter 5 draws on the ParlGov (see Döring and Manow 2015) dataset on European national parliamentary elections that has been merged with the Whitefield–Rohrschneider Expert Survey on party positions. This allows the theory to be tested in times of economic crisis. Chapter 6 draws primarily on the CHES that spans more economically prosperous times. These expert surveys allow the dissertation to identify correlations and patterns, thus enhancing the external validity of the theory. However, these expert surveys are snapshots in certain time periods and due to data limitations, both chapters are unable to make direct causal inferences (internal validity) across time about how center

right party electoral success plays out. Chapter 7 seeks to build on this data limitation by drawing on a qualitative analysis that features four case studies that are generated from the main empirical findings in Chapter 5.

Chapter 7 allows the dissertation to illustrate more systematically the internal validity of the theoretical framework. The case studies are structured around a thematic comparison (salience of immigration, crisis; incumbency) that allows the theoretical framework to be tested under different conditions that underline competition between center right and populist radical right parties on immigration. The case study provides added value to the theoretical framework in examining center right and populist radical right party competition dynamics around the emphasis placed on immigration in the crisis period, focusing in particular on the three situations that are outlined. Table 4.2 below outlines the ‘strategic emphasis on immigration model’ and the main operationalization of the two main competing models of issue voting (salience and spatial/positional) that forms the three main empirical chapters of this dissertation.

Theory: Caveats

There are a number of ‘caveats’ that are important to outline that the theoretical framework does not include in this dissertation. Firstly, the valence model of issue based voting tends to be an individual-level model, with voters outlining which party is deemed most competent to handle the immigration issue. As the theoretical model is an aggregate level model, the valence model of issue voting is not directly tested in this dissertation. A limitation caused by not including the valence model of issue voting is that the dissertation cannot claim empirically that center right parties perform better on immigration due to credibility or perceived competence amongst voters on this issue. A second limitation of the theoretical framework is that it does not capture ‘ideological convergence/’distance’ measures on immigration between center right and populist radical right parties as this is beyond the scope

of the dissertation. Instead, the dissertation is more focused in examining the combined effect of issue salience and positions together empirically, in economic bad and good times.

A third limitation and an additional caveat to add is that the theoretical framework does not capture party competition dynamics in countries which do not have a far right party. This is primarily because the theory is focused on examining party competition between center right and far right parties. Two direct examples of countries which have not had far right parties recently are Portugal and Spain and provide interesting cases. The dominant center right party in Spain, the People's Party (PP) has still managed to establish itself on the immigration issue, arguably adopting more anti-immigrant stances and spatially filling the void that the absence of a radical right party has provided. The center right party in Portugal (CDS-PP) has similarly adopted tougher immigration restrictions and made the immigration issue salient in its electoral appeals (see Bale, 2008; Heywood, 2012). Whilst not central to the theoretical framework, center right parties in countries such as Spain have still emphasized immigration, even in the absence of a far right party. Furthermore, a party strategy such as this may serve as an electoral strategy to counteract center left parties such as the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) in electoral terms.

A final caveat is that the 'strategic emphasis' theoretical framework does not differentiate between different party systems (i.e. two-partyist v. multipartyist) systems as this adds another level of complexity that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. It should also be noted that the majority of party systems in Western and Central-Eastern Europe tend to be multipartyist in their nature and that this more fine-grained distinction is therefore not necessary. A more simplified model of party competition is represented (see Figure 4.1) and still allows for a dynamic game to be theoretically depicted for both center right and populist radical right party families, particularly in the case studies that form Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

Table 4.1: Theory of ‘Strategic Emphasis’ Core Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Economic Context
H₁: In line with patterns of economic volatility, incumbent parties on the mainstream center right and center left will lose out electorally (decrease in vote share)	Economic Crisis (2008 – 2013)
H₂: ‘Challenger’ (non-incumbent/opposition) center right parties that emphasize immigration will perform better electorally than populist radical right parties	Economic Crisis (2008 – 2013)
H₃: Center Right Parties (particularly ‘incumbents’) that do not emphasize immigration will perform electorally worse, with populist radical right parties benefiting electorally	Economic Crisis (2008– 2013)
H₄: In line with economic good times, ‘incumbent’ parties on the mainstream center right and center left will perform better electorally (increase in vote share)	Outset of the 21 st Century (1999–2007)
H₅: Center Right Parties that emphasize immigration will perform electorally better (increase in vote share) than populist radical right parties	Outset of the 21 st Century (1999–2007)

Table 4.2 Strategic emphasis on immigration (key indicators)

Issue Based Voting Model	Definition	Operationalization	Level	Measured in Model
Saliency of Immigration	The emphasis placed on political parties' electoral programmes	Economic Crisis (2008–13) <u>Importance of the issue</u> 1= 'Not important' 7= 'Very important' <u>Importance of the issue</u> Outset of the 21st Century (1999–2007) 0= 'Not important' 10= 'Very important'	Aggregate	Yes
Spatial/Position on Immigration	The position on immigration that political parties adopt in their electoral programmes (For or against immigration)	Economic Crisis (2008–13) <u>Position</u> 1= 'Support' 7= 'Against' Outset of the 21st Century (1999–2007) <u>Position</u> 0= 'Opposes tough policy' 10= 'Favors tough policy'	Aggregate	Yes
Valence on Immigration	The party that is seen by voters as being best able to deliver on immigration and is perceived as most competent in managing this issue	Not directly tested	Individual	No

Notes: The 2008–13 economic crisis draws on the Whitefield–Rohrschneider 2007/08 Expert Survey (Chapter 5)
 The 1999–2007 electoral period draws on the 1999–2007 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) (Chapter 6)

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter developed an overarching theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ that highlighted differences and identified patterns during times of crisis and during economically prosperous times. Three core factors (salience of immigration; incumbency and economic context) were identified and play an important role in the dynamics that underline party competition between center right and populist radical right parties. The ‘strategic emphasis’ model is an aggregate level model that seeks to examine how emphasizing immigration provides electoral payoffs for the center right and can allow them under specific situations to outperform the populist radical right in the 21st century in two different economic contexts. This chapter outlined the original contribution to knowledge that this dissertation makes, in outlining a rationale for how center right parties’ strategic use of immigration can allow this party family to outperform populist radical right parties, in times of crisis and also in economically prosperous times. The next chapter empirically tests H1–H3 of the theoretical framework, in examining party competition between both party families in times of economic crisis (2008–2013) and seeks to understand some broader and general patterns that underpin the relative electoral success of center right parties in this economic context.

Chapter 5

Center Right Party Electoral Resilience in the 2008–2013 Economic Crisis: ‘Strategic Emphasis’ and Non-Incumbent effects on the Immigration issue

This chapter examines how mainstream center right parties and populist radical right parties responded to the 2008–2013 economic crisis and the strategies that they have adopted, in particular the degree to which they compete on and emphasize specific socio-cultural issues, notably immigration. This economic context allows the chapter to examine patterns of electoral volatility and protest voting (H_1), namely the extent to which this has created an opportunity for insurgent populist radical right parties to benefit electorally at the expense of mainstream parties. Building on the central theory outlined in Chapter 4, this chapter argues that in party competition terms, mainstream center right parties will respond to the recent economic crisis through seeking to emphasize the immigration issue as a strategy that can provide electoral payoffs. Simply put, center right parties (particularly ‘challenger’ ones) that emphasize immigration and make the issue ‘visible’ to voters are likely to perform electorally better than populist radical right parties (H_2), primarily because they can emphasize the right salient issue in the economic crisis. The center right may also be seen as a more ‘moderate’ and credible party family amongst voters on this issue (see Bale, 2008; Pardos-Prado, 2015).

However, in line with the theoretical framework, if center right parties ‘downplay’ or ‘remain silent’ on immigration, then this allows the far right to gain coverage of the issue amongst voters and conceivably profit electorally from the center right’s absence on this issue domain (H_3). This chapter therefore provides the first aggregate level empirical test of this theory in the crisis context, in empirically testing the dynamics of party competition on the immigration issue between both party families and its electoral implications in national parliamentary elections across 24 countries in Europe. Thus, this chapter tests three

hypotheses (H₁–H₃) of the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework in times of economic crisis:

HYPOTHESES

H₁: In line with theories of protest voting, ‘incumbent’ parties on the mainstream center right and center left will lose out electorally in the crisis period. This provides distinct electoral opportunities for the populist radical right in the context of economic bad times.

H₂: ‘Challenger’ (non-incumbent/opposition) center right parties that emphasize immigration will perform better electorally than populist radical right parties.

H₃: Center Right Parties (particularly ‘incumbents’) that do not emphasize immigration will perform electorally worse, with populist radical right parties benefiting electorally.

5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Data

This chapter draws on two datasets which have been merged together to form a ‘change in party performance’ dataset. The first is a widely used dataset on parties’ electoral performances in national parliamentary elections across Europe (ParlGov: Döring and Manow 2015). These data include the percentage of votes each party in each country won during parliamentary elections.¹¹ The central dependent variable comprises the change in electoral performance and measures the overall electoral success of parties. The change in electoral performance is measured as the difference in percentage of aggregate votes between the national parliamentary election before the 2008 crisis to the first election after the crisis. In the case of an election during 2008, these elections are used as the base, so that each country’s parliamentary election data includes the onset of the economic crisis in 2008. A

¹¹ The chapter also makes every effort to account for parties that changed coalition.

positive score means that a political party performed better electorally from the previous election and a negative score means it performed electorally worse.

The chapter then merges the ParlGov data together with a well-known expert survey conducted across Western and Central-Eastern Europe that has been commonly used in the party competition literature (see Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012). The Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey conducted in 2007–2008 allows the chapter to examine parties’ issue positions and salience on key electoral issues such as immigration during the economic crisis. They recruited experts from a list of country-specific academics who had published a peer-reviewed article or book on their party system over the past ten years (N=209 experts). For each country, the lead researchers aimed to have ten completed questionnaires which were achieved in the majority of countries (see Appendix B), further adding to the reliability of this expert survey (Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012).

Two core criteria were used by Whitefield and Rohrschneider to justify the inclusion of political parties. Firstly, parties had to have achieved representation (seats) in the national parliament and secondly, they had to have received at least 2% of the national vote in the last parliamentary election.¹² The Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey is primarily chosen because it has been shown to provide a high degree of reliability and consistency in terms of the empirical measures. Furthermore, analysis conducted on the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey has produced reliable empirical patterns that have matched other data sources such as the Comparative Manifesto Research Project and the Chapel Hill Expert survey (see Dalton et al., 2011).

To position the parties, country experts in the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey placed them along the left-right ideological dimension. Political parties were then

¹² This chapter is unable to include the following radical right-wing parties: The British National Party (BNP) Golden Dawn (Greece), the Swiss People’s Party (SVP) (Switzerland) in the empirical analysis as the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey did not include these three parties. The Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIEP) was also not included as this party’s change in vote share was minimal and deemed too insignificant to include.

distinguished between a ‘center’ and a ‘radical/extreme’ category, producing four categories of party that underpin the empirical analysis of this chapter: radical left, center left, center right, and populist radical right (see Rohrschneider and Whitefield, 2012).¹³ To check the reliability and accuracy of party classifications, party families were matched with the 2010 Chapel Hill Expert survey (see Bakker et al., 2015). Furthermore, as discussed comprehensively in Chapter 2, scholars have had difficulty reaching consensus on which parties to include within the populist radical right party family (see Mudde, 2007). This chapter therefore drew on Cas Mudde’s recent classifications (2013; 2014) of far right parties, checking these classifications of this party family with the CHES to ensure further consistency. This chapter was therefore able accurately to cross-check codings and identify parties as belonging to the radical right and center right party families. Remaining parties were coded as belonging to the center left party family.

It is also important to note that some empirical research has disregarded smaller competitors to maintain focus on the mainstream right and mainstream left (see Meguid 2005). This chapter adopts the empirical strategy of including all parties to maintain the number of observations – allowing for a deeper analysis and for the observed rise in populist radical right parties in Europe (see Hernández and Kriesi 2016). The final sample size comprises 208 political parties across 24 countries in Western and Central-Eastern Europe. (The full breakdown of party classifications and measurement can be found in Appendices A and B at the end of the dissertation. The integrated Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey codebook can also be found at the end of Appendix B.) The countries included in this chapter are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania,

¹³ Specifically, the dimension of the left-right ideological position of each political party enabled a country-specific mean to be produced for each country. The mean was then set to zero with a standard deviation of one for each country. Thus, ‘left’ is defined as including any party with a score of less than zero (to the ‘left’ of the mean) and ‘right’ as including any party with a score of more than zero (to the ‘right’ of the mean). ‘Radical’ parties were parties that fell outside of the first standard deviation.

Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.¹⁴ Table 5.1 below lists the parties that comprise the center right and populist radical right party families analyzed in this chapter.

¹⁴ Moldova, Ukraine and Russia are not examined in this chapter as the political contexts are vastly different to make any meaningful comparisons. As a result, these three countries were omitted from the final dataset.

Table 5.1: Classification of Political Parties: By Party Family (2008–2013)¹⁵

Country	Center Right	Radical Right
Austria	ÖVP	FPÖ BZÖ
Belgium	CD&V N-VA LDD MR VLD	FN VB
Bulgaria	BPU CEDB DSB NMSS UDF	NUA
Czech Republic	KDU-CSL ODS	
Denmark	KF NA VENSTRE	DF
Estonia	ER IRL RE	
Finland	KD KESK KOK SFP	PS
France	MO DEM MPF NC UMP	FN
Germany	CDU CSU FDP	
Greece	ND	LAOS
Hungary	FIDESZ KDNP MDF	JOBBIK
Ireland	FF FG PD	
Italy	FI/PdL UDC	AN LN
Latvia	JL LPP TP	TB/LNNK
Lithuania	TS-LK LCS LRLS	
Poland	LPR PO	PIS
Portugal	CDS-PP PSD	
Romania	PLD PNG PNL PNTCD UDMR	PRM
Slovakia	KDH MKP SDKU	SNS
Slovenia	NS SDS SLS	SNS
Spain	CIU EAJ –PNV CC PP	
Sweden	C FP KD M	SWEDISH DEMOCRATS
The Netherlands	CDA CU SGP VVD	PVV
The United Kingdom	CON	UKIP
Number of Parties (N)	71	20

¹⁵ Detailed classifications of parties, alongside the full names can be found in Appendix B.

Variables

To measure populist radical right and center right party performance in the context of the 2008–2013 economic crisis, two separate dependent variables were constructed (% change in vote shares for center right parties; % change in vote shares for radical right parties). The dependent variables are continuous and comprise the percentage change in vote share (i.e. the change in party performance) from the national parliamentary election before the 2008 economic crisis to the first election after the crisis. A positive or higher score on this variable means that parties performed better electorally in the 2008–2013 crisis period relative to the previous election. A negative or lower score on this variable means that parties performed electorally worse during this period. An additional dependent variable measures the percentage change in vote shares for center left parties and provides an important point of comparison to the two main party families that are examined in this chapter.

The main independent variables include party-level variables. In order to test the effect of issue salience factors and the emphasis that populist radical right and center right parties place on key issues, a number of issue salience variables are examined. The central independent variable is immigration and issue emphasis is measured on a 1–7 scale with higher values meaning that the issue featured prominently in the manifesto of center right and populist radical right parties. This measure also enables us to assess how important immigration was in determining the electoral success of populist radical right and center right parties in the 2008–2013 economic crisis. Additional issue salience variables feature nationalism and European Union integration. These variables are all scored on a 1–7 scale with the same methodological procedure. The chapter also measures the emphasis parties placed on socio-economic issues, namely welfare (state intervention) and the free-market economy. This allows the chapter to assess how important emphasis on socio-economic issues was to the electoral success of both party families in the crisis context.

Controls

In order to test the role played by spatial/proximity factors, a number of issue positions are examined. In line with the literature (Arzheimer, 2009; Mudde, 2007; Odmalm and Bale, 2015), socio-cultural issue positions on immigration are included. In order to examine the impact of immigration positions on populist radical right and center right parties, a variable measuring anti-immigrant positions is included. Higher values on this variable mean that parties performed electorally better when adopting more anti-immigrant positions in the economic crisis.

Socio-economic issue positions include parties' support for the market economy and for an active state role in providing welfare. Previous party competition literature has shown that populist radical right parties have tended to perform electorally better when holding neo-liberal economic policies (see Kitschelt, 1995). However, recent research (see de Lange, 2007; Carter, 2005; Arzheimer, 2009; Rovny, 2013) has argued against this claim, providing empirical evidence to show that populist radical right parties tend to perform better electorally when they present a more centrist economic position (i.e. state and government intervention in the economy). Ideologically, center right parties are traditionally known for cutting taxation and emphasizing free market economics (see Girvin, 2005; Heywood, 2012). In line with this theoretical distinction, different variables are used to model socio-economic stances and emphasis for both sets of parties. These variables are selected as they enable us to examine the effect of different spatial positions and to what degree they influence electoral success.

In measuring the severity of the 2008–2013 economic crisis, two key macroeconomic control variables were merged into the final dataset.¹⁶ These variables comprise the change in gross domestic product (GDP) and the change in unemployment, both measured between

¹⁶ The data on these variables were extracted from the World Bank and merged into the final dataset.

2008 and 2012. Higher values on the GDP variable correspond to an increase in economic growth, whilst higher values on the unemployment variable correspond to an increase in unemployment. The change in Income inequality (2008–2012) variable is also included in this chapter and is taken from the Solt Index in the World Income inequality database. Income inequality is measured through the Gini Index, with higher scores corresponding to more unequal resource distribution. This chapter also attempted to include the change in Migration levels (2008–2012) from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which has the largest and most comprehensive dataset. However, these data were not complete and there are some countries where official migration numbers could not be included, reducing the overall sample size considerably. As a result, this variable was dropped from the final empirical models.

In order to avoid the problem of omitted variable bias, various institutional variables are included, in line with the existing literature. Plurality electoral systems tend to limit electoral support for the far right, whereas proportional representation electoral systems tend to facilitate support for populist radical right parties (see Norris, 2005; Carter, 2005; Arzheimer and Carter, 2006). This chapter draws on the Gallagher Index of the change in disproportionality levels (2008–2012).¹⁷ This single measure enables us to compare proportionality across electoral systems, examining how this changed across time. The Gallagher Index is also a commonly used measure in the party competition literature. Higher values on this variable imply that there is a higher level of disproportionality in electoral systems between elections and negative values mean that electoral systems are more proportional between elections. In line with the literature (see Hobolt et al., 2012) an indicator variable is included that examines how incumbent parties fared electorally in the economic crisis period.

¹⁷ Strictly speaking, this variable covers the change in disproportionality for the last two national elections in the 2008–2012 electoral period. However the years vary slightly due to the different timeframes that national parliamentary elections were held across Europe.

Modeling approach

Preliminary statistics in the form of correlations were first produced to examine the empirical relationship between emphasizing immigration and the percentage change in vote share for center right, populist radical right and center left parties. To investigate the central hypotheses (H₁–H₃), four main OLS regression models with robust standard errors were then produced. Robust standard errors are produced instead of OLS standard errors, as they tend to be more reliable in correcting for heteroscedasticity and unequal variations across variables. Hierarchical linear regression models were not produced, for two main reasons. Firstly, the sample size of 24 countries is too small and renders multilevel modeling obsolete (see Steenbergen, 2012; Hox, 2002). Secondly, there are only 20 far right parties that feature in this economic context and multilevel models would not be able to converge with such a small sample size, thus limiting and calling the external validity of this study into question. Models 1–4 examine the electoral performance of center right, populist radical right and center left parties in the context of the economic crisis, particularly around the emphasis on immigration.¹⁸ Robustness checks on multicollinearity were made for each model through the variance inflation factor. In order to further supplement the main empirical analysis and examine key patterns and trends, a ‘universe of cases’ table is constructed towards the end of this chapter. This table depicts the dynamics of party competition between the center right and populist radical right in further detail, enabling us to examine the broader picture of party competition between both party families in different countries across this economic context.

5.2 ANALYSIS

Bivariate Correlations

To begin testing the relationship between the emphasis placed on immigration and levels of

¹⁸ Radical Left-Wing Parties were not included in the analysis as the sample size for this party family is small and not central to our empirical analysis.

party support, a Pearson r correlation coefficient is produced for the main party families under investigation. Table 5.2 shows that there is considerable variation by party family. Center right parties perform better electorally when emphasizing the immigration issue in the economic crisis period, with a strong correlation ($r=+0.37$). Populist radical right parties also performed well electorally ($r=+0.46$), showing that competition between party families is strong on this issue. In contrast, center left ($r=+0.08$) and radical left parties ($r=+0.05$) had a weak correlation and did not appear to benefit at all from emphasizing the immigration issue. Therefore, the correlations presented provide a general snapshot of how both center right and populist radical right parties appear to benefit electorally from emphasizing the immigration issue in the context of economic crisis. However, these results are snapshots and the inclusion of control variables through OLS regression modeling in the next section enables the dynamics of party competition between both party families to be investigated in a more comprehensive manner.

Table 5.2: Correlations between % Vote Share Change for Political Parties and the Salience of Immigration in the Economic Crisis Period (2005–2012)

Party Ideology	Salience of Immigration (Pearson's r correlation)	Observations (N)
Radical Left	+0.05	34
Center Left	+0.08	84
Center Right	+0.37	71
Radical Right	+0.46	20

Source: Author's own figures

Notes: Radical Left figures omitted from the table.

OLS Regression Models

The chapter now moves on to test these empirical relationships through OLS regression models, with the inclusion of control variables. Models 1 and 3 in Table 5.3 enable us to test H_1 in investigating how incumbents on the center right and center left lost out electorally in the crisis period. Both models in Table 5.3 show that center right and center left parties were punished in the context of the economic crisis and are statistically significant. These results are in line with empirical evidence found by a number of scholars in the literature (see Lewis-Beck, 1986; Alvarez et al., 2000; Duch, 2008; Hobolt et al., 2012; Kriesi and Pappas, 2015). Model 1 in Table 5.3 enables us to test H_2 and investigate the degree to which center right parties benefited from emphasizing the immigration issue in the economic crisis period. Most significantly, center right parties in Europe that emphasized the immigration issue performed well, increasing their vote share considerably ($p < 0.01$). This finding provides strong empirical evidence for H_1 , showing how center right parties tended to outperform the far right on immigration (see Pardos-Prado, 2015; Odmalm et al., 2015; Bale, 2008). A notable case of this is the N-VA Party in Belgium which outperformed the populist radical right VB Party in Belgium through an emphasis on immigration. However, Model 1 shows that adopting hardline stances (issue position) on immigration decreased the center right's electoral vote share and was not a vote-winning strategy.

Model 2 in Table 5.3 examines how populist radical right parties performed on a number of issue positions and issue salience, alongside controlling for party and country-level variables in the economic crisis period (see a similar approach in Pardos-Prado, 2015). The incumbency variable is not included for the populist radical right party model as there are only two cases (TB/LNNK in Latvia and SNS Party in Slovakia). Including the incumbency for these two variables caused multicollinearity and distorted the other coefficients in the regression model. In testing H_2 , Model 2 shows that populist radical right

parties that emphasized immigration did perform better electorally; however, this relationship is statistically insignificant. This finding calls into question whether the populist radical right party family can lay claim to ‘owning’ the immigration issue, especially in times of economic crisis. Opposition towards EU integration increased electoral support for the far right, but this variable is non-significant. This is a surprising finding as the far right is often known for its issue ‘ownership’ on this issue (see Werts et al., 2012; Arzheimer, 2009). Model 2 also provides surprising findings. Opposition to immigration actually decreased the overall vote share for populist radical right parties in the economic crisis. The negative finding for anti-immigration is particularly noteworthy as it suggests that hardline stances on immigration taken by populist radical right parties may have been too hostile and unpalatable for voters in times of economic crisis (see Carter, 2005).

Turning to macroeconomic conditions at the country-level, counter-intuitive results are found. The change in GDP (2008–2012) variable suggests that populist radical right parties performed better in the economic crisis and in countries which had higher levels of economic growth. However, the change in unemployment (2008–2012) variable is weak and further highlights the inconsistent pattern surrounding the relationship between economics and populist radical right voting at the aggregate level (see Goodwin, 2014; Mudde, 2014). Model 3 also demonstrates that center left parties performed worse electorally in comparison to center right parties when emphasizing immigration. A closer inspection of the dataset showed that notable center left parties that did not particularly emphasize immigration, such as the Socialist Party (MSZP), the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the UK Labour Party, saw the sharpest decline in their share of the vote in the economic crisis period. Similarly to incumbent center right parties, Model 3 also shows that left-wing incumbents experienced a substantial decline in their vote share in national parliamentary elections (see Bermeo and Bartels, 2014; Kriesi and Pappas, 2015). Table 5.4 includes an additional

populist radical right party model. As there are only 20 radical right parties in Model 2 and due to the limited sample size, the Model in Table 5.4 seeks a more parsimonious approach in modeling fewer independent variables, namely the most important variables that have been proven in past research to drive support for this party family (see Arzheimer, 2009; Mudde, 2007; Werts et al., 2012). The salience of immigration is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) and shows that populist radical right parties did perform better electorally here. However, anti-immigration positions again decreased electoral support for the populist radical right. These models were then tested for multicollinearity and are within the accepted limit. Whilst the empirical findings in this model do demonstrate that radical right parties prospered during the economic crisis when emphasizing immigration, the small sample size here must be treated with caution, especially in regards to making definitive inferences about external validity.

Robustness Checks

A multiple regression coefficient plot with 95% confidence intervals is also included in Figure 5.1 and provides additional robustness checks. This also allows us to visualize the magnitude of the electoral effect for center right, populist radical right and left-wing parties when emphasizing immigration, whilst including the main independent and control variables from Models 1–3 in Table 5.3. Figure 5.1 then includes the emphasis placed on immigration by left-wing parties and demonstrates how center right parties that emphasized immigration performed better electorally than radical right and left-wing parties during the economic crisis. Additional robustness checks were run for each of the three main party models through the variance inflation factor (VIF). Any offending variables above 10 were removed from the final analysis and no multicollinearity was present in the statistical models that have been presented. VIF tables can be found Table 5.5 below the four regression models presented in this chapter.

Limitations

Whilst the three OLS regression models show clear patterns for H₁ (patterns of electoral volatility) and H₂ (center right electoral success), due to data limitation and the small sample size of 20 far right parties, these statistical models are unable to empirically capture the dynamics of party competition between both party families and directly test H₃ (different levels of emphasis on immigration) in combined statistical models. Instead, the next section of the chapter provides a more fine-grained approach in examining specific patterns and cases that are drawn from the change in party performance dataset. This enables the chapter to examine different patterns from the dataset that relate to party competition dynamics on the immigration issue between both center right and populist radical right parties in the economic crisis period and examine the three situations of competition derived from the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework that was outlined in Chapter 4.

Table 5.3: Center-Right Party, Populist Radical Right and Center Left Party Performance, Economic Crisis: Statistical Models

	(M1) Center-Right Model	(M2) Radical Right Model	(M3) Center-Left Model
Saliency: Immigration	0.031** (2.85)	0.023 (1.93)	0.020 (1.50)
Position: Anti-Immigration	-0.011 (-0.74)	-0.04 (-1.22)	-0.003 (-0.37)
Incumbent	-0.10** (-3.43)	-	-0.054* (-2.53)
Position: Welfare	-0.02 (-1.05)	-0.027 (-1.24)	0.0005 (0.05)
Saliency: Welfare	-0.045* (-2.55)	-0.029 (-0.69)	-0.035* (-2.45)
Position: Market Economy	0.004 (0.29)	-0.02 (-0.18)	-0.02 (-1.42)
Saliency: Market Economy	0.031 (1.69)	-0.009 (-0.53)	0.023 (1.71)
Position: EU Opposition	0.0019 (0.17)	0.048 (1.71)	-0.01 (-1.27)
Disproportionality Index	-0.007 (-0.84)	-0.019 (-1.75)	0.0008 (0.13)
Change in Unemployment (2008–12)	-0.002 (-0.58)	0.003 (0.42)	0.0014 (0.50)
Change in GDP Growth (2008–12)	-0.0018 (-0.28)	-0.0007 (0.16)	-0.0015 (-0.38)
Change in Gini Index (2008–12)	-0.002 (-0.32)	-0.004 (-0.24)	-0.00006 (-0.01)
Constant	0.051 (0.48)	0.133 (0.68)	0.0725 (0.77)
N	71	20	84
Adj. R2	0.21	0.42	0.07

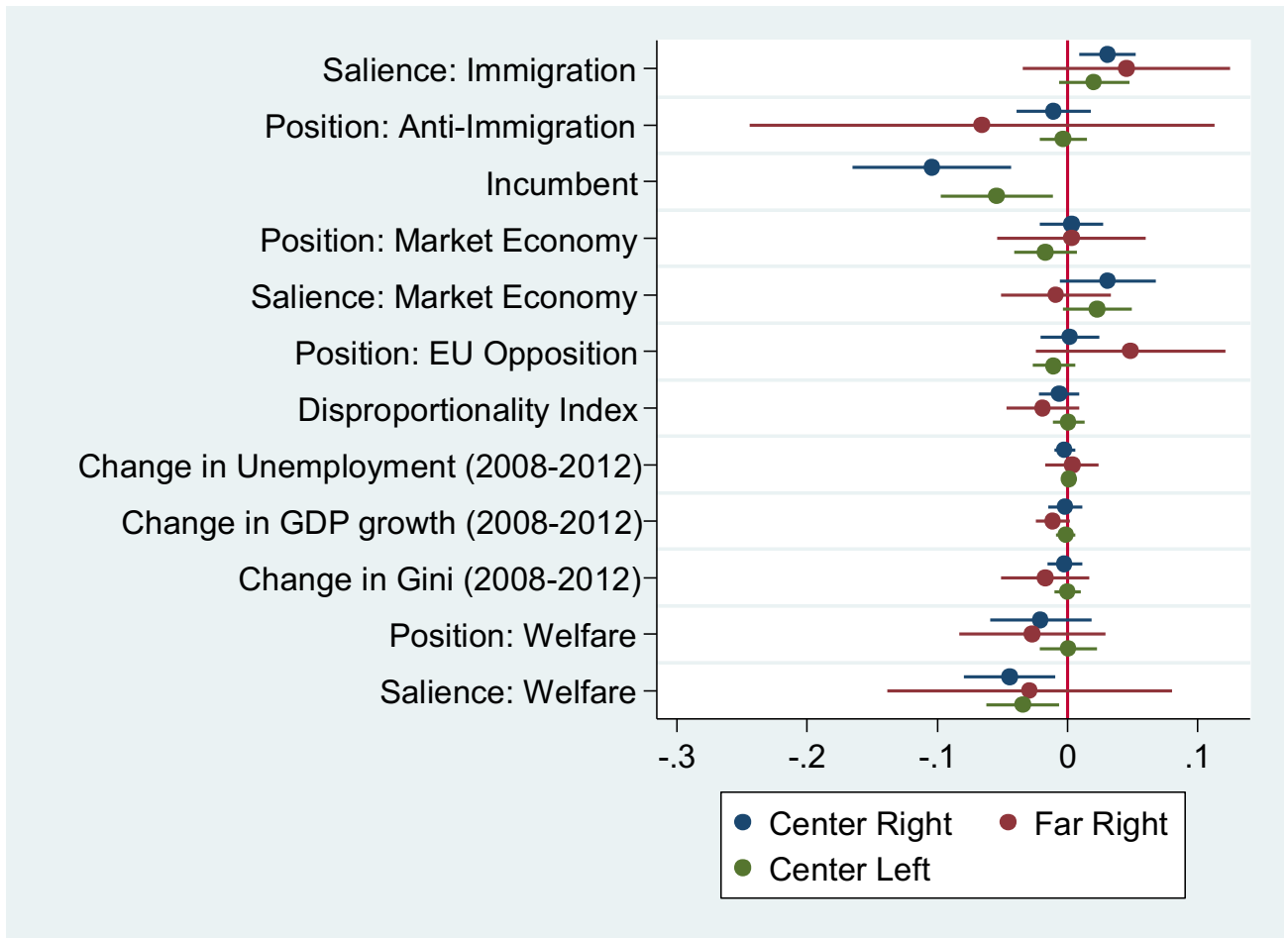
Notes: OLS Regression Models run with robust standard errors
t statistics in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5.4: Populist Radical Right Additional Model, Economic Crisis

	(M4)
Saliency: Immigration	0.021** (2.65)
Position: Anti-Immigration	-0.03 (-0.97)
Position: EU Opposition	0.007 (0.72)
Change in Unemployment (2008–2012)	-0.0009 (-0.30)
Change in GDP Growth (2008–2012)	0.004 (0.88)
Constant	-0.09 (-1.69)
N	20
Adj. R2	0.29

Notes: OLS Regression Models run with robust standard errors
t statistics in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 5.1: Regression Coefficient Plot with 95% Confidence Intervals (Inclusion of Control Variables)



Source: Original Dataset on Change of Parties' Performance in European National Parliamentary Elections and Whitefield-Rohrschneider Expert Survey.

Table 5.5: Robustness Checks: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variables	Center-Right (M1) VIF	Radical Right (M2) VIF	Center-Left (M3) VIF	Radical Right (M4) VIF
Saliency: Immigration	1.49	2.15	1.60	1.59
Position: Anti-immigration	2.17	2.03	1.70	1.91
Incumbent	1.56	-	1.26	-
Saliency: Welfare	1.97	1.72	3.25	-
Position: Welfare	2.63	2.16	2.23	-
Saliency: Market Economy	2.81	2.52	2.24	-
Position: Market Economy	2.63	3.03	3.07	-
Position: EU Opposition	2.31	4.09	2.86	2.57
Disproportionality Index (2008–12)	1.66	1.88	1.36	-
Change in Unemployment (2008–12)	1.61	1.53	1.45	1.12
Change in GDP Growth (2008–12)	2.49	1.44	1.28	1.33
Change in Gini (2008–12)	2.56	2.79	1.54	-
Mean VIF	2.10	2.25	2.03	1.66

Case Study Approach

Center Right Parties

Whilst the OLS regression models demonstrate that center right parties appear to perform better electorally when emphasizing the immigration issue than radical right parties did in times of economic crisis, it is important to examine the findings from the statistical models by country and adopt a case-based approach. A closer inspection of the dataset reveals that a number of ‘challenger’ center right parties performed well electorally when emphasizing immigration. Notable examples include the New Flemish Alliance Party (N-VA) in Belgium, the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) in the Netherlands, alongside the

Swedish Moderate Party (M), the UK Conservative Party (CON), the Liberal Alliance in Denmark (NA) and to a lesser extent the Danish Liberal Party (VENSTRE). Other center right parties who benefited from an emphasis on immigration were the PdL in Italy under Silvio Berlusconi, the People's Party in Portugal (CDS-PP), the Homeland Union Party in Lithuania (TS-LK) and the People's Party in Spain (PP). However, a number of center right parties performed poorly. Notable examples include incumbent center right parties that saw their vote share decrease in national parliamentary elections across the economic crisis period. These cases include the Center Party (KESK) coalition government with the National Coalition Party (KOK) in Finland and Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union Party (CDU) in Germany. Furthermore, whilst incumbent center right parties such as the UMP in France under Nicolas Sarkozy and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) emphasized immigration, they performed electorally worse. This pattern also suggests that even when emphasizing immigration, specific incumbent center right parties still lost out electorally in the economic crisis. However, the main patterns demonstrated here are that incumbency alongside a lack of emphasis on immigration is likely to have hindered the electoral success of these center right parties in the crisis context, providing more impetus for the far right to claim ownership over the immigration issue in these countries.

Populist Radical Right Parties

Upon closer inspection of the dataset, there are a number of populist radical right parties that benefited electorally from an emphasis on immigration during the crisis context. Most notably, the Finns Party (PS) in Finland, the Hungarian Party Movement for a Better Hungary (JOBBIK), Geert Wilders' Party for Freedom (PVV), the French Front National (FN), the Swedish Democrats (SD) and the Northern League in Italy (LN) performed better electorally when emphasizing immigration. The results in Austria show that both far right parties, the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) increased their

overall vote share in national parliamentary elections. However, these findings also suggest that a number of populist radical right parties lost out electorally when emphasizing immigration. The Flemish Interest Party (VB) in Belgium, the Danish People's Party (DF), the Francophone Front National Party (FN) in Belgium emphasized immigration but saw their respective vote shares decline over the electoral period. Other far right parties such as UKIP saw a marginal increase in their vote share (+1%) at the 2010 UK General Election, but did not win any seats in the Westminster Parliament, largely due to institutional constraints in the form of the FPTP electoral system. Evidently, placing emphasis on the immigration issue in these countries did not translate into concrete electoral gains for these populist radical right parties and center right parties also arguably played an important role in this process.

Patterns of Party Competition: Economic Crisis Context

Situation I: Center Right outperform the Far Right

Thus, three key patterns can be observed from these preliminary findings. Table 5.6 below depicts the key cases from these three party competition situations in more detail. This Table outlines the percentage change in vote shares for both center right and populist radical right parties in key cases, alongside the emphasis placed on immigration by both party families. In terms of defining 'low' salience and 'high salience' on the immigration issue, this chapter makes two distinctions. Political parties that scored 1–4 on this measure did not particularly emphasize immigration, whereas parties that scored 5–7 on this issue emphasized the issue considerably in their party strategies. Table 5.7 then shows the 'universe of cases' that comprise these different situations by country and the election years under investigation. Firstly, center right parties that emphasized immigration performed better electorally than far right parties did. A key finding is the Belgian case, which highlights how the non-incumbent center right N-VA (+8%) outperformed the populist radical right party VB (-4%) when emphasizing immigration. The Danish results provide an additional case where center right

parties (VENSTRE and NA) perform electorally better than the populist radical right (DF).

Situation II: Center Right and Far Right Parties both achieve electoral success

Secondly, in a number of countries party competition was strong, with both the center right and populist radical right emphasizing immigration and achieving similar levels of electoral success (Netherlands and Hungary). In the Netherlands, the far right PVV increased their vote share (+10%) alongside the center right VVD Party (+6%). In Hungary, there was strong party competition on the dual socio-cultural issue dimensions of nationalism and immigration, with center right nationalist party Fidesz increasing its vote share (+11%) alongside the radical right party Jobbik (+14%).¹⁹ Sweden is another example, where the Moderate Party (M) increased its vote share (+4%) and the Swedish Democrats (SD) also performing better electorally (+3%). In Italy, the center right coalition (comprised of PdL and LN) performed well electorally at the 2008 Italian General Election. The far right and regionalist party Northern League were also part of the coalition at this election and increased their vote share (+4%).²⁰

Situation III: Far Right outperform the Center Right

A third pattern demonstrated that in specific countries, populist radical right parties outperformed center right parties on the immigration issue (Finland, Greece, Austria and France) largely due to two dual mechanisms taking place; (i) a wider anti-incumbency effect and by the center right (ii) not particularly emphasizing immigration. Finland is a notable case of both mechanisms, with the far right PS Party increasing its vote share (+15%)

¹⁹ Upon closer inspection, the Hungarian case showed that nationalism was a more prominent driver of support for both party families than immigration was.

²⁰ In Italy, Forza Italia (2006) renamed itself The People of Freedom (PdL) and was joined by the National Alliance (NA). The totals for the PdL were divided by thirds with two thirds going to Forza and one third going to NA (based on their relative 2006 performance). In addition, a coalition of the left, The Left – The Rainbow, was a reconfiguration including the Communist Refoundation Party, Party of Italian Communists, Federation of the Greens, and The Democratic Socialists. The total for The Rainbow is divided in quarters among these parties and can be found in Appendix B at the end of the dissertation.

considerably, with the incumbents KESK (-7%) and KOK (-2%) suffering electorally in this economic context and not emphasizing the importance of the immigration issue. Greece is an additional example of this pattern, where the center right incumbent party New Democracy (ND) performed electorally worse (-8%) and LAOS increased their vote share (+2%) at the 2009 Greek legislative election. The findings for France and Austria show that even though center right parties emphasized immigration (UMP and ÖVP), being an incumbent was electorally damaging in this economic context. An added dimension is that specific center right parties in countries such as Spain (PP) and Portugal (CDS-PP) which have not tended to have designated far right parties within the political system, still performed well electorally on immigration and increased their vote shares respectively. Though these findings are preliminary, these results highlight different and complex patterns of party competition on immigration between both party families in the context of economic bad times.

Table 5.6: Patterns of Party Competition (Key Cases)

Situation I: Center Right outperform the Populist Radical Right in the Crisis Period

Country and Election Years	Center Right Party	Radical Right Party
Belgium (2007–2010)	N-VA (+8%) 5.0	VB (-4%) 7.0
UK (2005–2010)	CON (+4%) 5.2	UKIP (+1%) 6.3
Denmark (2007–2011)	NA (+2%) 5.6 VENSTRE (+1%) 5.1	DF (-3%) 6.6

Notes: % Change in Vote Shares are outlined for both Center Right and Radical Right Parties in parentheses.

Bold figures denote Emphasis on Immigration (1–4= ‘Low’ Salience on Immigration, 5–7= ‘High’ Salience on Immigration)

Situation II: Center Right and Populist Radical Right both achieve electoral success in the Crisis Period

Country and Election Years	Center Right Party	Radical Right Party
Netherlands (2006–2010)	VVD (+6%) 5.2	PVV (+10%) 7.0
Hungary ²¹ (2006–2010)	FIDESZ (+11%) 4.1	JOBBIK (+14%) 6.0
Sweden (2006–2010)	MODERATE (+4%) 5.0	SD (+3%) 6.7
Italy (2006–2008)	(PdL) (+1%) 5.4	NL (+3%) 6.6

Notes: % Change in Vote Shares are outlined for both Center Right and Radical Right Parties in parentheses.

Bold figures denote Emphasis on Immigration (1–4= ‘Low’ Salience on Immigration, 5–7= ‘High’ Salience on Immigration)

²¹ Strong party competition between the center right Fidesz and the populist radical right party Jobbik is largely explained by contestation over the issue of nationalism, than immigration.

Situation III: Populist Radical Right outperform the Center Right in the Crisis Period

Country and Election Years	Radical Right Party	Center Right Party
Finland (2007–2011)	PS (+15%) 6.3	KESK (-7%) 3.7 KOK (-2%) 3.8
Austria (2006–2008)	ÖVP (-8%) 5.3	FPÖ (+7%) 7.0 BZÖ (+7%) 6.6
France (2007–2012)	UMP (-8%) 5.3	FN (+4%) 6.9
Greece (2007–2009)	ND (-8%) 3.8	LAOS (+2%) 6.7

Notes: % Change in Vote Shares are outlined for both Center Right and Radical Right Parties in parentheses.

Bold figures denote Emphasis on Immigration (1–4= ‘Low’ Salience on Immigration, 5–7= ‘High’ Salience on Immigration)

Table 5.7: Center Right and Populist Radical Right Party Competition in the Crisis Period, by Country and Election Years (‘Universe of Cases’)

Center Right outperformed Far Right (Electoral Success)	Center Right and Far Right Competition (Both achieved Electoral Success)	Far Right outperformed Center Right (Electoral Success)	Center Right performed better (countries without a Far Right Party)
Belgium (2007–2010)	Netherlands (2006–2010)	Finland (2007–2011)	Spain (2004–2008)
UK (2005–2010)	Hungary (2006–2010)	France (2007–2012)	Portugal (2005–2009)
Denmark (2007–2011)	Sweden (2006–2010)	Austria (2006–2008)	
	Italy (2006–2008)	Greece (2007–2009)	

5.3 CONCLUSION

The empirical findings in this chapter suggest that there was a mechanism of ‘strategic emphasis’ at play during the 2008–2013 economic crisis period, particularly for non-incumbent (‘challenger’) center right parties. The political scientist Herbert Kitschelt (1995) coined the phrase ‘electoral winning formula’ to describe the dominance that specific radical right parties achieved in the 1990s by adopting neo-liberal economic positions alongside hardline positions on issues such as crime, law and order and immigration. Since Kitschelt’s landmark study, a number of scholars have shown how the immigration issue has come to dominate the ideology of the populist radical right and the attitudes of the voters that this party family attracts (see Lubbers et al., 2002; Mudde, 2007; Arzheimer, 2009; Werts et al., 2012). This chapter provided preliminary evidence for a ‘new electoral winning formula’ in this economic context, whereby mainstream center right parties can profit electorally from this issue when they emphasized the immigration issue in times of economic crisis. In certain cases, the center right can even perform better electorally than the populist radical right on this issue.

This chapter found that there were three distinct patterns that underlined the party competition game on the immigration issue between populist radical right and center right parties in the context of the recent economic crisis. Firstly, the OLS regression models demonstrated that center right parties appeared to perform better electorally than radical right parties and center left parties which were provided as points of comparison. Notable cases included Belgium, with the center right opposition party N-VA outperforming the far right VB Party. Whilst the OLS regression models showed the average causal effects of these empirical relationships, the populist radical right model sample size is small and this limits the overall generalizability of these empirical findings. There are additional limitations to the empirical findings in Chapter 5. The empirical analysis in this chapter examined two snapshot

elections, one during the economic crisis and one before the economic crisis in 24 countries across Europe. This means that the empirical analysis can identify patterns from the regression models, but cannot establish internal validity (causality). Building on these limitations, a more fine-grained approach was needed and the chapter examined some key patterns from the dataset. Building on the OLS regression models through a closer inspection of the dataset, a second and more complex pattern of party competition was found in this economic context. There were a number of countries that exhibited ‘strong’ party competition. In a number of countries such as the Netherlands, Hungary, Sweden and Italy, both center right and far right parties emphasized the immigration issue and prospered electorally in national parliamentary elections across the crisis period. Crucially, these cases demonstrate that party competition on the immigration issue acted as a central dimension of political contestation in these countries.

A third general pattern that is important to highlight is that there are electoral restrictions and caveats to the emphasis placed on immigration by center right parties. Thus, a caveat to center right party electoral success in this economic context is incumbency and not emphasizing the immigration issue. That is, even when emphasizing immigration, incumbent center right parties tended to lose out electorally in national parliamentary elections. Notable cases include Finland, France, Austria and Greece, where the populist radical right outperformed the center right when emphasizing the immigration issue. This chapter also found that anti-immigrant positions did not appear to explain center right party electoral success or indeed that of populist radical right parties in the crisis period. Rather than anti-immigrant positions explaining center right party electoral success, the central theoretical argument in this chapter is one of ‘strategic emphasis’, whereby specific center right parties are able to emphasize and benefit from a salient issue, namely immigration (see Bale, 2008; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Odmalm and Bale, 2015). At the same time, this chapter demonstrated

that from a spatial perspective, holding anti-immigrant positions decreased the electoral vote share for populist radical right parties during the economic crisis. Thus, the issue position findings on immigration provide evidence to show that the radical right may have been too hostile and unpalatable for voters during the crisis (see Carter, 2005; Odmalm and Bale, 2015).

These findings have implications for the contemporary party competition literature in suggesting that center right parties, particularly those in opposition, have the potential to benefit electorally from emphasizing the immigration issue in times of economic crisis. Whilst these empirical findings do point to the electoral resilience of center right parties in being able to challenge and in some cases outperform the populist radical right on their core issue of immigration during periods of economic crisis, there are a number of situations where the center right perform electorally worse; particularly when they are (i) incumbents, or (ii) when they do not emphasize the immigration issue. Thus, these cases show that there are electoral restrictions to emphasizing immigration in economic bad times, with potential electoral gains for populist radical right parties. The next chapter seeks to further understand the resilience of the center right across Europe, through examining how the dynamics of party competition play out, particularly in determining the electoral success of center right parties, and identifying patterns outside periods of economic crisis and across a longer time period, enhancing the external validity of the dissertation. This chapter allows us to understand more about how the patterns of party competition on the immigration issue diverge during economic good times, alongside the role of incumbency and how this affects the electoral fortunes of both party families, most likely in aiding center right parties' electoral fortunes.

Chapter 6

Center Right Party Electoral Resilience at the outset of the 21st Century: ‘Strategic Emphasis’ and Incumbency effects on the Immigration issue

Chapter 5 demonstrated that at the aggregate level, center right parties appeared to benefit electorally from emphasizing the immigration issue during the 2008–2013 economic crisis, alongside specific populist radical right parties. Distinctive patterns were found that related to the salience of immigration alongside incumbency. In the context of economic crisis, this chapter showed three different situations in regards to the underlying party competition dynamics between both party families. Firstly, the statistical models also suggested that in some cases, opposition and non-incumbent center right parties performed better electorally than populist radical right parties did when emphasizing immigration. Secondly, in countries where both center right and far right parties emphasized immigration simultaneously, both party families performed well electorally in national parliamentary elections. However, the third situation showed a more nuanced pattern: that in certain situations, the economic crisis context allowed some populist radical right parties to profit electorally at the expense of mainstream center right parties. Two mechanisms were displayed here and both conform to the theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ outlined in Chapter 4 of the dissertation. The first mechanism comprised an anti-incumbency effect, with a number of center right parties performing worse as a result of a protest vote and enabling far right parties to prosper electorally. The second mechanism involved some center right parties not emphasizing the immigration issue and even ‘downplaying’ it in their party strategies. Consequently, this arguably led populist radical right parties to benefit from this ‘issue space’ on salience and claim the immigration issue in economic bad times.

Building on the empirical findings in Chapter 5, the central theoretical expectation of this chapter is that the effect of immigration on voting choices is likely to be qualitatively different when economic times are good, as opposed to when times are bad. Thus, whilst the

immigration issue poses an electoral dilemma to center right parties, in whether to adopt more hardline or moderate stances on the issue, it is also likely to offer the center right particular benefits outside periods of economic crisis by hindering their populist radical right rivals. Primarily this is because economic good times are likely to reduce the electoral power of immigration, as the populist radical right will not have an ‘out-group’ such as immigrants that they can readily scapegoat and link to economic dislocation (see Meguid, 2005; Carter, 2005; Mudde, 2007). At the same time, this chapter argues that center right parties’ policy pitches on immigration will not involve scapegoating out-groups during economic good times, as they can simply emphasize immigration strategically through greater ‘visibility’ of the issue. This is likely to translate into significant electoral gains for the center right. Furthermore, the context of more prosperous economic times is also likely to translate into electoral advantage for mainstream center right and center left parties alike. This is because the incumbency effect works differently in the context of economic good times, where mainstream parties such as the center right are likely to possess an incumbency advantage and will not be as constrained by the threat of populist radical right parties. Thus, this chapter tests provides the second aggregate level test of the theoretical framework, through examining two core hypotheses (H₄ and H₅) of the ‘strategic emphasis’ theory through the use of Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) data from 1999–2007.²² The center left party family is again included in order to provide a comparison with the electoral performance of center right and populist radical right parties in this economic context.

²² The online CHES codebook (1999–2014) can be found here: http://chesdata.eu/1999-2014/1999-2014_CHES_codebook.pdf

HYPOTHESES

H₄: In line with economic good times, ‘incumbent’ parties on the mainstream center right and center left will perform better electorally.

H₅: Center Right Parties that emphasize immigration will perform better electorally than populist radical right parties.

6.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Data

This chapter draws on the CHES dataset from 1999–2007 which features 24 countries across the European Union (EU). The aim of the CHES dataset is to estimate the issue positions and issue emphasis that political parties adopt across Europe. The CHES is chosen primarily because it contains a wide range of political parties, especially a large number of populist radical right parties that enhances the external validity of this chapter. This also allows the study to examine the salience of immigration for populist radical right and center right parties across time. More specifically, drawing on the CHES multiwave survey enables the study to examine the electoral resilience of center right parties around the immigration issue outside periods of economic crises from 1999–2007 in national parliamentary elections (see Bakker et al., 2015).

In order to construct the center right party and populist radical right party variables, the chapter draws on the CHES left-right variable that places the position of political parties in terms of their overall ideological stances. The left-right variable is measured on a 0–10 scale. A score of 0 corresponds to a populist radical left party, with 5 denoting a centrist party and a value of 10 corresponding to a populist radical right party. Based on Benoit and Laver’s (2006) expert survey of party positions, center right parties tend to be located between 5 and 7 on the 0–10 scale, with populist radical right parties tending to be located between 8 and

10. A similar methodology is also outlined by Bale (2008) in classifying center right parties as Conservative, Christian Democratic or market liberal (see Hix and Lord, 1997).

In order to measure the electoral success of political parties, this chapter draws on two dependent variables that measure the absolute percentage vote shares in national parliamentary elections for different party families from 1999–2007. This allows the chapter to have a substantial sample size of parties, including multiple national parliamentary elections in a number of countries across this time period.²³ An advantage of this statistical procedure is that it enhances the external validity of the empirical findings from this chapter. Three vote share variables are deployed in this study, corresponding to center right, populist radical right and center left parties. In order to check the robustness of my results using this operationalization, an additional dependent variable was deployed. The aggregate vote share for populist radical right parties has been shown to be lower in national parliamentary elections. A range of institutional factors, such as the type of electoral system and the campaign resources that mainstream parties have at their disposal, may explain this relationship (see Norris, 2005; Carter, 2005; Arzheimer, 2009). The aggregate vote share for populist radical right parties has also been shown to be higher in second order elections, such as European Parliament elections (Carter, 2005; Mudde, 2007; 2014). Thus the second dependent variable deployed is the overall percentage vote share for party families at the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament elections.²⁴ Table 6.1 below outlines the classification of parties from the CHES that comprise the center right and populist radical right party families that form the empirical analysis in this chapter. Appendix C provides a more comprehensive overview of party classifications and measurement of key variables that are deployed in this study.

²³ The national parliamentary election years for each country can be found in Appendix C (see Classification of Countries III: Electoral Years)

²⁴ Since the results from the model using the European Parliament election results are very similar to those from the national parliamentary elections, I show the results for the latter only.

Table 6.1: Classification of Political Parties: By Party Family (1999–2007)²⁵

Country	Center Right	Radical Right
Austria	ÖVP	FPÖ BZÖ
Belgium	N-VA CD&V CDH MCC	FN VB
Bulgaria	ODS G-VMRO DSB L SDS	NOA
Czech Republic	US-DEU ODS SNK-ED TOP09	
Denmark	KF V	DF FP
Estonia	IRL	
Finland	KOK KESK	PS
France	RPR/UMP DL	MN RPF FN
Germany	CDU CSU FDP	DVU/NPD
Greece	ND POLA	LAOS
Hungary	MDF FIDESZ-M KDNP	MIEP
Ireland	FF FG	
Italy	UDC PPI FI UDC CDU CCD/UDC NCD	AN MS LN
Latvia	JL TP ZRP	TB-LNNK
Lithuania	NKS TS-LK TT	JL-PKS LLS
Poland	AWSP PSL PO	PiS
Portugal	CDS-PP	
Romania	CDR 2000 PMP	PRM
Slovakia	KDH	SNS PSNS
Slovenia	NS SDS SLS	SNS
Spain	PP FP	
Sweden	JL KD M	SD NyD
The Netherlands	CDA VVD CU SGP	CD LPF PVV
United Kingdom	CONS	BNP UKIP
Number of Parties (N)	64	32

²⁵ Appendix C provides a more comprehensive overview of the full list of party names in the CHES (1999–2007).

Variables

The key independent variable in the CHES dataset that this study draws on is the emphasis placed by center right and populist radical right parties on the issue of immigration. In the CHES dataset, the salience of immigration is measured on a 0–10 scale that has been constructed by country experts. If a political party scored 0 on this variable it means that the issue is not important at all to their ideological programmes. Political parties that scored 10 on this variable are those for which the issue is extremely important to their ideological programmes and party manifestos. The salience of immigration question was asked in the CHES from 1999 to 2010 and this study draws on the question from 1999–2006 that spans the context of more economic good times. A minor limitation of this question is that due to missing data, there is a reduced sample size on this variable.

The CHES dataset also measures party positions and salience on a number of socio-economic and socio-cultural issues that are important for party competition and are included in this study as control variables. The variable anti-taxation is included (spend vs. taxation), enabling us to examine parties' positions on improving public services vs. reducing taxes. This variable allows us to examine how important center right and populist radical right party stances on the economy are for their electoral success. A score of 0 implies that a party strongly favors improving public services, whilst a score of 10 corresponds to a party strongly favoring reducing taxes (anti-taxation position). A limitation of both variables is that they were only asked in 2006 and 2010 and therefore the sample is limited to 2006.²⁶

Controls

The issue position adopted by center right and populist radical right parties on immigration is also included. The immigration position variable is measured on a 0–10 scale, with a score of

²⁶ The inclusion of this variable in Table 6.3 reduces the sample size slightly for party families (center right, radical right and center left) in this chapter.

0 capturing a liberal position and meaning that a party supports immigration. A score of 10 captures a restrictive position and means that a party supports an anti-immigrant position. In order to further measure the positions on immigration for right-wing parties, a second indicator is provided. There is a second variable in CHES that measures right-wing parties' stances towards the integration of immigrants and asylum seekers (multiculturalism vs. assimilation). However, due to multicollinearity, only the positions adopted on immigration are included in the three main OLS regression models.

An additional variable is included that measures parties' issue emphasis on the issue of EU integration. The EU issue has been shown to be highly important to the appeal of right-wing parties, especially radical right parties (Lubbers et al., 2002; Arzheimer, 2009; Ford and Goodwin; Milazzo, 2015; Werts et al., 2012). The variable taps the salience of EU integration and is measured on a 0–10 scale, with a score of 0 corresponding to EU integration having no importance, or never being mentioned, whilst a score of 10 corresponds to EU integration being an extremely important issue for a party. The chapter draws on a measure of party stances towards law and order, an issue which has been shown to have benefited the populist radical right (see Mudde, 2014; 2007; Arzheimer, 2009). A score of 0 means that a party strongly promotes civil liberties, whereas a score of 10 indicates that a party strongly supports tough measures to fight crime.

The control variables used in the previous chapter are also drawn on here for the purpose of consistency. Incumbent parties are again included and are measured as an indicator variable. The inclusion of this variable enables us to examine how governing parties performed electorally in economic good times and provides an interesting comparison with the empirical findings for incumbents in economic bad times that formed the backdrop of Chapter 5. This chapter also draws on the Gallagher Index of the change in

Disproportionality levels (2002–2007)²⁷ and enables us to examine how this variable changed across time instead of measuring the absolute level. Higher values on this change variable imply that there is a higher level of disproportionality in electoral systems between elections and negative values mean that electoral systems are more proportional between elections. Country-level control variables are included in the form of macroeconomic conditions, namely the change in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2002–2007) and the change in unemployment (2002–2007) from the World Bank Dataset. Higher values on the GDP variable correspond to an increase in economic growth, whilst higher values on the unemployment variable correspond to an increase in unemployment.

Modeling approach

Preliminary statistics in the form of bivariate correlations were first produced to examine the empirical relationship between emphasizing immigration and the absolute percentage vote shares for center right, populist radical right and center left parties. To investigate the central hypotheses in economic good times (H₄–H₅), four main OLS regression models with robust standard errors were then produced. Models 1–3 examine the electoral performance of center right, populist radical right and center left parties in the context of economic good times, particularly around the emphasis on immigration.²⁸ Robustness checks on multicollinearity were again made for each model through the variance inflation factor and a regression coefficient plot with 95% confidence intervals provide a visualization of the main statistical findings.

²⁷ Strictly speaking, this variable covers the change in disproportionality for the last two national elections in the 2002–2007 electoral period. However the years vary slightly due to the different times that national parliamentary elections were held across Europe.

²⁸ Radical left parties were not included in the analysis as the sample size for this party family is small and not central to our empirical analysis.

6.2 ANALYSIS

Bivariate Correlations

This chapter deploys Pearson r correlations to first assess the empirical relationship between the emphasis placed on immigration and the varying electoral success for center right and populist radical right parties in economic good times. Correlations are also provided for center left parties and this provides a point of comparison with both party families during this economic context. In Table 6.2 we can see a clear relationship ($r=+0.31$) between the emphasis placed on immigration by center right parties and their electoral fortunes. Upon closer inspection of the dataset, a number of entrenched center right parties across Europe that emphasized immigration in their electoral strategy performed well at the outset of the 21st century in national parliamentary elections (Union for a Popular Movement/UMP in France, the ÖVP/Austrian People's Party, Fidesz in Hungary, the People's Party in Spain, the Christian Democratic Union Party in Germany, the Moderate Party in Sweden, and the VVD in the Netherlands). By comparison, the relationship between the emphasis placed on immigration and the electoral success of populist radical right parties (Table 6.2) is not only weak, it is negative ($r=-0.55$). The center left correlation is positive, but weak ($r=+0.06$) and further shows the center right parties performed better electorally during the period of economic good times.

Table 6.2: Correlations between % Vote Share Change for Political Parties and the Salience of Immigration at the Outset of the 21st Century (1999–2007)

Party Ideology	Salience of Immigration (Pearson's r correlation)	Observations (N)
Center Left	+0.06	92
Center Right	+0.31	108
Radical Right	-0.55	52

Source: Author's own figures

Notes: CHES (1999–2007)

Radical Left Party figures omitted from the table.

OLS Regression Models

To explore these empirical relationships more fully and with the inclusion of control variables, the chapter turns to OLS multivariate regression models (Table 6.3). The first model examines the percentage vote share for center right parties at the outset of the 21st century. Model 1 in Table 6.3 shows that center parties had an incumbency advantage during this electoral period and increased their vote share, thus finding strong support for H₄. This finding corroborates the theoretical expectations of the 'strategic emphasis' model and underlines the incumbency advantage during more economically prosperous times for center right parties. Most significantly, the statistical model also finds strong evidence for H₅, in showing that emphasizing immigration increased the vote share for center right parties considerably and is statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. Therefore, the salience of immigration provided significant electoral payoffs for the center right party family during this economic context. Similarly to the empirical findings outlined in Chapter 5, positions on immigration played no role in explaining center right party electoral success. Model 1 further demonstrates the wide-ranging appeal of center right parties, with an emphasis on EU integration increasing their vote share and proving significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. These

results are in line with the center right party literature, in showing the key ‘traditional’ issues from which this party family tends to profit electorally (see Heywood, 2012; Bale, 2008; 2010).

The second model in Table 6.3 outlines the empirical findings of the populist radical right party model in the context of economic good times. It is important to first note that the incumbency variable is not included for populist radical right parties, primarily because there are few cases of radical right incumbents and the sample size is very small (Austria: FPÖ in 1999 and 2002; BZÖ in 2006; Italy: AN in 2001; Latvia: TB-LNNK in 2002; Poland: PiS in 2005). Thus, the incumbency variable is not run for populist radical right parties due to multicollinearity occurring and the variable is subsequently left out of this empirical model. This statistical model shows that populist radical right parties did not perform particularly well when emphasizing immigration in more economically prosperous times and the empirical findings are weak. Similar findings are found to Chapter 5 in regards to positions on immigration. It appears that when holding anti-immigrant stances, far right parties lose out electorally ($p < 0.05$) and that this party family may again be seen by voters as too hostile in their positions on this issue (see Carter, 2005). The strongest variable in the populist radical right model comprises strong stances on law and order and this variable is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). This empirical finding has been previously found in the literature (see Mudde, 2002; 2007) and shows that when outlining strong and authoritarian stances on law and order, the populist radical right party family benefits electorally.

Model 3 in Table 6.3 provides an interesting point of comparison with both the center right and radical right party families, in modeling how well center left parties performed in this economic context. Surprisingly, this empirical model shows that center left parties performed well electorally when emphasizing immigration during this electoral period and is statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. In contrast to Chapter 5, this empirical finding

shows that center left parties performed better electorally on the immigration issue during economic good times, compared to economic bad times. Model 3 also shows that like center right parties, center left parties also benefited electorally from an incumbency advantage during this economic context ($p < 0.05$) and provides an interesting comparison with the anti-incumbency effect findings from Chapter 5. Two other variables also show the electoral appeal of center left parties during this electoral period, with the party family performing considerably better in electoral terms when emphasizing the EU issue ($p < 0.001$) alongside strong stances on law and order ($p < 0.001$).

Robustness Checks

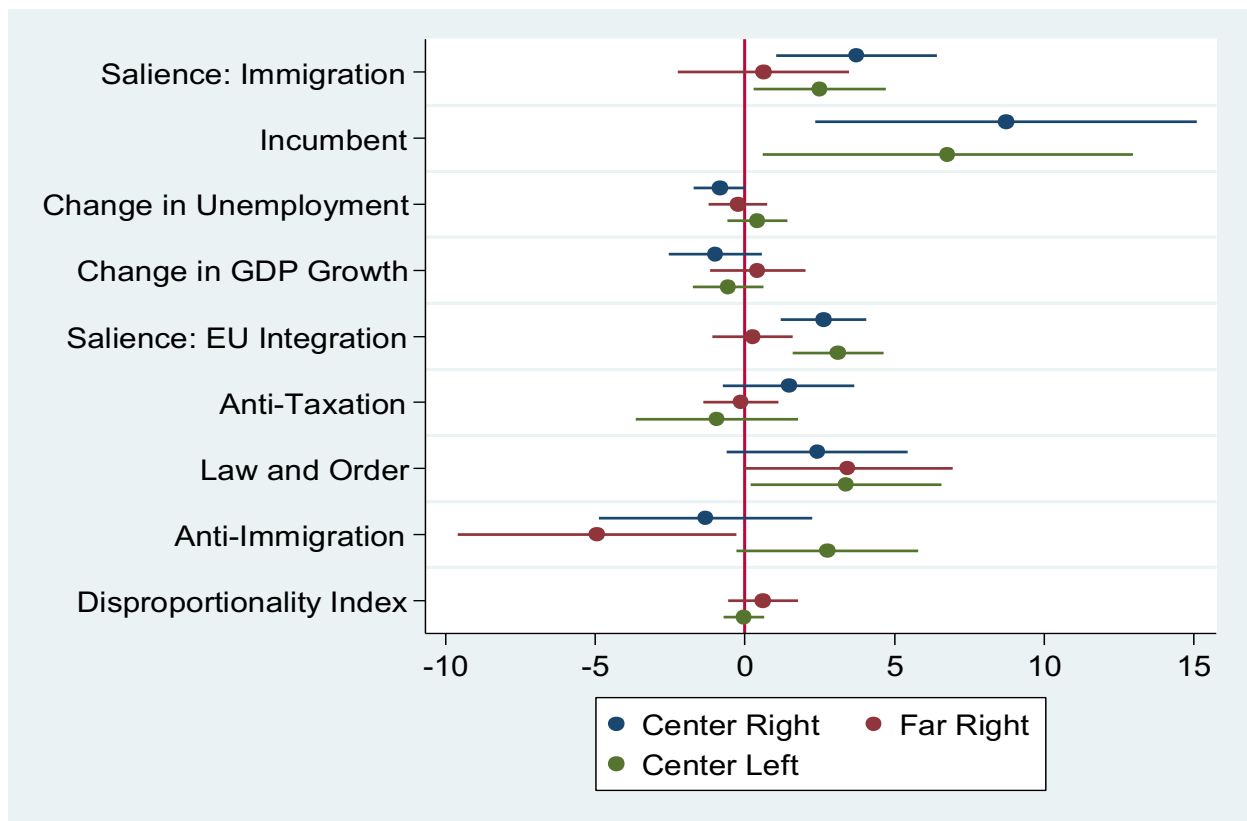
A regression coefficient plot with 95% confidence intervals is again included in Figure 6.1 and provides a robustness check. This allows us to visualize the magnitude of the electoral effect for center right, populist radical right and left-wing parties when emphasizing immigration, whilst including the main independent and control variables from Models 1–3 in Table 6.3 in the context of economic good times. Figure 6.1 depicts a particularly strong pattern for center right parties, showing that emphasizing immigration is a more electorally successful party strategy in comparison to populist radical right parties and to a lesser extent, center left parties. The confidence intervals are also narrow, further underlining the statistically significant effect for mainstream center right parties during this electoral period. The multiple coefficient plot in Figure 6.1 shows the opposite effect for populist radical right parties. In contrast to center right parties, the confidence intervals are much wider compared to center right parties and further underline the weak effect that emphasizing immigration had for this party family in this economic context. An additional robustness check is provided through the VIF statistic and again shows that all three models do not contain multicollinearity and are within acceptable levels. These tables can be found in Table 6.3 below from the three main multivariate regression models presented in this chapter.

Table 6.3: Center-Right Party, Populist Radical Right and Center Left Party Performance, Outset of the 21st Century: Statistical Models

	(M1) Center-Right Model	(M2) Radical Right Model	(M3) Center-Left Model
Saliency: Immigration	3.73** (2.77)	0.62 (0.45)	2.50* (2.26)
Position: Anti-Immigration	-1.32 (-0.74)	-4.95* (-2.18)	2.76 (1.81)
Incumbent	8.71** (2.73)	-	6.78* (2.19)
Position: Anti- Taxation	1.46 (1.33)	-0.13 (-0.22)	-0.94 (-0.69)
Law and Order	2.41 (1.60)	3.44* (2.02)	3.38* (2.12)
Saliency: EU Integration:	2.63*** (3.67)	0.26 (0.40)	3.11*** (4.07)
Disproportionality Index	-0.46 (-1.17)	0.60 (1.07)	-0.32 (-0.09)
Change in Unemployment (2002–07)	-0.06 (-1.31)	-0.23 (-0.49)	0.42 (0.83)
Change in GDP Growth (2002–07)	-0.63 (-0.74)	0.43 (0.55)	-0.55 (-0.94)
Constant	-25.33* (-2.24)	20.47 (1.25)	-33.64*** (-4.90)
N	108	52	92
Adj. R2	0.34	0.27	0.56

Notes: OLS Regression Models run with robust standard errors
t statistics in parentheses * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 6.1: Regression Coefficient Plot (Inclusion of Control Variables)



Source: CHES (1999–2007)

Table 6.4- Robustness Checks: Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variables	Center-Right (M1) VIF	Radical Right (M2) VIF	Center- Left (M3) VIF
Saliency: Immigration	3.57	4.74	3.55
Position: Anti- immigration	4.66	5.88	4.00
Incumbent	1.26	-	1.22
Anti-Taxation	1.28	1.90	1.59
Law and Order	3.39	2.65	3.55
Saliency: EU Integration	1.29	1.78	1.41
Disproportionality Index (2002–07)	1.76	3.38	1.47
Change in Unemployment (2002–07)	3.40	3.41	2.95
Change in GDP Growth (2002–07)	1.96	2.16	1.64
Mean VIF	2.41	3.29	2.25

Center Right Party Electoral Success: Notable Cases

To further illustrate patterns in the statistical models surrounding the electoral resiliency of the center right around the immigration issue in this economic context, this section briefly outlines four notable elections that serve as illustrative cases. These cases are descriptive examples showing specific center right parties that made immigration an important part of their party strategies in national parliamentary elections, allowing them to perform better electorally than populist radical right parties in the context of economic good times.

Patterns of Party Competition: Outset of the 21st Century**The 2002 Austrian Legislative Election**

The 2002 Austrian Legislative Election is a representative case of center right party electoral success at the expense of a populist radical right party in economic good times. Table 6.5 below provides a short summary of the results from the 2002 Austrian national parliamentary election. From 1999 to 2002, Austria was governed by a landmark coalition government

between the center right Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and the populist radical right Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ). The incumbent center right ÖVP under leader Wolfgang Schüssel received 42% of the votes at the 2002 election, seeing a substantial increase in their seat share (+27) in the National Council and becoming the largest party in Austria, winning 79 of the 183 seats. To a lesser extent, the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) also performed better electorally, achieving 37% of the overall vote and marginally increasing their seat share (+4), winning 69 of the 183 seats. However, the populist radical right FPÖ under their charismatic leader Jörg Haider saw a substantial reduction in their vote share (-16%) and lost 34 seats in the National Council, with the party now only holding ten seats.

Scholars such as Luther (2002) argue that changes in patterns of party competition, particularly around the socio-cultural issue dimension of immigration, were an important factor in this process. The incumbent center right ÖVP increased their focus on the immigration issue in seeking to capture disaffected FPÖ voters at this election. The ÖVP sought to raise the profile of the issue and this strategy was an important part of the party's manifesto (Luther, 2002). A second and linked explanation encompasses the incumbency status of FPÖ. The political science literature has noted that part of the FPÖ's core appeal has been its status as an insurgent 'outsider' party that has rallied against the political establishment (see Luther, 2002; Hainsworth, 2008). Thus, including the FPÖ as a coalition partner with ÖVP ended this 'outsider' status. As a governing party, the FPÖ now had to deal not only with policy failures and dissatisfaction amongst voters, but also internal party dissent amongst a section of the party who were opposed to being in coalition government with the ÖVP. In contrast, the center right ÖVP is an entrenched party within the Austrian political system and did not face the same incumbency problems as the FPÖ did. The ÖVP was arguably able to strategically focus on capturing the immigration issue and used their incumbency status as an advantage, in blaming the FPÖ for the breakup of the coalition

government that led to the election. Furthermore, the decision of the party to co-opt the issue and also include the populist radical right FPÖ in the governing coalition during this electoral period proved to be an electorally successful party strategy.

Table 6.5: The 2002 Austrian Legislative Election

Party	Political Ideology	% Change in Vote Share (1999–2002)	Seat Share 2002 (Seat Change +/-)	Incumbent
Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP)	Center Right	+15	79 (+27)	Yes
Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ)	Radical Right	-16	18 (-34)	Yes
Social Democratic Party (SPÖ)	Center Left	+3	69 (+4)	No
Green Alternative	Center Left	+3	17 (+3)	No
Total Number of Seats (National Council)			183	
92 Seats needed for a majority				

Source: http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/austria/introduction.html

Notes: The % Change in Vote Share figures (1999–2002) have been rounded to the nearest whole number and Minor Parties which did not achieve representation in the National Council have been omitted from this table.

France: 2002 Presidential and Legislative Elections

The second case that is briefly drawn on to highlight center right party electoral success at the outset of the 21st century is France. This case features both the Presidential and Legislative elections of 2002, in both of which the newly created center right party Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) triumphed, performing better electorally than the populist radical right Front National (FN) and the center left Parti Socialiste (PS). Table 6.6 below outlines key results from the 2002 Legislative elections. The 2002 French Presidential election was

dominated by socio-cultural issues, notably in the form of terrorism amidst the 9/11 attacks in the United States (see Cole, 2003). The immigration issue was also of importance at this election. The 2002 French Presidential election was particularly historic, with the far right Presidential candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen forcing a second round ballot and facing off against the incumbent center right Jacques Chirac of UMP. Whilst Chirac emphasized issues such as immigration at this election, his rhetoric was more moderate on this issue, compared to the hardline anti-immigrant approach adopted by the FN leader Jean-Marie Le Pen (see Cole, 2003; Mondon, 2014; Mondon, 2013).

A core explanation for Chirac's victory at the 2002 French Presidential Election lies more with other parties such as PS endorsing their voters to vote for Chirac in the second round to stop the insurgent radical right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen from winning, than it does from immigration or any other issue. In the second round run-off, Chirac ended up defeating Jean-Marie Le Pen in a landslide, receiving 82% of the popular vote, compared to Le Pen's 18%. Positive incumbency effects also played an influential role in explaining Chirac's victory, with voters opting for a tried and tested President, versus an ideologically unpalatable populist radical right candidate (see Perrineau, 2002; Cole, 2003). The French Legislative elections took place shortly afterwards and saw the center right UMP secure a majority (obtaining 357 seats), compared to François Hollande's PS (140 seats), with the radical right losing the single seat they had in the French Parliament and losing half of the voters who had previously voted for Jean-Marie Le Pen in the 2002 French Presidential Election. The 2002 French Legislative Election provides further evidence of how center right parties such as UMP outperformed the populist radical right in this electoral period.

Table 6.6: The 2002 French Legislative Election (Composition of the National Assembly)

Party	Political Ideology	Seats in National Assembly (2002)
Union for a Popular Movement (UMP)	Center Right	357
Socialist Party (PS)	Center Left	140
Front National (FN)	Radical Right	0
Union for a French Democracy (UDF)	Center Left	29
French Communist Party (PCF)	Radical Left	21
Others	N/A	30
Total Number of Seats (National Assembly)		577
289 Seats needed for a majority		

Source: http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/france/

Notes: A simplified table is presented, with only second round seat distributions presented. The breakdown of Minor Parties ('Others') is not presented for the sake of parsimony.

2007 French Presidential Election

The fourth snapshot case is the 2007 French Presidential Election. This election is an additional example of how the center right UMP performed better electorally than the populist radical right (and to a lesser extent the PS Party) in economic good times. From 2002 to 2007, immigration was a key issue in French politics, with a number of deportations of illegal immigrants taking place and the issue becoming highly politicized (see Mondon, 2014). During the election campaign, the center right UMP candidate Nicolas Sarkozy amplified the immigration issue much more through adopting a co-optation strategy, seeking

to attract FN voters away from voting for Jean-Marie Le Pen (see Evans and Ivaldi, 2007; Mondon, 2014). This was seen to be an electorally successful party strategy, with Sarkozy winning the election (53% of the popular vote), compared to the PS candidate Ségolène Royal (47%) in the second round run-off. In contrast, Jean-Marie Le Pen failed to reach the second round and performed considerably worse than in 2002 (see Marthaler, 2007; Mondon, 2014). Economic conditions (unemployment levels and GDP growth) were also more favorable during the 2002–2007 electoral periods and are also likely to have played an important role in explaining center right party electoral success at this election.

6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter further investigated the emphasis that center right parties and populist radical right parties placed on immigration outside periods of economic crisis. The main empirical findings in this chapter are that in economic good times, populist radical right parties do particularly badly from emphasizing the immigration issue. Furthermore, center right parties are electorally resilient on immigration in this economic context. As in Chapter 5, we see that center right parties did not benefit from adopting hardline stances on immigration; with the issue salience model playing a more prominent role in explaining electoral success for this party family than the spatial model (see Odalm and Bale, 2015). This chapter also showed that spatial factors, such as positions on anti-immigrant sentiment, reduced the overall vote share for radical right parties.

Therefore, the empirical evidence presented here suggests that emphasizing the immigration issue corresponded to a substantial percentage increase in the aggregate vote share of center right parties in national parliamentary elections (H_5). The central theoretical explanation of center right party electoral success offered here is not a valence nor a positional one, but simply that center right parties are able to trigger and emphasize the right issue during this electoral period through a mechanism of ‘strategic emphasis’, and also

benefit from an incumbency advantage (H₄) in this economic context. In comparison, center left parties also appeared to benefit electorally in this economic context, particularly when emphasizing immigration and also the EU issue. However, the empirical findings still demonstrate that center right parties performed better electorally than populist radical right and to a lesser extent center left parties in more economic good times when emphasizing the immigration issue. Four cases from Austrian (2002 Legislative election) and French politics (2002 Presidential/Legislative elections alongside the 2007 Presidential election) were briefly drawn on to further illustrate center right party electoral success during this economic context. The Austrian 2002 Legislative election in particular provides an important snapshot to the story of ‘strategic emphasis’, in outlining how emphasizing the immigration issue arguably played an important role in patterns of party competition, particularly in explaining center right party electoral success during the context of economic good times.

These empirical findings have important implications for contemporary party politics, in building on the empirical findings from Chapter 5 and showing how center right parties can make use of the immigration issue in diverse economic contexts. These findings suggest that mainstream center right parties are electorally resilient when they emphasize the immigration issue, in times both of economic crisis and of prosperity. Populist radical right parties, on the other hand, only seem to perform better when emphasizing immigration during economic tough times, as demonstrated in Chapter 5. This chapter sheds further light on the party competition dynamics and patterns between center right and populist radical right parties at the outset of the 21st century and provides further evidence that the center right may benefit from a ‘new electoral winning formula’ in 21st century European politics, specifically for center right parties that make ‘strategic emphasis’ central to their party ideology (see Kitschelt, 1995). Whilst the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework has been empirically tested in two diverse economic contexts, namely at the aggregate level, the next chapter seeks

to build on the empirical findings discussed in Chapter 5. The next chapter seeks to further unpack the three different situations in specific countries that underline party competition dynamics between center right and populist radical right parties in times of economic crisis. This case study analysis adopts a qualitative research design and seeks to add further value to this dissertation through investigating three different situations of party competition, examining the electoral fortunes of both center right and populist radical right parties in the context of economic crisis.

Chapter 7

Center Right Party and Populist Radical Right ‘Strategic Emphasis’ and Incumbency effects on Immigration? A Case Study Analysis of Belgium, The Netherlands, France and Finland

Chapters 5 and 6 of the dissertation have demonstrated important empirical patterns and trends between contemporary center right and populist radical right parties on the immigration issue in two diverse economic contexts. The empirical findings from Chapter 5 showed that when center right parties emphasized immigration, they tended to perform better electorally in national parliamentary elections during the context of economic bad times. Simply put, when emphasizing immigration, center right parties’ overall vote share was higher than both populist radical right and center left parties. A closer inspection of the main empirical findings showed that party competition dynamics were complex between both party families on the immigration issue across a number of countries. Whilst a number of non-incumbent center right parties were electorally resilient on the immigration issue, the findings also highlighted how, in certain situations, center right parties’ electoral success was arguably restricted by (i) their incumbency status and (ii) not emphasizing the immigration issue in certain countries, allowing the populist radical right to make electoral gains.

In line with the theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’, these situations provided two distinctive opportunities for specific populist radical right parties to prosper electorally. The empirical findings from Chapter 6 demonstrated that center right parties did even better in economic good times when emphasizing the immigration issue. This chapter also showed that patterns of party competition were qualitatively different in this economic context. The empirical models in Chapter 6 suggest that center right parties were not only able to make use of immigration emphasis in economic good times, but also prospered electorally from an incumbency advantage in this context. In contrast, populist radical right parties performed markedly worse; they did not have the advantage of protest voting or

indeed patterns of electoral volatility (greater voter volatility) during this economic context.

This chapter seeks to build on the main empirical findings from Chapter 5 in investigating patterns of party competition between mainstream center right and populist radical right parties on immigration that are derived from the theoretical framework. This case study chapter focuses on the economic crisis period for two main reasons. Firstly, there are broader patterns of electoral volatility (incumbency–punishment), with incumbent parties suffering electorally. In this context, electoral volatility can be seen as a consequence of the economic crisis, meaning that voters are now less aligned to parties, and thus more prone to punish poorly performing incumbents. Secondly, center right and populist radical right party competition was stronger during this economic context, especially with the populist radical right performing better electorally compared to more economically prosperous times. The case studies seek to build on the large N findings from Chapter 5 in illustrating more systematically the patterns of the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework. Thus, the role of this case study chapter is to shed more light on the theory, in investigating how specific hypothesized conditions lead to different electoral outcomes (electoral success of center right and radical right parties). The case studies in this chapter are structured around a thematic comparison (salience of immigration; crisis; incumbency) that allows the theoretical framework to be tested under different situations that underline competition between center right and populist radical right parties on immigration. The case study chapter provides added value to the theory in examining center right and populist radical right party competition dynamics. Thus, the case studies investigate qualitatively how the choices that specific types of center right parties make on immigration (emphasizing v. not emphasizing) in times of economic crisis affected their electoral success, in tandem with the electoral opportunities with which downturns can provide populist radical right parties. The case studies allow us to examine within-system dynamics between the two party families.

7.1 CASE STUDY SELECTION

This chapter draws on four case studies that were generated from the main empirical findings in Chapter 5 (see Table 7.1 below). Table 7.1 depicts a broad ‘universe of cases’ that represent different patterns of party competition between center right and populist radical right parties in times of crisis. There are three main situations that underline party competition between both party families in the recent economic crisis period. This case study chapter acknowledges that specific center right parties performed well electorally when emphasizing immigration, in countries which had no far right party (such as the PP in Spain and CDS-PP in Portugal). However, this chapter does not examine these case studies as this is beyond the scope of the theory. Moreover, the theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ focuses on party competition between center right and far right parties and does not account for center right party electoral success in countries which do not have a far right party. The first situation involves cases of center right party electoral success. The cases of Belgium, the UK and Denmark represent situations where center right parties prospered electorally in national parliamentary elections through emphasizing the immigration issue. The second situation represents a more nuanced dynamic of party competition. The Dutch, Hungarian, Swedish and Italian cases represent cases where both center right and far right parties were electorally successful, underscoring the importance of the immigration issue in the most recent national parliamentary elections.

Due to variations on the third party competition situation, two cases are examined here in order to provide a more stringent test of the theoretical framework. The aim of these cases is to show how populist radical right parties emphasized immigration and outperformed center right parties, in examining the specific conditions at work here. There are four country cases here: Finland, France, Austria and Greece. The preliminary findings from Chapter 5 demonstrated that conditions such as (i) center right party incumbency and (ii) not

emphasizing immigration were likely to explain why center right parties lost out electorally to far right parties. The primary aim of these four case studies is to choose a representative case from each situation that illustrates broader and generalizable patterns of party competition, providing further understanding of competition on the immigration issue between party families in times of crisis amidst greater voter volatility (see Lijphart, 1971: p. 691). In examining these patterns of party competition, the cases are selected primarily on the independent variables that were found in Chapter 5 of the dissertation from the dataset observations: (i) what happens when there is an economic downturn (center right party incumbency–punishment effect), (ii) the degree to which incumbent center right parties emphasize/do not emphasize immigration, and (iii) the degree to which ‘challenger’ center right parties emphasize/do not emphasize immigration.²⁹ These independent variables form three conditions that underpin different electoral outcomes and are used as the primary method of case selection in this chapter. Table 7.2 outlines these hypothesized conditions that form the situations in the overall cases and how they lead to different electoral outcomes for center right and far right parties.

²⁹ In accordance with the empirical findings from Chapter 5, I define a ‘challenger’ party as one that is in opposition and not currently in government. The terms ‘challenger’ and ‘non-incumbent’ parties are used interchangeably throughout this chapter.

Table 7.1: Center Right and Populist Radical Right Party Competition in the Crisis Period, by Country and Election Years ('Universe of Cases')³⁰

Center Right outperformed Far Right (Electoral Success)	Center Right and Far Right Competition (Both achieved Electoral Success)	Far Right outperformed Center Right (Electoral Success)
Belgium (2007–2010)	Netherlands (2006–2010)	Finland (2007–2011)
UK (2005–2010)	Hungary (2006–2010)	France (2007–2012)
Denmark (2007–2011)	Sweden (2006–2010)	Austria (2006–2008)
	Italy (2006–2008)	Greece (2007–2009)

³⁰ The full list of parties and party classifications used in this chapter are provided in Appendix D of the dissertation.

Table 7.2: Case Studies- Conditions of Center Right–Far Right Party Competition on Immigration

Country and Election Years	<u>C1:</u> <u>Electoral Volatility:</u> Center Right Incumbency–Punishment Effect	<u>C2:</u> <u>‘Incumbent Parties’</u> Center Right ‘Incumbent’ Parties compete with the Far Right on Immigration	<u>C3:</u> <u>‘Challenger’ Parties</u> Center Right ‘Challenger’ Parties compete with the Far Right on Immigration	Electoral Outcomes (‘Winners’)
<u>S1:</u> Belgium (2007–2010)	Yes	No	Yes	Center Right ‘Challengers’ (N-VA)
<u>S1:</u> UK (2005–2010)	No****	Yes	Yes	Center Right ‘Challengers’ (CONS)
<u>S1:</u> Denmark (2007–2011)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Center Right**** ‘Incumbents’ (VENSTRE)
<u>S2:</u> Netherlands (2006–2010)	Yes	No	Yes	Center Right and Far Right ‘Challengers’ (VVD and PVV)
<u>S2:</u> Hungary’ (2006–2010)	No****	No	No	Center Right and Far Right ‘Challengers’ (FIDESZ and JOBBIK)
<u>S2:</u> Sweden (2006–2010)	No	Yes	No**	Center Right ‘Incumbents’ and Far Right ‘Challengers’ (MODERATE and SWEDISH DEMOCRATS)
<u>S2:</u> Italy (2006–2008)	No****	No	Yes	Center Right and Far Right ‘Challengers’ (PdL and LEGA NORD)
<u>S3:</u> Finland (2007–2011)	Yes	No	No**	Far Right ‘Challengers’ (PS)
<u>S3:</u> France (2007–2012)	Yes	Yes	No**	Far Right* ‘Challengers’ (FRONT NATIONAL)
<u>S3:</u> Austria (2006–2008)	Yes	Yes	No**	Far Right ‘Challengers’ (FPÖ and BZÖ)
<u>S3:</u> Greece (2007–2009)	Yes	Yes	No**	Far Right* ‘Challengers’ (LAOS)

Notes: (S1-S3 denote the three different situations of the theoretical framework; C1-C3 denote the three core conditions that underpin the core electoral outcomes).

* = denotes ‘relative’ levels of electoral success.

** = denotes that there is no significant ‘challenger’ center right party in these countries.

*** = denotes that although the center right ‘incumbent’ party Venstre won the most votes and seats in Denmark, a center left coalition was formed after the election, meaning that the center right party now became the main opposition party.

****= denotes that incumbent center left parties were punished electorally.

Table 7.3: Case Study Selection

Country	<u>C1:</u> <u>Electoral</u> <u>Volatility:</u> <u>Center Right</u> <u>Incumbency–</u> <u>Punishment</u> <u>Effect</u>	<u>C2:</u> <u>‘Incumbent</u> <u>Parties’</u> <u>Center Right</u> <u>‘Incumbent’</u> <u>Parties</u> <u>compete with</u> <u>the Far Right</u> <u>on Immigration</u>	<u>C3:</u> <u>‘Challenger’</u> <u>Parties</u> <u>Center Right</u> <u>‘Challenger’</u> <u>Parties</u> <u>compete with</u> <u>the Far Right</u> <u>on</u> <u>Immigration</u>	Electoral Outcomes (‘Winners’)
Belgium (2007– 2010)	Yes	No	Yes	Center Right ‘Challengers’
Netherlands (2006–2010)	Yes	No	Yes	Center Right and Far Right ‘Challengers’
Finland (2007–2011)	Yes	No	No**	Far Right ‘Challengers’
France (2007–2012)	Yes	Yes	No**	Far Right* ‘Challengers’

Note: * = denotes ‘relative’ levels of electoral success.

** = denotes that there is no significant other ‘challenger’ center right party in these countries.

Situation I: Center Right Party Electoral Success

Due to the differences in party competition between the regions of Flanders and Wallonia in Belgium, the Belgian case study only includes party competition in Flanders and does not examine Wallonia. Drawing on Table 7.2, the Belgian case study is chosen for three primary reasons that are in line with the theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis.’ Firstly, the Belgian case study shows wider patterns of electoral volatility at the 2010 Federal parliamentary election, through anti-incumbency patterns for parties in Flanders during the economic crisis period (the 2010 European sovereign debt crisis). Secondly, the Belgian case

is underpinned by incumbent center right parties not competing on the immigration issue. In contrast, center right party ‘challengers’ competed heavily on immigration. The Belgian case therefore provides a case where specific center right parties that compete on the immigration issue perform better electorally. The Belgian case study seeks to show qualitatively how the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), a ‘challenger’ center right party, capitalized electorally from emphasizing immigration and performed considerably better in electoral terms than the populist radical right party Flemish Interest (VB) in national parliamentary elections (2010–2007). An added dynamic in the Belgian case is that N-VA also outperformed other center right parties such as the incumbent Christian Democratic and Flemish Party (CD&V) alongside List Dedecker (LDD). Thus, the Belgian case provides a representative case of ‘strategic emphasis’ as the issue was also a prominent one in Flanders in the run up to 2010 election (see Pauwels, 2011). The UK case (2005–2010) is not selected, primarily because immigration was not a core issue at the 2010 UK General Election (see Ford and Goodwin, 2014). The Danish case is also not selected for two main reasons. Although the center right parties NA and Venstre increased their vote share, this was fairly minimal and a center left coalition was formed after the election, meaning that the center right party now became the main opposition party. It is therefore debatable whether center right parties did achieve electoral success in Denmark in this economic context. Secondly, economic issues were more important than issues such as immigration at the 2011 Danish election and thus this case is not selected.

Situation II: Center Right and Populist Radical Right both achieve Electoral Success

The Dutch case study provides a representative test of the second party competition situation of ‘strategic emphasis’. The Dutch case (2007–2011) is selected because it typifies the three main conditions in Table 7.2. Firstly, there is greater voter volatility, with incumbent parties, particularly on the center right losing out. This has arguably provided electoral opportunities

for non-incumbent and ‘challenger’ center right parties such as the Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), alongside the populist radical right Freedom Party (PVV) to compete on the immigration issue and also benefit from wider anti-incumbency effects. Secondly, the immigration issue has played an important role in 21st century Dutch politics, not just at the 2006 General Election, but also particularly at the recent 2010 General Election (see Van Kessel, 2010; Van Kessel and Crum, 2009). Thirdly, this case allows us to examine how specific non-incumbent center right and populist radical right parties competed on the immigration issue, compared to incumbent center right parties that did not compete on and emphasize the issue at the 2010 election. Thus, the Dutch case also allows us to examine party competition dynamics on the immigration issue between the center right VVD and far right PVV in the context of the European sovereign debt crisis. The Hungarian case (2006–2010) is not selected as whilst immigration emphasis arguably played a role, historically nationalism has been shown to be a much more important driver of political contestation than immigration in Hungary. This was also shown to be the case at the 2010 election (see Pytlas and Kossack, 2013; see Rovny, 2016; Rovny and Polk, 2016). The Swedish (2006–2010) and Italian (2006–2008) cases were also not selected, as immigration was not a central issue in either the 2010 or 2008 national parliamentary elections in both countries. In addition, both the Swedish and Italian cases coincided with incumbent center left parties losing out electorally, as opposed to incumbent center right parties.

Situation III: Populist Radical Right Party Electoral Success

In order to examine the third situation of party competition, two different cases are selected from Table 7.2 to provide an accurate representation of the patterns that underpin the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework in times of crisis. The third situation of party competition shows how specific types of center right parties (namely incumbents) performed electorally worse compared to populist radical right parties. These two case studies are

selected, based on two variations on the independent variables (see Eckstein, 1975: pp. 104–08; (Mahoney and Goertz, 2004; Gerring, 2007: Chapter 5). These two conditions comprise (i) incumbent center right parties that did not compete on and emphasize immigration and (ii) incumbent center right parties that did compete on and emphasize immigration. The Finnish and French case studies are selected as they comprise two divergent patterns of populist radical right party electoral success, at the expense of incumbent center right parties. The context of the Finnish case study is important, primarily because the 2011 election culminated in the largest ever increase in support for a single party (PS) in the Finnish Parliament, further typifying wider patterns of electoral volatility. The Finnish case therefore seeks to shed light on how two distinct conditions of (i) incumbency and (ii) lack of emphasis on immigration hindered the mainstream center right during this electoral period and allowed the populist radical right to prosper electorally from the opening up of ‘issue space’ on immigration.

Secondly, this chapter draws on France (2007–2012) and serves as an additional case study in investigating the third party competition situation in more detail. Table 7.2 shows that this case study provides a more nuanced and fine-grained investigation of the theoretical framework, compared to the Finnish case. The French case shows a second and important variation, notably that there are electoral restrictions to emphasizing the immigration issue for center right parties. Even though the incumbent center right party UMP emphasized immigration at the 2012 national parliamentary election, their status as a governing party meant that anti-incumbency effects arguably swamped a focus on immigration. Thus, this case allows us to see that that emphasizing immigration in the crisis period does not guarantee electoral success for a center right party, particularly if that party is in government and presides under worsening economic conditions. In turn, this negative incumbency effect is likely to have created electoral opportunities for the populist radical right party FN to

benefit from greater voter volatility in the context of the recent economic crisis. Whilst the Greek (2007–2009) and Austrian (2006–2008) cases demonstrate similar conditions to the French case study, the latter is chosen as it provides a representative account of the theoretical framework; namely with the incumbent center right party losing out, even though they competed heavily on the immigration issue.

Party Competition Model: Immigration

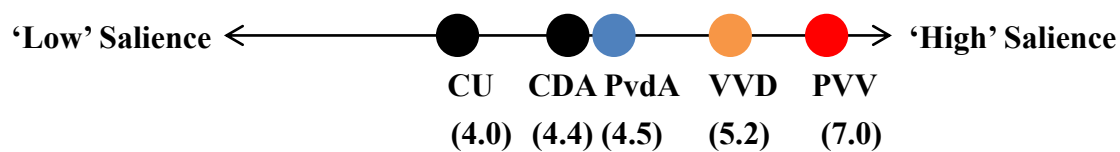
Table 7.3 outlines the hypothesized conditions of the four cases studies that were selected and form the basis of this chapter. The three divergent conditions are presented and provide a summary of the cases. Figure 7.1 below outlines the party competition dynamics model and depicts the emphasis placed on immigration in the four country specific case studies of Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland and France. Drawing on the 2007/08 Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey, the figure models the salience of immigration (1–7 scale) that was deployed in Chapter 5. In interpreting what constitutes ‘low’ salience and ‘high salience’ on the immigration issue, this chapter makes two distinctions. Political parties that scored 1–4 on this measure did not particularly emphasize immigration, whereas parties that scored 5–7 on this issue emphasized the issue considerably in their party strategies. This is an important distinction to make and enables the chapter to shed further light on H₂ (‘Challenger’ center right parties that emphasize immigration will perform electorally better than populist radical right parties) and H₃ (‘Incumbent’ center right parties that did not emphasize immigration will perform electorally worse, with populist radical right parties benefiting electorally). This allows this chapter to further build on the party competition patterns that were outlined in Chapter 5 of the dissertation. Comparable features are also provided for each case study and include the percentage change in vote shares, seats shares and overall distributions, alongside incumbency and the salience of immigration.

Figure 7.1: Party Competition Dynamics on Immigration Emphasis (Economic Crisis Context)

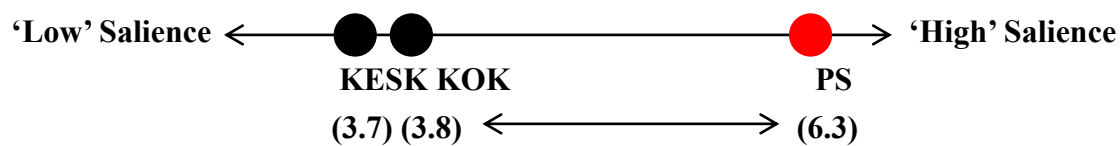
Belgium (Flanders): Situation I: CR Party Electoral Success



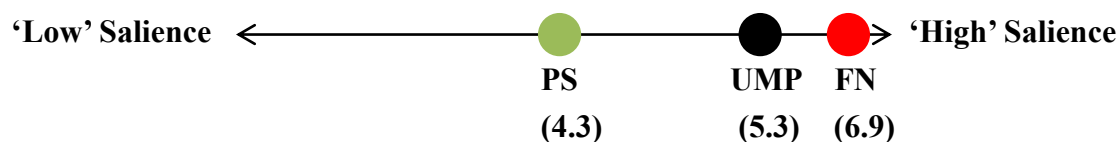
The Netherlands: Situation II: PRR and CR Party Electoral Success



Finland: Situation III(i): PRR Party Electoral Success



France: Situation III(ii): Anti-Incumbency Effects



Notes: Emphasis placed on Immigration (1–7) is denoted in parentheses (see Tables 7.4–7.7)

for full party names and classifications)

1–4= ‘Low’ Salience on Immigration

5–7= ‘High’ Salience on Immigration

Black: ‘Incumbent’ Center Right Party

Orange: ‘Challenger’ Center Right Party

Blue: ‘Incumbent’ Center Left Party

Red: ‘Challenger’ Radical Right Party

Green: ‘Challenger’ Center Left Party

Source: Change in Party Performance Dataset (Whitefield–Rohrschneider Expert Survey)

7.2 ANALYSIS

Situation I: Center Right Party Electoral Success

Belgium

Election Background

The Belgian case study provides a more fine-grained test of ‘strategic emphasis’ in seeking to shed further light on patterns of party competition within a multiparty political system.³¹ This case allows us to investigate how the non-incumbent center right party New Flemish Alliance (N-VA) sought to emphasize the immigration issue by co-opting it and prospered electorally from this issue, at the expense of the populist radical right party Flemish Interest (VB). The case study also shows how the center right N-VA performed better electorally than other center right parties, such as the incumbent CD&V alongside LDD. From 2007–2010, the Belgian political system was characterized by political crises around constitutional reform, particularly between the Flemish and French-speaking communities over the bilingual district of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde. Between 2007 and 2010, numerous governments led by the incumbent center right CD&V under Yves Leterme I, Herman Van Rompuy I, and Yves Leterme II replaced each other and further added to the ongoing political crisis in Belgium.

The center right N-VA party created a political earthquake by becoming the biggest party in Flanders at the 2010 Federal election. The N-VA received the highest share of votes in Belgium, with 17%, and obtained more seats (27) out of 150 in the Chamber of Representatives than any other party. In contrast, the populist radical right party VB emphasized immigration, but saw a significant decrease in their vote share from 2007 (-4% points) and also lost five seats in the Chamber of Representatives at the 2010 Federal

³¹ The Belgian political system is a highly complex consociational political system that has historically led to frequent coalition governments due to its multipartyist system (see Lijphart, 2012; Deschouwer, 2012) with multiple political parties being represented in government and underlying party competition.

election.³² Thus, VB's final seat tally came to 12 seats out of 150 in the Chamber of Representatives. This election also produced wider patterns of electoral volatility, through an anti-incumbency effect for the main coalition partners, with the exception of the Socialist Party (PS) in Wallonia. Government formation took a record-breaking 541 days, with gridlock occurring over the composition of the coalition. A deal on the next government was finally reached, with a government being formed on 6 December 2011. Although N-VA emerged as the largest party in Belgium at the 2010 election, the party was unable to agree a coalition agreement with the Francophone Socialist Party (PS) and talks broke down. A government coalition was formed without the center right N-VA, with the leader of the PS Party Elio Di Rupo becoming the Prime Minister. The governing coalition included liberal, socialist and Christian democratic parties from both Flanders and Wallonia. Table 7.4 outlines the Belgian electoral picture and key statistics from 2007–2010 that underline party competition in this economic context. The table also splits party competition across the two regions of Flanders and Wallonia.

N-VA 'Strategic Emphasis' on Immigration: Party Strategy

This section explores the electoral rise of the center right N-VA party at the 2010 Federal parliament election, through their 'strategic use' of immigration.³³ Longitudinal survey data has shown that the immigration issue has remained an important issue over time in Flanders, particularly since 2007. Belgium as a whole has also experienced high levels of immigration in the 21st century, with a number of non-EU migrants entering the country (see Swyngedouw, 2009; Pauwels, 2011) and the issue has become highly politicized in recent

³² For the sake of parsimony, the Belgian case study does not investigate the far right Francophone Front National Party (FN) in Wallonia as this party is seen as a minor party and has not played a particularly prominent role in the Belgian political system historically. Furthermore, by including the two Flemish speaking parties in the form of the center right N-VA and the radical right party VB this allows a greater degree of comparability.

³³ It is also important to note that the economic crisis hit Belgium less severely than other European Union countries.

years. In turn, the immigration issue has offered distinct electoral opportunities to a number of parties in Flanders, particularly the populist radical right party VB who have often been seen to claim ownership over immigration (Pauwels, 2011). The immigration issue is also likely to catalyze parties on the center right of the political spectrum in Flanders, such as the N-VA and List Dedecker (LDD). Both center right parties are in competition with one another on this issue and seek to profit from the issue, particularly at the expense of the far right VB Party. Moreover, both center right parties also have the potential to steal voters away from VB and this issue dimension provides a large pool of disaffected voters for these center right parties to tap into. Recent survey research (Pauwels, 2011) has also demonstrated that former VB voters have shifted towards the center right parties N-VA and LDD largely due to concerns over issues such as immigration.

Figure 7.1 outlines party competition dynamics on immigration and the emphasis placed on the issue by different parties in Flanders, thus investigating the first party competition situation from the ‘universe of cases’ table in 7.1. The figure depicts emphasis placed on immigration by a number of parties. Drawing on the 2007/08 Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey, the figure models the salience of immigration (1–7 scale) that different political parties in Flanders adopted. The party competition model in Figure 7.1 depicts VB emphasizing immigration (7.0) and forms a key part of the party’s strategy. In contrast, the incumbent center right CD&V did not particularly emphasize immigration (3.4). At the same time, Figure 7.1 shows that both center right parties, N-VA (5.0) and LDD (5.1) emphasized immigration more than the other political parties in Flanders. However, although emphasizing the immigration issue, Table 7.4 also shows that the other center right party in LDD saw a 2% reduction in their vote share at the 2010 election. This calls into question whether this strategy allowed LDD to profit electorally from the immigration issue and more importantly how N-VA were able to strategically frame the issue.

The central argument in the Belgian case is that N-VA sought to strategically co-opt and take this issue away from the populist radical right party VB during the 2007–2010 electoral period. However, N-VA also faced competition from the center right Party LDD at this election. Pauwels (2011) notes that the immigration issue has become much more important to the center right N-VA under Bart De Wever’s leadership. Dandoy (2014) concurs with Pauwels (2011) in suggesting that N-VA has benefited from the immigration issue in recent years. Coffé (2005) and Hepburn (2009; 2011) have more recently argued that regionalist parties such as N-VA can combine immigration and nationalism, emphasizing the protection of regional identities and of the dominant ‘ethnic in-group’ that comprises the Flemish-speaking community that provides electoral advantages. Building on Coffé (2005) and Hepburn (2009; 2011), this case study argues that ideologically, N-VA has focused its party strategy more on the immigration issue in recent years and has sought to shift itself from its previous focus on Flemish nationalism (which implies separation from the Belgian state and forming an independent Flemish nation-state). In turn, N-VA has also sought to combine the issue of immigration with Flemish nationalism to form a dual party strategy. This strategy has enabled the N-VA to appeal not only to voters who are distrustful in light of the ongoing 2007–2010 political crisis, but also to traditional VB party supporters who tended to support separation from Belgium and were concerned about immigration (see Adam and Deschouwer, 2016).³⁴ The N-VA has effectively been reborn under leader Bart De Wever, who has underscored the importance of immigration and linked this to a ‘catch-all’ party strategy of Flemish nationalism (see Abts, Poznyak, and Swyngedouw, 2010; Pauwels, 2011; Dandoy, 2014).

In the run-up to the 2010 General Election, N-VA’s party strategy on immigration also focused on emphasizing immigration through linking the issue to the importance of Flemish

³⁴ VB also advocated separation from the Belgian state and forming a separate Flemish community, one that is based on ethnic grounds.

culture, identity and language. Flemish identity is often seen as being under threat from French-speaking Walloons in the North of Belgium, and also from new non-EU immigrant groups in Flanders (see Baycan, 2016). Thus it is likely that this ‘catch-all’ party strategy of linking immigration with Flemish nationalism and frequently emphasizing immigration was electorally fruitful for N-VA, enabling the party to appeal to a wider range of voters and also to attract a large section of VB’s core electorate (see Pauwels, 2011).

In contrast to N-VA, VB’s focus on immigration has tended to include frequent ideological rhetoric that combines xenophobia with hostility towards ethnic out-groups (see Pauwels, 2011; Mudde, 2007). In recent years this xenophobic rhetoric has been particularly aimed against Islam, and the perception that ‘Islamization’ is undermining the Flemish community in Flanders (see Swyngedouw, et al. 2009; Swyngedouw and Billiet, 2009; Swyngedouw, et al. 2007; Mudde, 2007). From a spatial perspective and in line with the empirical findings in Chapter 5, it is conceivable that VB’s focus on immigration was too hostile and unpalatable for voters during the 2010 election (see Baycan, 2016; Adam and Deschouwer, 2016), and that N-VA’s emphasis on immigration was a better electoral strategy than VB’s narrow spatial focus on anti-immigrant positions. However, the unpalatable nature of VB does not fully explain how the center right N-VA party capitalized from emphasizing immigration and restricted their electoral success. It is therefore important to factor in the impact of internal party system factors such as the ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy,³⁵ which complements the story of ‘strategic emphasis’ on the immigration issue in this case study.

³⁵ Translated from French into English, the phrase literally means ‘sanitary cordon’ and denotes a containment strategy.

Table 7.4: Belgian Case Study (2010–2007)

Party	Political Ideology	% Vote Share	% Change in Vote Share (2010–2007)	Total Seats	Seat Share Change (+ or -) (2010–2007)	Electoral College (%) (Dutch and French Speaking)	Whitefield–Rohrschneider (2007–08) Emphasis on Immigration (1–7)	Incumbent
<u>Flanders Party Competition</u>								
New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)	Center Right	17.40	+8.15	27	*	28.23	5.0	No
Flemish Interest (VB)	Radical Right	7.76	-4.23	12	-5	12.60	7.0	No
List Dedecker (LDD)	Center Right	2.31	-1.72	1	-4	3.74	5.1	No
Open Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD)	Center Right	8.64	-3.19	13	-5	14.02	4.6	No
Christian-Democratic and Flemish (CD&V)	Center Right	10.85	+1.6	17	*	17.60	3.4	Yes
The Flemish Greens (GROEN)	Radical Left	4.38	+0.40	5	+1	7.11	4.4	No
Socialist Party Differently (SPA)	Center Left	9.24	-1.02	13	-1	14.99	3.7	No

Wallonia Party Competition								
Socialist Party (PS)	Center Left	13.70	+2.85	26	+6	35.72	4.2	Yes
Reform Movement (MR)	Center Right	9.28	3.23	18	-5	24.18	3.6	Yes
Ecologists (ECOLO)	Radical Left	4.80	-0.30	8	0	12.50	4.3	No
Humanist Democratic Centre (cdH)	Center Left	5.52	-0.53	9	1	14.39	4.0	Yes
Front National (FN)	Radical Right	0.51	-1.97	0	-1	N/A	6.9	No
Others	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Number of Seats (Chamber of Representatives)				150				
76 Seats needed for a majority								

Notes: * = Christian Democratic and Flemish (CD&V) and the New Flemish Alliance (N-VA) contested the 2007 elections together, receiving 18.51% of the votes and 30 seats. No meaningful change in the seat share between the 2010 and 2007 elections could be calculated from available data sources.

N/A= Missing data

Sources: Change in Party Performance Dataset (Author's own figures) and http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/belgium/

Emphasis on Immigration and the ‘Cordon sanitaire’ policy

The Belgian case study argues that institutional procedures such as the ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy must be taken into account when examining the electoral success of the center right N-VA and the electoral decline of the far right VB at the 2010 election. The ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy was implemented in Belgian politics in the 1980s as a strategy to counteract the electoral threat of VB and to halt the party’s sudden rise. Mainstream Belgian political parties joined forces to exclude VB from any future coalition government, and this strategy has continued in the 21st century. The political science literature has pointed to the importance of ‘supply-side’ factors such as the ‘cordon sanitaire’ and containment policy, which has reduced VB’s electoral potential and made it largely obsolete in recent years (see Pauwels, 2011; Van Heerden et al., 2013; Van Spanje and Van der Brug, 2009; Rummens and Abts, 2009; Art, 2007). The ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy has arguably contributed to the electoral decline of VB and provided N-VA with a distinct electoral opportunity to profit from making the immigration issue more ‘visible’ to voters.

Pauwels (2011) has demonstrated the powerful effect of the ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy in consigning VB to permanent opposition, effectively making the party irrelevant amongst voters (see Van der Eijck and Franklin, 2009: p. 103). Departing from Pauwels’ (2011) analysis alongside Rummens and Abts (2009), this case study provides a more original line of argumentation, in arguing that a co-optation strategy on the immigration issue has taken place, in tandem with the ‘cordon sanitaire’ policy. Thus, non-incumbent center right parties such as N-VA have been able to make the immigration issue more ‘visible’ to voters in their electoral strategy. At the same time, N-VA has capitalized on the issue of immigration, over which VB has often claimed ownership, through linking it to Flemish nationalism and the preservation of Flemish culture over immigrant groups (see Pauwels, 2011).

From a spatial perspective, N-VA has also tended not to adopt a hardline stance on

immigration and has held a more moderate party strategy (Pauwels, 2011). In line with Odalm and Bale's (2015) rationale for center right party electoral strategies on immigration, this case study argues that N-VA were able to emphasize immigration strategically. Crucially, they strategically linked the immigration issue with the building of an independent Flemish nation-state, which arguably resonated with a large proportion of voters at the 2010 election in Flanders. N-VA's broad electoral appeal also potentially enabled them to effectively crowd out the competing center right nationalist party LDD on the issue and become the largest party in Flanders at this election. Thus, this electoral strategy also conceivably offered disaffected VB supporters a more 'catch-all' party for whom they could vote, rather than a populist radical right party such as VB that adopted hardline anti-immigrant positions and had become seen as largely irrelevant by voters (see Van der Eijck and Franklin, 2009) due to the long-term impact of the 'cordon sanitaire'. In effect, 'strategic emphasis' on immigration combined with 'supply-side' factors such as the 'cordon sanitaire' and anti-incumbency conditions allowed the 'challenger' N-VA to take the immigration issue away from the far right VB at the 2010 election, and to profit electorally as a result.

Situation II: Center Right and Populist Radical Right both achieve Electoral Success

The Netherlands

Election Background

The Dutch case study provides an investigation of the second party competition situation, in examining how both the center right People's Party for Freedom for Democracy (VVD) and the populist radical right Freedom Party (PVV) emphasized the immigration issue and both achieved electoral success at the 2010 Dutch General Election. The 2010 Dutch General Election took place after the collapse of Prime Minister Jan-Peter Balkenende's fourth government, which comprised a coalition between the Christian Democrats (CDA), Labour (PvdA) and the Christian Union (CU) parties. An election was triggered after a dispute between withdrawing Dutch troops from Afghanistan. The coalition agreement had previously been unstable, with disputes regularly occurring over issues such as austerity and labor market policy (see Van Kessel, 2010).

Firstly, the 2010 election was marked by patterns of high electoral volatility (conditions of anti-incumbency), with the center right incumbent CDA under Prime Minister Balkenende suffering a landmark loss (-13%) and losing 20 seats in the House of Representatives. CDA's final tally of seats came to 21 out of 150 seats in the House of Representatives. To a lesser extent, the two other incumbent parties, the center left PvdA (-2%) and the center right CU (-1%) also performed electorally worse. This has continued a trend of 'partisan dealignment' in the Dutch political system across the 21st century, with some scholars referring to the Netherlands as having the highest level of voter volatility in Western Europe (see Mair, 2008; Van Kessel, 2010). Table 7.5 outlines the Dutch electoral picture and key statistics from 2006–2010 that underline party competition in this economic context. Secondly and more importantly, these conditions of electoral volatility arguably provided specific electoral opportunities for non-incumbent center right parties, such as VVD

who increased their vote share by 9% and gained nine seats (31 seats overall out of 150 in the House of Representatives). The VVD managed to gain one more seat than PvdA (30 seats overall) and thus became the largest party in the Netherlands, also finishing above the CDA (21 seats overall). Thirdly, the populist radical right party PVV under their charismatic leader Geert Wilders performed well (+10) and became the third largest party in the Netherlands (gaining 15 seats), up to 24 seats in the House of Representatives.

Table 7.5: Dutch Case Study (2010–2006)

Party	Political Ideology	% Change in Vote Share (2010–2006)	Seat Share 2010 (Seat Change +/-)	Whitefield–Rohrschneider (2007–08) Emphasis on Immigration (1–7)	Incumbent
People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD)	Center Right	+5.8	31 (+9)	5.2	No
Freedom Party (PVV)	Radical Right	+9.6	24 (+15)	7.0	No
Labour (PvdA)	Center Left	-1.6	30 (-3)	4.5	Yes
Christian Democrats (CDA)	Center Right	-12.9	21 (-20)	4.4	Yes
Socialist Party (SP)	Center Left	-6.8	15 (-10)	4.9	No
Democrats ’66 (D66)	Center	+5.0	10 (+7)	5.0	No
GreenLeft (GL)	Center Left	+2.1	10 (-3)	5.2	No
Christian Union (CU)	Center Right	-0.8	5 (-1)	4.0	Yes
Orth. Protestants (SGP)	Center Right	+0.1	2 (0)	3.7	No
Animal Party (PvdD)	Radical Left	-0.5	2 (0)	2.8	No
Total Number of Seats (House of Representatives)			150		
76 Seats needed for a majority					

Sources: Change in Party Performance Dataset (Author’s own figures) and Kiesraad

(<http://www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl>)

Context of the Immigration issue

Since the start of the 21st century, the salience of the immigration issue has increased in the manifestos of Dutch political parties (see Van Heerden et al., 2013; Van Kersbergen and Krouwel, 2008). Recent research has demonstrated that the center right party VVD has historical precedence on the immigration issue, having previously adopted a co-optation strategy on the immigration issue in reaction to List Pim Fortuyn's electoral success in the early 2000s (Van Heerden et al., 2013). The 2010 Dutch election was dominated by a number of socio-economic and socio-cultural issues. Socio-economic issues included labor market reforms and austerity in the wake of the 2010 European sovereign debt crisis. Key socio-cultural issues comprised immigrant integration (Aarts et al., 2010). However, issues such as European Union integration played little part in the Dutch election campaign (Van Kessel, 2010). Unsurprisingly, immigration was an important issue for the populist radical right PVV at the 2010 election; however the center right VVD under leader Mark Rutte also campaigned on this issue heavily at the election as well.

Survey research has shown how both VVD and PVV voters stated that immigrant integration was the 'most important problem facing the Netherlands' in the 2010 General Election. Both proportions were considerably smaller for voters that voted for the incumbent parties CDA, PvdA and CU (see Aarts et al., 2010) and demonstrate that both PVV and VVD's electorates were comprised of voters who perceived immigration as a problem that concerned the future of Dutch society. The key differences on immigration between VVD and PVV are located on the spatial dimension. The radical right PVV tended to adopt more hardline stances on immigration (anti-immigrant sentiment) focusing on the problem posed by Islam to the Netherlands. In contrast, the center right VVD has focused on a more moderate and ideologically palatable party strategy on the issue (see Van Kessel, 2010; Van Heerden et al., 2013), outlining restrictions on immigration, but not based around the PVV's

politics of race and incompatibility of Islam in Dutch society. This has arguably given VVD a broader base of voters to appeal to in Dutch politics.

‘Strategic Emphasis’ on Immigration

Through a content analysis of party programmes, Van Heerden et al. (2013) have demonstrated that under leader Mark Rutte, VVD placed more issue salience on the immigration issue in their party manifesto at the 2010 election, compared to the 2006 election. Furthermore, VVD placed considerably more emphasis on immigration than incumbent parties did (CDA, CU and PvdA) in mentioning the issue much more frequently. This is likely to have attracted the attention of Dutch voters at the 2010 election, combined with the VVD’s non-incumbency status. This further underlines how VVD were the closest party to the far right PVV on the salience of immigration. This case study builds on the Van Heerden et al. (2013) study in showing similar effects, in how the center right VVD has sought to challenge the radical right PVV’s issue ownership on the immigration issue, through emphasizing the issue.

Figure 7.1 depicts party competition dynamics on immigration emphasis in the Netherlands and the second party competition situation. The figure depicts emphasis on immigration by a number of parties. Drawing on the 2007/08 Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey, the figure again models the salience of immigration (1–7 scale). Generally speaking, the three incumbent parties (CDA– 4.0; CU– 4.4 and PvdA– 4.5) placed lower emphasis on the immigration issue than the nearest center right party VVD. Moreover, VVD’s emphasis on immigration (5.2) further demonstrates that the center right party made immigration an important part of their strategy, compared to the three incumbent parties. As befits a populist radical right party, PVV’s emphasis on immigration (7.0) underlined how this issue was of paramount importance to the party’s strategy and still featured more heavily than VVD’s. This is not surprising however as Wilders’ party has focused heavily on this

issue in previous elections and this issue has come to dominate their party strategy (see Mudde, 2007). The important point that needs to be made here is the party strategy of the center right VVD. Not only were more voters likely to vote for the VVD based on their perceived competence on socio-economic issues such as austerity and handling the economy, but at the same time, VVD sought to frame and make the immigration issue more ‘visible’ to voters at the 2010 election (see Aarts et al., 2010). Underscoring immigration and tying this issue to a more moderate center right party strategy is likely to have enabled VVD to tap into voters who were concerned about immigration, but cautious of voting for the populist radical right PVV due to their unpalatable ideology. Conceivably, this framing and emphasis on the issue arguably provided electoral payoffs for VVD and may have even enabled the party to restrict the electoral success of the insurgent PVV under Wilders.

Therefore, the primary argument in the Dutch case study is about the dynamics on immigration within a multiparty system and how issue emphasis on immigration matters in explaining the electoral downturn of incumbent center right parties (CDA) in this economic context of voter volatility. Both the center right VVD under leader Mark Rutte and the populist radical right PVV gained substantially from anti-incumbency conditions (anti-incumbency voting for center right and left parties). Clearly, the 2010 Eurozone crisis played a significant role in explaining these incumbency-punishment patterns. However, the primary theoretical argument here is about how the non-incumbent center right VVD was able to realize the electoral importance of emphasizing immigration in their party strategy and differentiate themselves from the CU, CDA and PvdA incumbents in emphasizing the issue more at the 2010 election. Evidently, Wilders’ PVV party benefited considerably from its anti-Islam rhetoric and continued emphasis on immigration amongst a core set of disaffected voters, in achieving a landmark electoral result. It is conceivable though that without VVD’s playing up of the immigration issue, the PVV party under Wilders may have gained even

more voters at the 2010 General Election. Though the PVV created a ‘political earthquake’ in the Netherlands at this election, the Dutch political system is built on compromise. Constitutionally, coalition governments are the norm, making it extremely difficult for any one party, particularly a populist radical right party, to govern alone. The best outcome they can often hope for is therefore to enter into a coalition government with the approval of established mainstream parties. Government formation after the election took 127 days, with a right-wing coalition finally being formed between the two center right parties, VVD and CDA, with the PVV making an ‘informal’ agreement to support the center right-led government (see Van Kessel, 2010; Lijphart, 2012).

Situation III(i): Populist Radical Right Party Electoral Success

Finland

Election Background

By comparison with the first two case studies, the case study of Finnish center right parties’ strategies on immigration offers a more nuanced variation of ‘strategic emphasis’. This case study features a case that coincided with a remarkable anti-incumbency vote at the 2011 Finnish national parliamentary election. It investigates the third situation in the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical framework, demonstrating two key conditions, namely how center right parties that (i) were incumbents and (ii) did not emphasize the immigration issue lost out electorally in the context of economic bad times. This case study shows that these two conditions are interlinked and arguably allowed the far right Finns Party (PS) to emphasize immigration, thus enabling their message to cut across a large proportion of disaffected Finnish voters at the 2011 Finnish national parliamentary election.

Since the 2007 national parliamentary elections, Finland had been governed by a center right coalition between the National Coalition Party (KOK), the Centre Party (KESK), with the support of the Green League (VIHR) and the Swedish People’s Party (SFP). The

2011 Finnish election was a historic one, with the populist radical right party PS winning 19% of the votes and the mainstream parties on the center right and left both losing out in the Eduskunta (Finnish Parliament). Table 7.6 outlines the Finnish electoral picture and key statistics from 2007–2011 that underline party competition in this economic context. The PS party was able to benefit electorally from these wide patterns of electoral volatility, by placing ‘high’ salience on the immigration issue, gaining 34 seats (39 seats out of 200 in the Eduskunta) at the 2011 Finnish national parliamentary election. This case study enables us to examine how the incumbent center right coalition, especially the center right KESK, lost out significantly at the same election, seeing a substantial reduction in their vote share (-7%) and losing 16 seats. KESK’s final seat tally came to 35 out of 200 seats in the Eduskunta. The National Coalition Party (KOK) which was also a member of the KESK coalition did not emphasize immigration either and lost out electorally, losing six seats (44 seats out of 200).

‘Strategic Emphasis’ on Immigration

The context of the 2011 Finnish parliamentary election took place in the backdrop of the unfolding Eurozone crisis and subsequent bail-out measures that the Finnish government was involved in. The EU issue was an important issue at the 2011 election, in part fostering support for the far right PS party and antipathy for the center right governing coalition amongst Finnish voters. This case study acknowledges that the backdrop of the EU bail-outs played an important role, but makes an original contribution to the literature in arguing that the Finnish literature has tended to downplay (see Raunio, 2011) the role of the immigration issue, leading to patterns of electoral volatility (anti-incumbency vote) and creating fertile conditions for the populist radical right party PS to prosper.

In recent years, the immigration issue has gained significant traction in Finland amongst voters (see Rahkonen, 2011). Moreover, insurgent parties such as the populist radical right PS party have focused heavily on the issue. The PS has weaved a populist

narrative about the out-of-touch mainstream parties in Finland not representing traditional Finnish voters (Raunio, 2011). Mainstream parties by and large in Finland have tended not to engage with the immigration issue. This opening up of issue ‘space’ has arguably provided distinct electoral opportunities for PS to benefit, particularly in the context of greater voter volatility. The Finnish case study is graphically represented in the party competition model in Figure 7.1. The Finnish case study demonstrates how the incumbent center right parties (KESK and KOK) did not emphasize immigration (3.7 and 3.8 respectively), thus leaving competition and ‘space’ open on this dimension for the populist radical right PS party to emphasize (6.3) in their party strategy. In line with the third situation of party competition, this study argues that this large issue ‘space’ and absence of the incumbent center right on immigration is crucial in explaining how the far right PS could profit electorally and claim the immigration issue at this election. Thus, the central argument in the Finnish case study is that through ‘strategic emphasis’, the populist radical right party PS has been able to bring immigration narratives into the mainstream of political debate in Finland. At the same time, other mainstream parties on both the left and right alike have failed to articulate a clear strategy on immigration, according to Rahkonen (2011: pp. 433–434). A notable example of this are the incumbent center right parties, led by Prime Minister Mari Kiviniemi, which failed to address the immigration issue, either downplaying it by focusing on more socio-economic issues, or remaining ‘silent’ at the recent 2011 parliamentary election. According to Puuronen (2011), not featuring immigration in its party strategy impacted on the National Coalition Party’s electoral fortunes in 2011. Further, by remaining ‘silent’ on this issue, KESK effectively allowed PS to emphasize and articulate the immigration issue to a wide section of voters. Similarly, the center right KOK largely remained ‘silent’ on immigration, focusing on issues such as the economy instead. This is likely to have contributed to their substantial electoral downfall in 2011, culminating in PS effectively assuming ownership of

the immigration issue in Finnish politics.

Table 7.6: Finnish Case Study (2011–2007)

Party	Political Ideology	% Change in Vote Share (2011–2007)	Seat Share 2011 (Seat Change +/-)	Whitefield–Rohrschneider (2007–08) Emphasis on Immigration (1–7)	Incumbent
National Coalition (KOK)	Center Right	-1.9	44 (-6)	3.8	Yes
Centre (KESK)	Center Right	-7.3	35 (-16)	3.7	Yes
The Finns (PS)	Radical Right	+15.0	39 (+34)	6.3	No
Social Democratic Party (SDP)	Center Left	-2.3	42 (-3)	5.2	No
Left Alliance (VAS)	Center Left	-0.7	14 (-3)	3.6	No
Swedish People’s Party (SFP)	Center	-0.3	9 (0)	5.2	Yes
Green League/Green Alliance (VIHR)	Center Left	-1.2	10 (-5)	5.2	Yes
Others	N/A	N/A	7	N/A	N/A
Total Number of Seats (Eduskunta/ Parliament)			200		
101 Seats needed for a majority					

Sources: Change in Party Performance Dataset (Author’s own figures) and http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/finland/

PS Party Strategy: ‘Strategic Emphasis’

From a spatial perspective, scholars such as Sundberg (2011) have argued that the PS party made significant use of the fear felt by ordinary Finnish voters about the immigration issue.

Sundberg (2011) notes that a key argument deployed by PS was that immigration were

increasing and immigrants were threatening the traditions of Nordic life (see Tervonen-Gonçalves and Oinonen 2012; Puuronen 2011: pp. 204–205). Recent analysis of the PS party's policy positions has also shown how at the 2011 Finnish national election, the populist radical right party was heavily focused on depicting immigrants as undermining Finnish culture and national identity (see Sundberg, 2011). However, in contrast to Sundberg, this case provides a more nuanced explanation around issue salience, in arguing that the PS party focused much more on issue salience and getting this issue across to ordinary Finnish voters.

Under its charismatic leader Timo Soini, PS still adopted hardline stances on immigration, but sought to tone down its rhetoric on anti-immigrant positions, by placing much more emphasis on the importance of protecting Finnish culture and language (see Raunio, 2012; Borg, 2012). Raunio (2012: p. 18) notes that PS placed considerably more emphasis on 'Finnishness' and on the protection of national identity than on other issues. Arguably, this provided an electorally successful party strategy for PS to emphasize the immigration issue, which mainstream parties such as KESK and KOK tended to 'downplay'. Thus, the PS party focused on frequently mentioning the immigration issue and brought this issue into public discourse at the 2011 national election, which likely proved to be an electorally successful party strategy (see Puuronen 2011; Keskinen, Rastas and Tuori 2009; Keskinen 2014). PS also arguably benefited from feelings of dissatisfaction amongst working class voters at the perceived absence of the incumbent center right led coalition on the immigration issue (see Pyrhönen 2015; Keskinen, Rastas and Tuori, 2009: pp. 10–11). At the same time, declining economic conditions and the continuation of the Eurozone crisis also likely led to greater voter volatility in Finland and widespread anti-incumbency effects, with the punishment of the center right incumbents.

Pyrhönen (2015) argues that the populist radical right PS has been effective not only in 'owning' immigration, but in providing a vehicle for dissatisfied working class voters.

Thus, by KESK and KOK not emphasizing immigration and with conditions of greater voter volatility (anti-incumbency effects), this is likely to have further enabled the PS party to make substantial electoral gains at the 2011 election. This arguably allowed PS to become more associated with the immigration issue amongst voters, ‘owning’ it from incumbent center right parties that vacated this issue dimension and did not emphasize it at this election. Though the populist radical right PS achieved a landmark electoral result at the 2011 election and outperformed mainstream center right and left parties, the leader of the party Timo Soini refused to enter into coalition negotiations. Thus, a coalition government was formed of six parties. The center right KOK headed up the coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and featured the support of the Left Alliance (VAS), the Green League (VIHR), the Swedish People’s Party (SFP) and the Christian Democrats (KD).

Situation III(ii): Anti-Incumbency Effects

France

Election Background

The fourth and final case of the 2012 French Legislative Election comprises a modification of the third situation outlined in the theoretical framework of ‘strategic emphasis’ (see Table 7.1). The French case (2007–2012) provides a more fine-grained investigation of the key patterns that underline competition on the immigration issue between the center right and populist radical right party families. Most significantly, the French case demonstrates that when emphasizing and making the immigration issue an important one, center right party incumbency (conditions of anti-incumbency) provided electoral restrictions for this party family. At the same time, these patterns of electoral volatility and protest voting arguably enabled the far right Front National (FN) to prosper electorally from emphasizing the immigration issue at the expense of the incumbent center right UMP during the economic crisis context. Table 7.7 outlines the French electoral picture and key statistics from 2007–

2012 that underline party competition in this economic context.

In the 2012 French national parliamentary election, the incumbent center right UMP emphasized immigration, yet still performed electorally poorly. Under leader Jean-François Copé, UMP's vote share decreased by around 8% from the previous election in 2007, with the party losing 119 seats in the National Assembly and only holding 194 out of 577 seats in the National Assembly. Although the party emphasized the immigration issue, this strategy did not prove electorally successful. Recent research (Mondon, 2013; 2014) has suggested that under French President Nicolas Sarkozy, UMP attempted to emphasize the immigration issue more and claim it from the Front National (FN). However, this electoral strategy had a limited effect and it appears that the party's incumbency status, coinciding with the effects of the Eurozone crisis arguably played a significant role in the party's electoral decline during this period (see Kuhn and Murray, 2012). The Socialist Party (PS) led by Jean-Marc Ayrault clearly benefited from the UMP's electoral slide in 2012 and wider patterns of electoral volatility. The PS Party saw its seat share increase by 94 and held 280 out of 577 seats in the National Assembly. Whilst PS fell short of the 289 majority required governing alone, they still became the largest party in the French National Assembly. The FN led by Marine Le Pen increased their vote share by 4% and placed 'high' emphasis on immigration. Nonetheless, the results for the FN at this election constitute relative, rather than absolute electoral success. Electoral and institutional restrictions meant that the party's vote share was not proportionally distributed into seats and the FN only won two seats in 2012 in the French National Assembly (see Mondon, 2013).

Table 7.7: French Case Study (2012–2007)

Party	Political Ideology	% Change in Vote Share (2012–2007)	Seat Share 2012 (Seat Change +/-)	Whitefield–Rohrschneider (2007–08) Emphasis on Immigration	Incumbent
Union for a Popular Movement (UMP)	Center Right	-8.4	194 (-119)	5.3	Yes
Socialist Party (PS)	Center Left	-1.4	280 (+94)	4.3	No
Front National (FN)	Radical Right	+3.6	2 (+2)	6.9	No
Greens	Center Left	+3.2	17 (+13)	5.1	No
New Center (NC)	Center Right	+0.4	12 (-10)	3.8	No
Left Radical Party (PRG)	Center Left	+0.7	12 (+5)	4.8	No
Others	N/A		60		
Total			577		
Number of Seats (National Assembly)					
289 Seats needed for a majority					

Source: http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/country/france/

Notes: Only second round seat distributions are presented.

‘Strategic Emphasis’ on the Immigration issue?

The immigration issue has become an important issue in France since the 2007 Presidential and Legislative elections, with issues such as illegal immigration and asylum seekers coming to the fore of French politics in recent years. In turn, the issue has provided a number of

electoral opportunities for parties on the right-wing of the political spectrum in France (see Mondon, 2014; 2013). A simplified party competition model is outlined in Figure 7.1 for the French case and depicts the radical right FN emphasizing immigration (6.9) and was a key party strategy at the 2012 national parliamentary election. The incumbent center right UMP also placed considerably more emphasis on the issue (5.3) compared to the center left PS (4.3) and shows the importance of immigration to the UMP's party strategy at this election. A number of French political commentators have argued that the electoral strategy of emphasizing immigration ('visibility') was adopted initially by Sarkozy in the 2007 French presidential election, focusing on key themes of national identity and sovereignty in order to reduce the electoral threat posed by Jean-Marie Le Pen and the FN (see Evans and Ivaldi, 2007; Mondon, 2013). Mondon (2013) argues whilst this electoral strategy proved to be successful at the 2007 National parliamentary election, but not at the 2012 election, and he is among those scholars who argue that a paradoxical outcome of UMP's electoral strategy has been to bring the discourse of the FN into the mainstream of French politics, thereby legitimizing the FN amongst the French electorate.

From recent research (Mondon, 2013; 2014), it seems that Sarkozy's rightward shift on immigration between 2007 and 2012 arguably brought the discourse of the Front National into the mainstream of French politics. However, 'strategic emphasis' on immigration required an effective politician to wield this party strategy, and Marine Le Pen arguably provided this vehicle. She was elected leader of the FN on 16 January 2011, taking over from her father Jean-Marie Le Pen, who had led the party for over three decades. Since 2011, Marine Le Pen has undertaken a series of internal party reforms, seeking to rebrand the image and core ideology of the FN in ways that could make it more appealing to the French electorate (Ivaldi, 2012; Goodwin, 2014).

Marine Le Pen's ideological revamping of the FN sought to mark a clear departure from

the ideology propounded by her father. From a spatial perspective, Marine Le Pen has also sought to tone down the party's anti-immigration rhetoric (see Mondon, 2014). Immigration is still central to the ideology of the FN Party, but Marine Le Pen has sought strategically to link the issue with a populist discourse that has resonated with the French electorate, particularly amongst the disaffected working classes (Ivaldi, 2012; Mondon, 2014). Le Pen has linked immigration with the undermining of the French state and national sovereignty, in particular emphasizing the problem that Islam poses to French society. She has also sought to link the discourse of immigration to the Eurozone crisis and the failure of the EU project to achieve reform. The French case also provides a more nuanced case in arguing that when center right parties are in government, conditions of anti-incumbency can also swamp a focus on immigration. The economy was also a key issue at the 2012 French legislative election, with the Eurozone crisis culminating in France experiencing higher levels of unemployment and declining GDP (Kuhn and Murray, 2013).

Scholars have highlighted the importance of economic factors and how economic variables such as unemployment can act as key determinants in leading to the electoral punishment of incumbents (see Fauvelle-Aymar et al., 2011; Kuhn and Murray, 2013). Arguably, higher levels of unemployment are likely to have depressed the vote considerably for the incumbent UMP, with voters holding them accountable for the declining state of the French economy at the 2012 legislative election (Caramani et al., 2012). Caramani et al. (2012) also argue that a similar anti-incumbent process mechanism occurred a few months earlier at the 2012 French Presidential election, where the center right incumbent Nicolas Sarkozy was defeated by the PS candidate François Hollande, further highlighting patterns of greater voter volatility. The anti-incumbency effect in the French Presidential election was unprecedented and Sarkozy was the first incumbent President in over thirty years not to win a second term. This anti-incumbency effect is an important condition as it highlights that in

times of economic crisis, there are electoral restrictions to emphasizing immigration for center right parties, particularly for incumbent center right parties such as UMP. Evidently, the UMP's association with being an incumbent party in the context of the Eurozone crisis (higher levels of unemployment) is likely to have sealed their fate at the 2012 Legislative election and the strategy of playing up the immigration issue did not pay off. Therefore, this anti-incumbency context is likely to have provided a distinct opportunity for populist radical right parties such as the Front National to prosper electorally, by emphasizing immigration and benefiting from patterns of voter volatility in the context of the ongoing Eurozone crisis.

7.3 CONCLUSION

In line with the theoretical framework of 'strategic emphasis', this chapter examined different patterns that illustrated the electoral success of specific center right parties during the context of greater voter volatility. The case studies in this chapter provide added value to the statistical models in Chapter 5, through showing more nuanced dynamics on competition between center right and populist radical right parties across Europe in national parliamentary elections. These cases outlined the importance of party competition dynamics and party-level factors in explaining the different processes of the 'strategic emphasis' theory. The case studies also showed that the extent of center right party electoral success rested largely on two different conditions (namely an incumbency–punishment effect and the emphasis of 'challenger' center right parties on the immigration issue). These findings have important implications for the nature of contemporary party politics in Europe.

Incumbency–punishment

The case studies in this chapter showed important patterns of electoral volatility in the context of economic crisis, with voters less aligned to parties, and thus more prone to punish poorly performing incumbents. Two main generalizable lessons can be drawn from these four

case studies. Firstly, the case studies demonstrated the key variable of incumbency–punishment, in showing that incumbent center right parties tended to be punished electorally. This in turn allowed the far right to benefit from this pattern of electoral volatility in the crisis period. Whilst the *raison d'être* of populist radical right parties is their focus on immigration, the Finnish case study showed that when incumbent center right parties fail to tap into and mobilize voters on this issue, this created fertile conditions for the populist radical right to achieve electoral success in this economic context. The French cases showed that even when incumbent center right parties emphasized and competed on the immigration issue, they were punished electorally, due to an anti-incumbency effect (declining economic conditions). This finding reinforces the condition of incumbency-punishment that was found in Chapter 5 of the dissertation and further underscores the importance of anti-incumbency effects in this economic context.

Center Right ‘Challenger’ Parties

Secondly and interrelated, the case studies demonstrated that specific types of center right parties, namely ‘challenger’ center right parties that were in opposition, were electorally resilient. The Belgian and Dutch case studies showed that competing on and emphasizing the immigration issue provided electoral dividends for non-incumbent center right parties. Center right parties that were in opposition (N-VA in Belgium and VVD in the Netherlands) during economic downturns were not tainted by anti-incumbency effects and conceivably had more freedom to compete on the immigration issue with populist radical right parties. This is a much more nuanced finding and complements the findings from Chapter 5 in making an important distinction between types of center right parties, most notably ‘incumbent’ and ‘challenger’ center right parties that characterize varying levels of volatility in economic downturns. These findings are also important as they suggest that the frequency of mentioning the immigration issue amongst voters and the amount of coverage the issue

gained may have mattered more than the actual policy positions on immigration in explaining electoral success for ‘challenger’ center right parties.

From a more analytical perspective, the case studies also show that two specific conditions exist, that conform to both ‘sufficient’ and ‘necessary’ conditions of center right party electoral success. A sufficient condition of center right party electoral success is the ability of these parties to emphasize immigration in this economic context. However, the ‘type’ of center right party matters particularly in this economic context, with ‘challenger’ center right parties (those not in government) prospering markedly from this strategy. In contrast, incumbent center right parties did not benefit from such a strategy, in line with anti-incumbency effects. These findings provide an important departure from the main empirical findings in Chapter 6, where incumbent center right parties prospered electorally in more economically prosperous times. Therefore, a key contribution of this case study chapter is in outlining a necessary condition of center right party electoral success in this economic context, in the form of ‘challenger’ center right parties that compete on and emphasize immigration. Though these cases are not definitive, they nonetheless show that non-incumbent center right parties were the main electoral beneficiaries in the context of greater voter volatility. The next and final chapter contextualizes the dissertation’s main empirical findings, examining whether there is a ‘new electoral winning formula’ in 21st century European politics for center right parties that place ‘strategic emphasis’ on immigration, and considers the implications this poses for contemporary party politics.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSION

The central research question of this dissertation set out to further our knowledge by exploring party competition on the immigration issue between populist radical right and center right parties in the 21st century across Europe. The dissertation focused on mainstream center right parties as opposed to center left parties for two primary reasons. Firstly, center right parties were found to be closer spatially on the immigration issue than center left parties were. Secondly, center right parties share a number of ideological similarities with populist radical right parties, on issues such as keeping taxation low, maintaining law and order alongside national security that is likely to appeal to a core base of the center right electorate. These two factors provided the rationale for focusing on both party families in this dissertation.

The dissertation makes an original theoretical contribution to knowledge in arguing that mainstream center right parties are best placed to compete with the radical right on the immigration issue and prosper electorally. Empirically, the dissertation shows comparatively at the aggregate level, that center right parties have the capacity to perform better electorally than populist radical right parties. This effect was particularly surprising in times of economic crisis but the effect was more pronounced in economic good times. This final section revisits the key findings of the three main empirical chapters, outlining the main contributions that the dissertation makes to the existing literature on party competition and on the overall project of the center right in Europe. This conclusion also highlights areas within these fields where our knowledge remains limited, underdeveloped or unexplored.

Center Right Party ‘Strategic Emphasis’ on Immigration

Chapter 1 of the dissertation first set out to examine whether populist radical right parties benefited electorally from the 2008–2013 economic crisis, since economic downturns are widely believed to precipitate a rise in support for such parties at the expense of mainstream parties, due to patterns of electoral volatility and anti-incumbency effects. The empirical relationship between the economic crisis and electoral support was shown to vary considerably across Europe, and it appeared that the populist radical right did not do as well as expected. Chapter 1 showed that center right parties performed better electorally than both populist radical right and particularly center left parties did during the crisis, and argued that the ‘strategic’ choices that center right parties made on the immigration issue was likely to be an important factor in this outcome. The central research question of this dissertation is generated: it sought to further our understanding of competition on the immigration issue between populist radical right and center right parties, primarily in how center right parties are able to exploit this issue and benefit electorally in diverse economic contexts. The primary theoretical story in this dissertation argues that the electoral success of center right parties depends on how far they can emphasize the immigration issue. Moreover, how far they succeed in doing this depends largely on the emphasis placed on immigration, alongside factors such as incumbency and different economic contexts, both during times of economic crisis, and times of economic stability. Chapter 2 then drew on the contemporary political science literature in providing concrete classifications for both party families, whilst outlining some ideological similarities and differences between both party families on the immigration issue.

Chapter 3 exposed the lack of scholarly research on how populist radical right and center right parties compete on the immigration issue and how this party competition has affected their electoral fortunes. This chapter argued two main points: that the academic

literature has often neglected the role that the immigration issue can play in determining party competition and the electoral success that center right parties enjoy as a result (see Bale, 2008; Mudde, 2014c; Pardos-Prado et al., 2014; Pardos-Prado, 2015). Secondly, the academic literature has tended to examine issue positions/proximity models (see Van der Brug et al., 2005; Mudde, 2010; Pardos-Prado, 2015; Bale, 2008) in investigating competition between both party families. It follows that less research has focused on issue salience and the strategic framing of the immigration issue that center right parties have the capacity to provide on this issue dimension. From this lacuna in the political science literature, the dissertation outlined and tested a novel theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ in Chapter 4, which argued that center right parties are much more dynamic in their strategy on the immigration issue than we might think. My theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ argued that the immigration issue is not solely an issue which populist radical right parties ‘own’, but one from which center right parties can prosper electorally in the 21st century. The theory then offered an analysis of the relative electoral success of center right parties in two different economic contexts, suggesting a rationale for why they performed better than both populist radical right and center left parties when emphasizing – as opposed to outlining hardline positions on – the immigration issue. The theoretical framework also outlined a simple dynamic game of party competition, in showing that there were three main situations that underlined party competition between the center right and radical right, particularly in the 2008–2013 economic crisis context.

Center Right Party Electoral Resilience

Whilst immigration is traditionally viewed as an issue which the populist radical right tends to profit from electorally and claim issue ownership over, this dissertation shows that this is not the case. Most significantly, center right parties that emphasized the immigration issue tended to perform better electorally than populist radical right parties, particularly in the

context of economic good times. Chapters 5 and 6 set out my original contribution to knowledge in two different economic contexts: it demonstrated through a series of empirical findings that when emphasizing the immigration issue, center right parties tended to perform better electorally than populist radical right parties, both in times of economic crisis (2008–2013) and particularly in the period of relative economic prosperity at the outset of the 21st century (1999–2007). The empirical findings also demonstrated that spatial positions on immigration (i.e. more hardline positions on immigration) did not play a particular role in explaining center right party electoral success. This was likely due to two main reasons: firstly, voters did not know about the specific policies on immigration that the center right held; and secondly, voters might not necessarily know the differences in spatial positions on immigration policy between the center right and populist radical right (see Odmalm and Bale, 2015). Instead of spatial positions explaining the center right’s electoral success, what mattered most was the ‘visibility’ of immigration: frequently mentioning the issue to voters proved to be electorally fruitful.

Chapter 5 showed this effect to be most pronounced during the economic crisis, with notable examples of ‘challenger’ opposition center right parties performing electorally better including the New Flemish Alliance Party (N-VA), the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) in the Netherlands and the UK Conservative Party (CON). The biggest electoral losers among populist radical right parties on the ‘strategic emphasis’ of immigration were the Flemish Interest Party (VB) in Belgium and the Danish People’s Party (DP), who both saw their vote share decrease substantially. Chapter 5 also found general patterns of electoral volatility in the economic crisis period, with incumbents on both the center right and left losing out markedly. Surprisingly, despite the crisis being perceived as a crisis of capitalism, the center right was able to perform well when emphasizing the immigration issue during this period. This chapter also showed more nuanced findings, in

outlining three different situations that underlined party competition between both party families in the crisis period. The statistical models also demonstrated the resilience of the center right in performing better in electoral terms when emphasizing the immigration issue than center left parties did, both during the 2008–2013 economic crisis and at the outset of the 21st century. Chapter 5 also demonstrated that center right parties (most notably incumbents) that did not particularly emphasize the immigration issue tended to lose out electorally in national parliamentary elections and provided opportunities for populist radical right parties to benefit electorally. Chapter 6 provided an important illustrative case of the Austrian 2002 Legislative Election. This case showed how emphasizing the immigration issue played an influential role in explaining center right party electoral success during the context of economic good times and how they performed better than the populist radical right.

Chapter 7 drew on the large N comparative findings from Chapter 5 in investigating qualitatively different types of party competition situations that were drawn from a ‘universe of cases’ and underpin center right–populist radical right party competition. The four case studies were drawn from a ‘universe of cases’ table and demonstrate further how the choices that center right parties made on immigration (emphasize v. did not emphasize) affected their electoral success across the 2008–2013 period, alongside the combined role of incumbency in this economic context. Two main generalizable lessons for party competition were drawn from the case studies in Chapter 7. Firstly, the case studies demonstrated the key variable of incumbency–punishment, in showing that incumbent center right parties (Finland and France) tended to be punished electorally and allow populist radical right parties to prosper electorally. Thus, in the Finnish case, the ‘issue space’ on salience is left open by mainstream parties on the right, thus allowing the far right to claim the immigration issue in times of economic crisis. A more nuanced case study was provided in France and showed that there

were electoral restrictions for center right parties in economic bad times. The French case showed that when center right parties were in government, anti-incumbency effects swamped a focus on immigration, with populist radical right parties prospering electorally in the context of electoral volatility.

Secondly and most significantly, the case studies provided a nuanced finding that complemented the large N comparative findings from Chapter 5 of the dissertation. Center right parties that were in opposition (N-VA in Belgium and VVD in the Netherlands) during this economic context were not tainted by anti-incumbency effects and therefore had more freedom to compete on the immigration issue with populist radical right parties. This is a much more nuanced finding and complements the findings from Chapter 5 in adding another dimension to the story of center right party electoral success, particularly for ‘challenger’ center right parties.

8.1 Implications for Party Politics

The political scientist Herbert Kitschelt (1995) coined the phrase ‘electoral winning formula’ to account for the electoral success achieved by the populist radical right in a number of Western European countries in the 1990s through adopting neo-liberal economic positions combined with hardline authoritarian positions on issues such as crime, law and order, and immigration. Pardos-Prado (2015) also recently demonstrated the importance of spatial positions on immigration to an understanding of how center right parties can compete on the issue with populist radical right parties.

The main empirical findings of my dissertation are situated within the party competition literature and seek to build primarily on Kitschelt (1995) and Pardos-Prado’s (2015) empirical findings. My dissertation argues that at the aggregate level, there is conceivably a ‘new electoral winning formula’ that focuses on the immigration issue cleavage, but departs from Kitschelt’s and Pardos-Prado’s assertions of the centrality of issue

positions. In contrast to Kitschelt, my theoretical argument on immigration is that issue salience is of greater importance to this electoral formula than hardline stances. My findings show the resilience of center right parties in profiting electorally from strategic emphasis of the immigration issue in both economic good and bad times. However, this ‘electoral winning formula’ is context dependent and depends on important factors such as (i) incumbency and (ii) the degree to which parties emphasize immigration in their party strategies.

These empirical findings pose a number of implications for the state of contemporary liberal democracy across Europe, and make a central contribution to the party politics literature about the dynamic nature of center right parties’ ‘strategic’ choices on the immigration issue (see Bale, 2008; Mudde, 2014c; Pardos-Prado et al., 2014; Pardos-Prado, 2015). From a historical perspective, the project of the center right in Europe has been marked by a pragmatic necessity to adapt to significant political change throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The empirical findings in this dissertation contribute towards an understanding of the dynamic nature of the center right project, demonstrating that the electoral success of center right parties in the 21st century cannot be put down to traditional issues such as law and order, the maintenance of social institutions in society and the free market economy. Instead, the dissertation demonstrated that the center right did not particularly benefit electorally from these traditional ‘bread and butter’ issues.

This dissertation has shown how the center right has been able to embrace new issues on the socio-cultural issue dimension such as immigration, which have become largely associated with parties of the populist radical right, particularly in 21st century Europe. Therefore, the central story in this dissertation has not been about the center right benefiting electorally from immigration when adopting hardline stances on the issue, or indeed being deemed by voters as competent or the best party to deliver on this issue. This dissertation has shown throughout that the explanation is much more nuanced. From an electoral perspective,

the center right has been able to benefit substantially from emphasizing immigration, through making the issue salient and ‘visible’ in the public domain and mentioning it frequently in their electoral campaigns. The Belgian and Dutch cases in Chapter 5 particularly demonstrated this effect. This dissertation makes an important first step in examining the electoral resilience of center right parties around the immigration issue and in identifying the different ‘types’ of center right parties (‘challengers’) that succeed in diverse economic contexts. Furthermore, ‘downplaying’ or not emphasizing this issue proved to be costly, particularly for incumbent mainstream center right parties in Finland, and this pattern appears to fit in with the existing literature (see Bale et al., 2010).

There are, however, limitations to the main findings of this dissertation. Firstly, the empirical results only cover up to the recent 2008–2013 economic crisis. The empirical analysis in Chapter 5 contains shortcomings, with two snapshot elections being investigated, one during the economic crisis and one before the economic crisis took place in 24 countries across Europe. The implications of this are that long-term trends cannot be examined across time. However a number of important patterns are found in this time period that shed further light on party competition dynamics between center right and populist radical right parties. In addition, the findings from Chapter 5 are not generalizable towards analyzing the theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ in the ongoing migration crisis, from 2015 onwards. Secondly, the theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ is an aggregate-level model that examines party competition and does not include individual-level factors that would enable us further to examine how important the immigration issue is in encouraging support for center right or populist radical right parties. Furthermore, as the dissertation examines the aggregate level, valence models of issue-based voting at the individual level are not directly measured or included. Future research should seek to expand out the ‘strategic emphasis’ theoretical model and incorporate individual and aggregate levels together.

Surprisingly, in Chapters 5 and 6 when factoring in the spatial positions of populist radical right parties and their electoral performance, populist radical right parties appeared to be punished by voters when holding more anti-immigrant positions both during the 2008–2013 economic crisis and at the outset of the 21st century. Therefore, whilst the dissertation finds empirical evidence for the success of center right parties that emphasized immigration, the case study findings from Chapter 7 prevent the dissertation from making a definitive claim that there is a ‘new electoral winning formula’ in European politics. In order fully to understand the mechanisms of ‘strategic emphasis’, future research should seek to build on these findings.

8.2 Future Avenues of Research

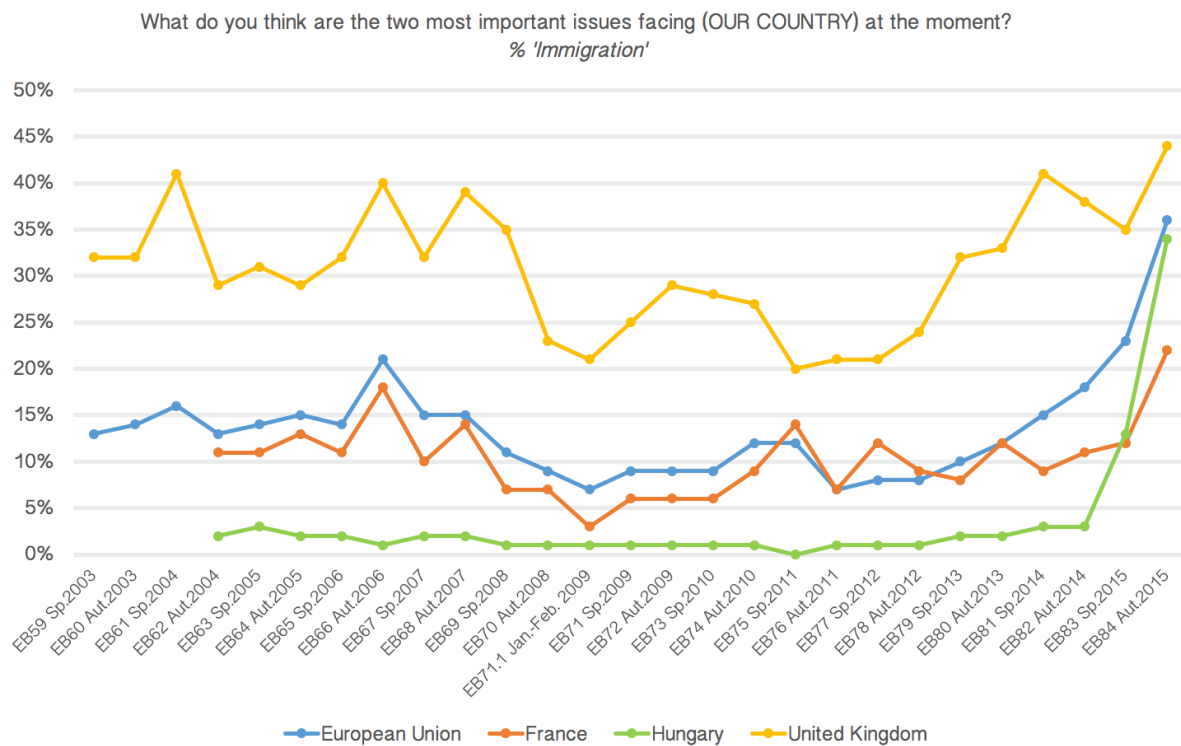
These limitations of the dissertation therefore provoke three main future avenues of inquiry that will further test the theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ and help determine whether there exists a ‘new electoral winning formula’ in 21st century European politics.

Extending the timeframe of ‘Strategic Emphasis’

Firstly, future research should seek to build on these empirical findings in further testing the resilience of the center right in the 21st century. The theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ can then be extended to understanding how center right and radical right parties have sought to place ‘high’ salience (‘visibility’) on the immigration issue during the context of the ongoing migration crisis, and the electoral implications of this strategy for center right and populist radical right parties’ electoral success. Figures 8.1 and 8.2 below show that there has been a substantial increase in the salience of immigration amongst citizens across the European Union. Most significantly, Figures 8.1 and 8.2 show that the salience of immigration increased considerably more during the recent migration crisis than it did during the economic crisis. The salience of immigration has risen amongst the public, particularly in

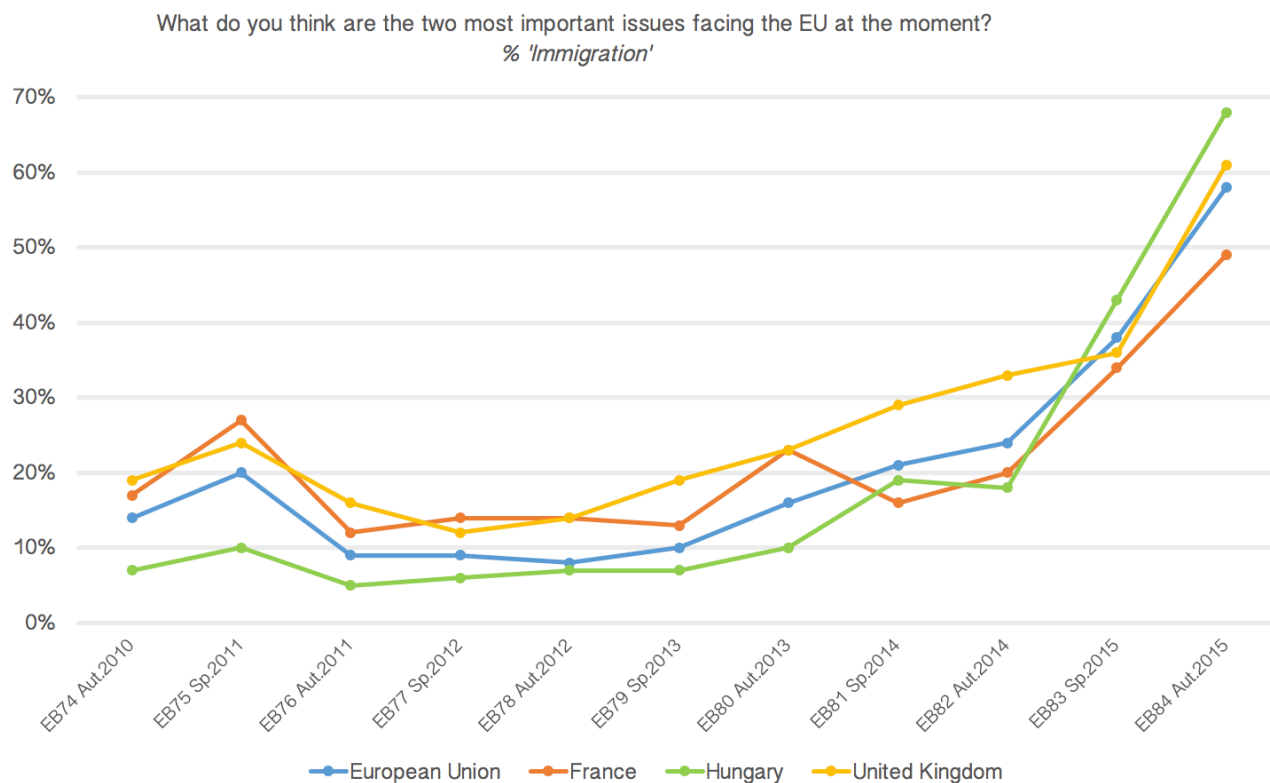
countries such as the United Kingdom and Hungary, and this suggests that further testing the theory of ‘strategic emphasis’ in the recent migration crisis period amongst center right and radical right parties would enable us to determine further how both party families benefit from such a party strategy in a differing political and economic context that spans the 21st century.

Figure 8.1: Most important issue facing our country (2003–2015)



Source: Eurobarometer

Figure 8.2: Most important issues facing the EU (2010–2015)



Source: Eurobarometer

Center Right Party Definition and The Ideology of Populism

A second major line of inquiry involves examining the definitional shortcomings surrounding the center right party label and better understanding how to classify the center right from a comparative perspective, since the term’s meaning varies considerably across Western and Central-Eastern Europe. This would help sharpen researchers’ understanding of the center right party family’s approach to the immigration issue. Whilst Chapter 2 outlined how center right parties are generally comprised of conservative, Christian democratic and market liberal parties, there is a high degree of diversity within this party family that makes it difficult to accurately classify. In order to further investigate electoral variations for center right parties, future research should seek to disaggregate this party family and examine the electoral fortunes of conservative, Christian democratic and market liberal parties interchangeably,

particularly in their use of the immigration issue. Furthermore there are a number of center right parties who, because they have begun to propound a more populist and nationalist rhetoric, may be considered no longer to fall under this party label: most notably, center right parties such as Fidesz in Hungary. Fidesz's rhetoric on immigration in recent years is closer to that of populist radical right parties than to that of other center right parties (see Rovny and Polk, 2016). Thus, future research should seek to reach beyond the 'populist radical right' and 'center right' party competition labels, with the current party family labels arguably not capturing the core ideology of contemporary right-wing parties accurately.

A recent landmark study (Kriesi and Pappas, 2015) examined the scope of populism across Europe and analyzed the variations of right and left-wing populism found in different regions. Future research should seek to build on the findings of Kriesi and Pappas (2015) by examining further how best to define specific political parties such as Fidesz in Hungary, which started off historically as a center right party, but in recent years has shifted more towards being considered as a populist radical right party. This may also enable researchers to further understand the evolution of the center right party family on the immigration issue in the 21st century.

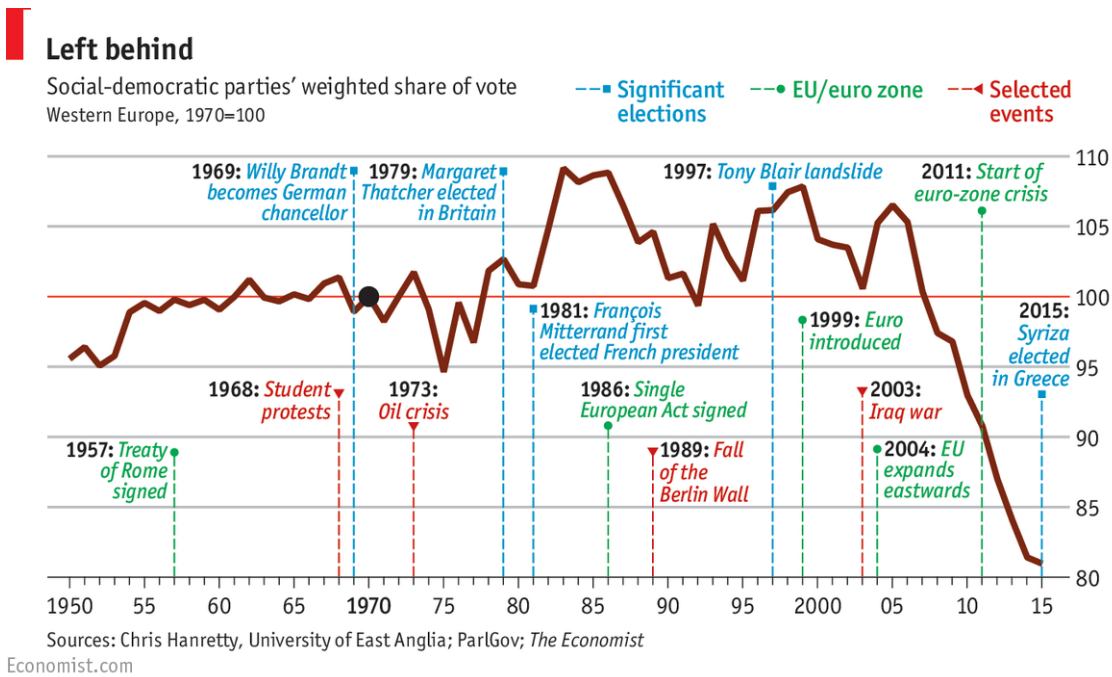
Decline of the Center Left in Europe

The third main area of inquiry that is generated from the empirical findings of this dissertation involves examining in further detail the decline of center left and social democratic parties across Europe, and whether there is a causal link with the party's policy stances and 'strategic emphasis' on the immigration issue. Whilst we have witnessed specific center right parties performing better electorally in the 21st century, Chapter 1 in particular showed that established left-wing parties across Europe suffered an electoral decline during the crisis period. Chapter 5 also showed that the center left party family did not significantly benefit from emphasizing the immigration issue in times of economic crisis. Figure 8.3

depicts this electoral decline for center left parties graphically. Recent analysis by Marquand (2015) investigates this significant decline of traditional social democratic parties and notes that its root cause extends much further back than the recent economic crisis. Marquand (2015) argues that traditional working class voters who would consistently vote for social democratic parties across Europe have abandoned these parties.

Two main explanations are put forward. The first explanation focuses on processes of globalization such as technological change, alongside increases in immigration across European Union member states which have caused working class voters to feel disaffected and under threat. The second explanation argues that social democratic parties across Europe have become professionalized party machines, eschewing state ownership in favor of a free market economy. Examples of this include the ‘professionalization’ of the British Labour Party, PASOK in Greece, the SPD in Germany, the French Socialists (PS) and Scandinavian social democratic parties. Goodwin and Milazzo (2015) in their recent book on UKIP argue that this ‘left behind’ class of voters can be attributed largely to the Thatcherite period and embodies a profound sense of de-alignment in British politics. Goodwin and Milazzo (2015) also argue that these disaffected former Labour voters have been swept away by the populist and nationalist discourse of UKIP. Therefore, this third main area of inquiry generated from the empirical findings of this dissertation would seek further to examine the decline of center left and social democratic parties across Europe, and investigate whether this is causally linked to the party’s policy stances and ‘strategic emphasis’ on the immigration issue.

Figure 8.3: The Decline of the Left in Europe (Social Democratic Parties' weighted share of vote in Western Europe, 1950–2015)



Source: The Economist (2016)

8.3 Summary

This dissertation has sought to provide an original contribution to the party competition literature by investigating center right parties electoral success on immigration in two different economic contexts. It makes a key claim that immigration is not solely ‘owned’ by the far right, and can also benefit the center right. It has demonstrated that immigration has traditionally been an important issue for the center right, one that brings electoral advantages. It has also shown that competition between party families has yielded different patterns in economic good and bad times that have implications for each family’s electoral success. Economic bad times create an electoral opportunity for populist radical right parties, with patterns of volatility and protest voting through voters punishing incumbent parties on the center right and left. Incumbent center right parties were punished electorally during this period (most notably in Finland and France). However, a number of ‘challenger’ center right

parties capitalized on the immigration issue (particularly in Belgium and the Netherlands) and benefited in national parliamentary elections. The main argument that this dissertation put forward is that populist radical right parties have not performed as well as expected on immigration in this economic context, primarily because non-incumbent center right parties have capitalized on the issue. A number of center right parties are shown to be electorally resilient, matching and even outperforming populist radical right parties in times of economic crisis.

Patterns of party competition in economic good times are qualitatively different, with mainstream center right parties having a positive incumbency effect and also benefiting from emphasizing the immigration issue. During times of economic prosperity, the far right performed worse when emphasizing immigration and their party ideology was arguably less receptive towards voters during this electoral period, compared to times of economic crisis. Emphasizing immigration enabled center right parties to increase their electoral advantage in this economic context, with their incumbency status also aiding the party's electoral fortunes. These core empirical findings suggest that there is conceivably a 'new electoral winning formula' in the 21st century that can aid center right parties' election campaigns and contribute to their success. A key contribution of this dissertation is to show that center right parties across Europe are more dynamic than we think and are electorally resilient on the immigration issue. This party family should not just be associated with traditional issues such as law and order and creating a strong state, but also with immigration. It follows that the salience of immigration has increased in the 21st century, making the issue an important part of political contestation across Europe. It is likely that as the issue gains increased prominence in the context of the ongoing migration crisis, this will create new dynamics of competition between center right, populist radical right and center left parties. This provides ample opportunities for further scholarship in contemporary European politics to build on the

findings of this dissertation.

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APPENDICES

Chapter 5

Appendix A: List of Key Variables

Original Dataset on Change of Parties' Performance in European National Parliamentary Elections and Whitefield–Rohrschneider Dataset

Dependent variables:

Change in electoral performance: Döring, Holger and Philip Manow (2015). Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov): Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies. *Source:* <http://www.parlgov.org/>.

Independent variables:

Issue Position (Spatial/Proximity Model)

- Anti- Immigration (1= Pro- Immigration, 7= Anti- Immigration) (Reverse coded)
- EU Integration: Opposition (1= Support, 7= Oppose) (Reverse coded)
- Pro- Welfare (1= Universal, 7= Means-tested)
- Pro- Market Economy: (1= Against Markets, 7= Pro Market)

Issue Salience (Salience Model)

- Immigration (1= Not Important, 7= Very Important)
- Welfare (1= Not Important, 7= Very Important)
- Market Economy: (1= Not Important, 7= Very Important)

Party-Level Variables

Proportionality Index (Electoral System, 2008–2012) Gallagher Index

Source:

https://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/staff/michael_gallagher/ElSystems/Docts/ElectionIndices.pdf

Incumbent

1= Incumbent Party; 0= Non-Incumbent: World Bank Data, *Source:*

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRES/Resources/469232-1107449512766/DPI2012.dta>

Party Family: Radical Left, Center Left, Center Right and Radical Right.

Country-Level Variables

Change in Unemployment (2008–2012): World Bank Data, *Source:*

www.worldbank.org/data.html

Change in GDP annual growth (2008–2012): World Bank Data, *Source:*

www.worldbank.org/data.html

Change in Gini Index (2008–2012): *Source:* Solt, Frederick. 2009. "Standardizing the World Income Inequality Database" *Social Science Quarterly*, 90(2):231-242. SWIID Version 4.0, September 2013.

Appendix B: Measurement of Variables

Variable Name	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Min	Max
% Change in Party Vote (National Parliamentary Elections, 2005–2012)	0.006	-0.09	208	-0.35	0.40
% Change in Populist Radical Right Party Vote Share, 2005–2012	0.02	0.07	20	-0.098	0.17
% Change in Center-Right Party Vote Share, 2005–2012	0.008	0.11	74	-0.35	0.40
% Change in Center Left Party Vote Share, 2005–2012	-0.009	0.08	84	-0.34	0.21
% Change in Incumbents Vote Share, 2005–2012	-0.05	0.09	65	-0.35	0.08
EU Integration: Opposition	3.28	1.54	208	1	6.9
Pro-Welfare	3.61	1.17	208	1	6.4
Pro-Market Economy	4.08	1.38	208	1	7
Incumbents	0.36	0.48	208	0	1
Center-Right Incumbents	0.48	0.50	74	0	1
Center-Left Incumbents	0.33	0.47	84	0	1
Saliency: Immigration (Combined)	4.52	0.99	179	2.7	7
Saliency: Immigration (Radical Right Parties)	5.99	1.15	18	3.6	7
Saliency: Immigration (Center Right Parties)	4.39	0.85	74	2.7	6.6
Saliency: Immigration (Left-Wing Parties)	4.34	0.81	84	2.8	6
Anti-Immigration (Combined)	3.72	1.35	179	1	6.7
Anti-Immigration (Radical Right Parties)	6.03	0.79	18	3.8	6.7
Anti-Immigration (Center Right Parties)	3.95	1.05	74	1.8	6.3
Anti-Immigration (Left-Wing Parties)	3.02	1.04	84	1	5.5
Saliency: Welfare	4.47	0.93	192	1	6.75
Saliency: Market Economy	5.03	1.06	178	1	7
Disproportionality Index (2008–2012)	1.62	2.18	179	-2.64	6.13
Change in Unemployment, 2008–2012	0.69	3.87	179	-8.1	10.3
Change in GDP Growth, 2008–2012	-2.78	-2.95	179	-11.9	2.3
Change in Gini Index, 2008–2012	0.66	1.91	178	-2.15	6.85

Classification of Parties and Countries I: Country/Electoral Years/Party

Austria: 2006–2008

Alliance for the Future of Austria
Freedom Party of Austria
The Greens
Austrian People's Party
Social Democratic Party of Austria

Belgium: 2007–2010

Christian-Democratic and Flemish
New Flemish Alliance
Humanist Democratic Centre
Ecologists
National Front
The Flemish Greens
List Dedecker
Reform Movement
Socialist Party
Socialist Party Different
Flemish Interest
Flemish Liberals and Democrats

Bulgaria: 2005–2009

Bulgarian Socialist Party
Bulgarian People's Union
Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria
Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria
Movement for Rights and Freedoms
National Movement for Stability and Progress
National Union Attack
Union of Democratic Forces

Czech Republic: 2006–2010

Christian and Democratic Union
Czech Social Democratic Party
Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia
Civic Democratic Party
Green Party

Denmark: 2007–2011

Danish People's Party
Unity List - The Red-Greens
Conservative People's Party
New/Liberal Alliance
Radical Liberals
Social Democracy
Socialist People's Party
Denmark's Liberal Party

Estonia: 2007–2011

Estonian Centre Party
Estonian Greens
Pro Patria and Res Publica Union
Estonian Reform Party
Estonian People's Union
Social Democratic Party

Finland: 2007–2011

Finnish Christian Democrats
Finnish Center
National Coalition Party
The Finns
Finnish Social Democratic Party
Swedish People's Party in Finland
Left Alliance
Green Alliance
Finnish Christian Democrats

France: 2007–2012

Democratic Movement
National Front
Movement for France
New Center
French Communist Party
Left Radical Party
Socialist Party
Union for a Popular Movement
The Greens

Germany: 2005–2009

The Left (Party of Democratic Socialism, PDS)
Christian Democracy Union
Christian Social Union
Free Democratic Party
Alliance 90/The Greens
Social Democratic Party of Germany

Greece: 2007–2009

Communist Party of Greece
Popular Orthodox Rally
New Democracy
Panhellenic Socialist Movement
Coalition of the Left, the Movements and the Ecology

Hungary: 2006–2010

Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Union
Christian Democratic People's Party
Hungarian Democratic Forum
The Movement for a Better Hungary (JOBBIK)

Hungarian Socialist Party
Union of Free Democrats

Ireland: 2007–2011

Soldiers of Destiny
Family of the Irish
Green Party
Labour Party
Progressive Democrats
We Ourselves
Communist

Italy: 2006–2008

Italy of Values
Left Democrats
Party of Italian Communists
National Alliance/PdL
Forza Italia/PdL
Leaga Nord
Italian Democratic Socialists
Union of Christian and Centre Democrats
Communist Refoundation Party
Green Federation

Latvia: 2006–2010

Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party
Fatherland and Freedom
New Era
Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way
Union of Greens and Peasants
For Human Rights in United Latvia
Harmony Centre
People's Party

Lithuania: 2004–2008

Fatherland Union
Order and Justice - Liberal Democrats
Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Alliance
Labour Party
Liberal and Centre Union
Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania
Lithuanian Social Democratic Party/New Union - Social Liberals
Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union
Civic Democratic Party

Poland: 2007–2011

Left and Democrats
League of Polish Families
Law and Justice
Civic Platform

Polish People's Party
Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland

Portugal: 2005–2009

Democratic Social Centre
Left Bloc
Portuguese Communist Party
Ecological Party–The Greens
Socialist Party
Social Democratic Party

Romania: 2004–2008

Democratic Party
Liberal Democratic Party
New Generation Party
National Liberal Party
Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party
Great Romania Party
Social Democratic Party
Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania

Slovakia: 2006–2010

Direction - Social Democracy
People's Party - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia
Christian Democratic Movement
Party of the Hungarian Coalition
Slovak Democratic and Christian Union
Slovak National Party

Slovenia: 2004–2008

Democratic Pensioners' Party of Slovenia
Liberal Democracy of Slovenia
New Slovenia–Christian People's Party
Social Democrats
Slovenian Democratic Party
Slovenian People's Party
Slovenian National Party

Spain: 2004–2008

Convergence and Union of Catalonia
Basque National Party
Navarre Yes
Galician Nationalist Bloc
Canarian Coalition
Aragonese Union
Basque Solidarity
Republican Left of Catalonia
United Left
People's Party
Spanish Socialist Workers' Party

Sweden: 2006–2010

Sweden Democrats
Centre Party
Liberal People's Party
Christian Democrats
Moderate Rally Party
Environment Party The Greens
Social Democratic Workers' Party
Left Party

The Netherlands: 2006–2010

Democrats 66
Labour Party
Party for the Animals
Christian Democratic Appeal
Christian Union
Green Left
Freedom Party
Reformed Political Party
Socialist Party
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy

The United Kingdom: 2005–2010

Conservative Party
Labour Party
Liberal Democrats
Party of Wales
Scottish National Party
The United Kingdom Independence Party

Full Party Names and Labels in Whitefield–Rohrschneider Expert Survey

Central-Eastern Europe:

Country	Party Name in Whitefield–Rohrschneider Expert Survey	Label
Bulgaria (11)	Bulgarian Socialist Party	CfB
Bulgaria	National Movement for Stability and Progress	NMSS
Bulgaria	Movement for Rights and Freedoms	MrF
Bulgaria	Union of Democratic Forces	UDF
Bulgaria	National Union Attack	NUA
Bulgaria	Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria	DSB
Czech-Republic (10)	Civic Democratic Party	ODS
Czech-Republic	Czech Social Democratic Party	CSSD
Czech-Republic	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia	KSCM
Czech-Republic	Christian and Democratic Union	KDU-CSL
Czech-Republic	Green Party	SZ
Estonia (10)	Estonian Reform Party	RF (RE)
Estonia	Estonian Centre Party	EK
Estonia	Pro Patria and Res Publica Union	IrL
Estonia	Social Democratic Party	SDE
Estonia	Estonian Greens	Er
Estonia	Estonian People's Union	RL
Hungary (9)	Hungarian Socialist Party	MSZP
Hungary	Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Union	FIDESZ
Hungary	Union of Free Democrats	SZDSZ
Hungary	Hungarian Democratic Forum	MDF
Hungary	Christian Democratic People's Party	KDNP
Hungary	Movement for a Better Hungary	JOBBIK
Latvia (10)	People's Party	TP
Latvia	Union of Greens and Peasants	ZZS
Latvia	New Era	JL
Latvia	Harmony Centre	SC
Latvia	Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way	LPP
Latvia	Fatherland and Freedom	TB/LNNK
Latvia	For Human Rights in United Latvia	PCTVL
Latvia	Latvian Social Democratic Workers' Party	LSdSP
Lithuania (10)	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party	LSDP
Lithuania	Fatherland Union	TS-LK

Lithuania	New Union - Social Liberals	NS
Lithuania	Order and Justice - Liberal Democrats	TiT
Lithuania	Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania	LrLS
Lithuania	Labour Party	DP
Lithuania	Liberal and Centre Union	LCS
Lithuania	Lithuanian Peasant Popular Union	LVLS
Lithuania	Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Alliance	LrA
Lithuania	Civic Democratic Party	PDP
Moldova (9)	Communist Party of the Republic of Moldova	PCRM
Moldova	Party Alliance Our Moldova	PAMN
Moldova	Democratic Party of Moldova	PDM
Moldova	Social-Liberal Party	PSL
Moldova	Christian Democratic People's Party	PPCD
Moldova	Socialist Party from Moldova	PSM
Moldova	Party of Socialists from Republic of Moldova	PSRM
Poland (9)	Law and Justice	PIS
Poland	Civic Platform	PO
Poland	Left and Democrats	LiD
Poland	Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland	SrP
Poland	League of Polish Families	LPr
Poland	Polish People's Party	PSL
Romania (8)	Social Democratic Party	PSD
Romania	Democratic Party	PD
Romania	National Liberal Party	PNL
Romania	Great Romania Party	PrM
Romania	Conservative Party	PC
Romania	Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania	UDMr
Romania	New Generation Party	PNG
Romania	Liberal Democratic Party	PLD
Romania	Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party	PNTCD
Romania	National Initiative Party	PIN
Russia (10)	Unified Russia	ER
Russia	Communist Party of the Russian Federation	KPRF
Russia	Liberal-Democratic Party of Russia	LDPR
Russia	Fair Russia	SR
Russia	Union of Rightist Forces	SPS
Slovakia (10)	Christian Democratic Movement	KDH
Slovakia	People's Party - Movement for a Democratic Slovakia	HZDS
Slovakia	Slovak Democratic and Christian Union	SDKU
Slovakia	Direction - Social Democracy	Smer
Slovakia	Party of the Hungarian Coalition	SMK
Slovakia	Slovak National Party	SNS

Slovenia (9)	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	LDS
Slovenia	Slovenian Democratic Party	SDS
Slovenia	Social Democrats	SD
Slovenia	Slovenian People's Party	SLS
Slovenia	New Slovenia - Christian People's Party	NS
Slovenia	Slovenian National Party	SNS
Slovenia	Democratic Pensioners' Party of Slovenia	DSUS
Ukraine (9)	Party of Regions	PRU
Ukraine	Bloc Yulia Tymoshenko	BJUT
Ukraine	People's Union Our Ukraine	NSNU
Ukraine	Socialist Party of Ukraine	SPU
Ukraine	Communist Party of Ukraine	KPU
Ukraine	Bloc of Yuri Lutsenko "People's Self-Defense"	NS
Ukraine	Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine	PSPU
Ukraine	People's Bloc Lytvyn	NBL
Ukraine	Viche Party	PV
Ukraine	Bloc of Borys Tarasyk	BBT-UP
Ukraine	Green Party	PZU

Notes: The number in parentheses refers to the number of experts responding to the Notes: The number in parentheses refers to the number of experts responding to the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey in each country).

Western Europe:

Country	Party Name in Whitefield– Rohrschneider Expert Survey	Label
Austria (10)	Social Democratic Party of Austria	SPÖ
Austria	Austrian People's Party	ÖVP
Austria	The Greens	GRUNE
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	FPÖ
Austria	Alliance for the Future of Austria	BZÖ
Belgium (10)	Christian-Democratic and Flemish	CDV
Belgium	New Flemish Alliance	N-VA
Belgium	Reform Movement	MR
Belgium	Flemish Interest	VB
Belgium	Flemish Liberals and Democrats	VLD
Belgium	Socialist Party	PS
Belgium	Socialist Party. Different	SPA
Belgium	Humanist Democratic Centre	CDH
Belgium	Ecologists	ECOLO
Belgium	List Dedecker	LDD
Belgium	The Flemish Greens	GROEN
Belgium	National Front	FN
Denmark (9)	Denmark's Liberal Party	V
Denmark	Social Democracy	S
Denmark	Danish People's Party	DF
Denmark	Socialist People's Party	SF
Denmark	Conservative People's Party	KF
Denmark	Radical Liberals	RV
Denmark	Unity List - The Red-Greens	EL
Finland (9)	Finnish Centre	KESK
Finland	National Coalition Party	KOK
Finland	Finnish Social Democratic Party	SDP
Finland	Left Alliance	VAS
Finland	Green Alliance	VIHR
Finland	Finnish Christian Democrats	KD
Finland	Swedish People's Party in Finland	SFP
Finland	The Finns	PS
France (10)	Union for a Popular Movement	UMP
France	Socialist Party	PS
France	Democratic Movement	MoDem
France	French Communist Party	PCF
France	National Front	FN
France	The Greens	VERTS
France	Movement for France	MPF
Germany (10)	Christian Democracy Union	CDU
Germany	Christian Social Union	CSU

Germany	Social Democratic Party of Germany	SPD
Germany	Free Democratic Party	FDP
Germany	The Left (Party of Democratic Socialism, PDS)	DIE LINKE
Germany	Alliance 90/The Greens	GRUNE
Greece (10)	New Democracy	ND
Greece	Panhellenic Socialist Movement	PASOK
Greece	Communist Party of Greece	KKE
Greece	Coalition of the Left, the Movements and the Ecology	SYN
Greece	Popular Orthodox Rally	LAOS
Ireland (10)	Soldiers of Destiny	FF
Ireland	Family of the Irish	FG
Ireland	Labour Party	LAB
Ireland	We Ourselves	SF
Ireland	Green Party	GP
Ireland	Progressive Democrats	PD
Ireland	Communist	SP
Italy (10)	Left Democrats	Left_Dem
Italy	Communist Refoundation Party	PRC
Italy	Italian Democratic Socialists	SDI
Italy	Party of Italian Communists	PdCI
Italy	Italy of Values	IdV
Italy	Green Federation	VERDI
Italy	National Alliance	AN
Italy	Northern League	LN
Italy	Union of Christian and Centre Democrats	UDC
Italy	Forward Italy	FI/PdL
Portugal (10)	Socialist Party	PS
Portugal	Social Democratic Party	PSD
Portugal	Portuguese Communist Party	PCP
Portugal	Ecological Party The Greens	PEV
Portugal	Democratic Social Centre	CDS-PP
Portugal	Left Bloc	BE
Spain (10)	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	PSOE
Spain	People's Party	PP
Spain	United Left	IU
Spain	Convergence and Union of Catalonia	CiU
Spain	Republican Left of Catalonia	ERC
Spain	Basque National Party	EAJ-PNV
Spain	Aragonese Council	CHA
Spain	Navarre Yes	Na-Bai
Sweden (10)	Social Democratic Workers' Party	SAP
Sweden	Moderate Rally Party	M

Sweden	Centre Party	C
Sweden	Liberal People's Party	FP
Sweden	Christian Democrats	KD
Sweden	Left Party	VP
Sweden	Environment Party The Greens	MP
Sweden	Sweden Democrats	SD
The Netherlands (9)	Christian Democratic Appeal	CDA
The Netherlands	Labour Party	PvdA
The Netherlands	Socialist Party	SP
The Netherlands	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	VVD
The Netherlands	Freedom Party	PVV
The Netherlands	Green Left	GL
The Netherlands	Christian Union	CU
The Netherlands	Democrats 66	D66
The Netherlands	Party for the Animals	PvdD
The Netherlands	Reformed Political Party	SGP
UK (10)	Labour Party	LAB
UK	Conservative Party	CON
UK	Liberal Democrats	LD
UK	Scottish National Party	SNP
UK	Party of Wales	PC
UK	The United Kingdom Independence Party	UKIP

Notes: The number in parentheses refers to the number of experts responding to the Whitefield–Rohrschneider expert survey in each country).

NOTES:

- Because the People's Party (TP) in Latvia joined with First Party / Latvia's Way (LPP) in 2010 but have different places in some dimensions, we divided the 2010 total of votes for the three parties by thirds, giving TP 1/3 (or 2.61) and LPP 2/3 (or 5.21).
- Because the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and the Ecological Party - The Greens (PEV) joined in the 2009 election but were separate before, we give ½ of the 2009 combined votes to each of them.
- In Italy, Forza Italia (2006) renamed itself The People of Freedom (PdL) and was joined by the National Alliance (NA). The totals for the PdL were divided by thirds with two thirds going to Forza and one third going to NA (based on their relative 2006 performance). In addition, a coalition of the left, The Left – The Rainbow, was a reconfiguration including the Communist Refoundation Party, Party of Italian Communists, Federation of the Greens, and The Democratic Socialists. The total for The Rainbow is divided in quarters among these parties.
- In Lithuania, the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) formed a union with the New Union - Social Liberals (NS). We take the mean of their scores for both time periods.
- In Romania in 2004, the National Liberal Party and the Democratic Party were together in the 'Justice and Truth Alliance'. They ran separately in 2008. Their percentage for 2004 is according to the distribution of seats (112 total (31.5% of total): 64 to NLP (57% of 122), 48 to DP (43% of 122)). For 2008, the Democratic Liberal Party (PDL) was formed by the Democratic Party and the Liberal Democratic Party (PLD) in 2007. We assigned 50% of the 32.4 total percentage to each.
- For the second stage of the analysis in CEE, the Liberal Democratic Party (PLD) and Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party (PNTCD) in Romania were dropped as there were no observations for them in the EUREQUAL dataset.

Integrated Codebook – Expert Surveys on Party Stances in Western and Central-Eastern Europe 2007–2008 (Whitefield–Rohrschneider)

The questions in this codebook are the aggregated and recoded responses to the combined East West European expert surveys. Additional variables have been added in order to aid researchers (e.g. Year, Country, and partyname). Included are the original survey questions and accompanying variable names.

Most Important Issues: We would like to begin by asking about the party system as a whole. Some countries may have multiple issue dimensions structuring party competition, others only one, and some of course may have none at all.

Could you please indicate how important each issue dimension is in the party system of [country]? If two issue dimensions are about equally important, please still rank order them for the purpose of the next question.

1. Most important issue
2. Second most important issue
3. Third most important issue
4. Fourth most important issue
5. Insignificant as an issue (not mentioned by an respondents)

A. Economy: redistributive issues (for example, tax levels, welfare state spending)

issue_a Distributional Issues 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_ar Distributional Issues 1 2 3 4 5th
 cleavage³⁶
issue_av % selecting A 1-4³⁷

B. Economy: State-run versus market economy

issue_b State vs Market Econ 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_br State vs Market Econ 1 2 3 4 5th cleavage
issue_bv % selecting B 1-4

C. Democracy: strengthening democratic institutions

issue_c Democracy 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_cr Democracy 1 2 3 4 5th cleavage
issue_cv % selecting C 1-4

D. Ethnic rights (for example, minorities)

issue_d Ethnicity 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_dr Ethnicity 1 2 3 4 5th cleavage
issue_dv % selecting D 1-4

³⁶ This includes blanks and 99 as category 5 in question 1 in a new variable (to indicate insignificance of dimensions not mentioned).

³⁷ This computes a variable indicating the proportion who selects a 99 or 9 blank in question 1.

E. Nationalism and Internationalism (for example, views about the EU)

issue_e Nationalism Intnat 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_er Nationalism Intnat 1 2 3 4 5th cleavage
issue_ev % selecting E 1-4

F. Religiosity (role of church)

issue_f Religiosity 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_fr Religiosity 1 2 3 4 5th
cleavage
issue_fv % selecting F 1-4

G. Social rights (for example, choice of non-conformist lifestyle, women's rights, etc)

issue_g Social Rights 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_gr Social Rights 1 2 3 4 5th
cleavage
issue_gv % selecting G 1-4

H. Views of the Communist past and its legacies

issue_h Communist Legacy 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_hr Communist Legacy 1 2 3 4 5th
cleavage
issue_hv % selecting H 1-4

I. Regional divisions

issue_i Regional Divisions 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_ir Regional Divisions 1 2 3 4 5th
cleavage
issue_iv % selecting I 1-4

J. Urban-rural divisions

issue_j Urban Rural 1 2 3 4th cleavage
issue_jr Urban Rural 1 2 3 4 5th cleavage
issue_jv % selecting J 1-4

Party Positions on Most Important Issue: We would like to ask you next about the main parties' positions on the issues you just identified. Please note that we are interested in the official position of the party as represented by the main party leaders. (We ask you later to assess the extent to which a political party is internally divided on its policy stances.)

Beginning with issue 1, could you now situate parties in [country]? Please use a seven-point scale to score the position of a party. A score of 7 indicates the most strongly liberal position and a score of 1 indicates the least liberal position on any particular issue. If a party has no stance on a given issue, please give it a score of 99.

posA Party Position Distributional Issues

Pro-distribution						Anti-Distribution	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posB State vs. Market Party Position Distributional Issues

Against Markets						Pro Market	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posC Party Position Democracy

Anti-Democracy						Pro-Democracy	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posD Party Position Ethnicity

Anti-Ethnic Rights						Pro-Ethnic Rights	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posE Party Position Nationalism

Nationalist						Internationalist	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posF Party Position Religiosity

Religious						Secular	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posG Party Position Social Rights

Pro Social Rights						Against Social Rights	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posH Party Position Communist Legacy

Pro-communism						Anti-Communist	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posI Party Position Regional Division

Regional						National	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

posJ Party Position Urban-Rural

Rural							Urban	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

Additional:

q2i1 un-recoded position - issue 1 where '.' and '99' not '0'

q2i1r % valid responses to q2i1

q2i2 un-recoded position - issue 2 where '.' and '99' not '0'

q2i2r % valid responses to q2i2

q2i3 un-recoded position - issue 3 where '.' and '99' not '0'

q2i3r % valid responses to q2i3

q2i4 un-recoded position - issue 4 where '.' and '99' not '0'

q2i4r % valid responses to q2i4

Salience of Most Important Issue: Next, and again using a 7-point scale, please indicate how important each issue is in defining a party's political orientation. Again, we are interested in the party's official stances. A 1 indicates no importance at all; a 7 stands for very important:

Not at all							Very	No position
important							important	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

Party Salience

- salA** Distributional Issues
- salB** State vs Market Econ
- salC** Democracy
- salD** Ethnicity
- salE** Nationalism
- salF** Religiosity
- salG** Social Rights
- salH** Communist Legacy
- salI** Reg Division
- salJ** Urban-Rural

with missing data coded as 1

- salAmd**
- salBmd**
- salCmd**
- salDmd**
- salEmd**
- salFmd**
- salGmd**
- salHmd**
- salImd**
- salJmd**

q2i1imp un-recoded salience - issue 1 where '.' and '99' not '0'

q2i1impr % valid responses to q2i1imp

q2i2imp un-recoded salience - issue 2 where '.' and '99' not '0'
q2i2impr % valid responses to q2i2imp

q2i3imp un-recoded salience - issue 3 where '.' and '99' not '0'
q2i3impr % valid responses to q2i3imp

q2i4imp un-recoded salience - issue 4 where '.' and '99' not '0'
q2i4impr % valid responses to q2i4imp

Question 3.

What position do parties take on social inequality in [country]? Does the party take the position that social inequality is unjustified and undesirable (in which case it would score 1) or that it is justified (because of incentives, justice etc) and desirable (in which case it would score 7) or something in between?

Social inequality is unjustified and undesirable						Social inequality is justified and desirable	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q3 Social Inequality
q3r % valid responses to q3

And how important is the issue of social inequality in the country to how the party appeals to the public? Is it very important (in which case score 7) or not important at all to how the party appeals (in which case score 1)?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q3imp Salience Social Inequality
q3impr % valid responses to q3imp

Question 4.

What position does each party take on taxation? First, in general, please say whether a party favours raising taxes to increase public spending (this would score 1) or favours cutting public spending to cut taxes (this would score 7) or something in between.

Raise taxes to increase public spending						Cut spending to cut taxes	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q4 Taxation
q4r % valid responses to q4

And how important is the issue of taxation and public spending to the way in which the party appeals to the electorate?

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q4imp Saliency Taxation
q4impr % valid responses to q4imp

Question 5.

And what position do parties take on the form that taxation should take. Do they favour progressive taxation in which those with higher incomes pay more in tax than those with low incomes (in which case they would score 1) or a flat tax, in which people pay the same rate of tax whatever their income level (in which case they would score 7) or something in between?

Favour progressive taxation							Favour flat taxation	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q5 Tax Form
q5r % valid responses to q5

And how important is the issue of progressive or flat tax to how parties appeal to the electorate

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q5imp Saliency Tax Form
q5impr % valid responses to q5imp

Question 6.

Now thinking about specific welfare and labour market measures, what stances do parties take on the following provisions? Do they strongly support (score 7) or strongly oppose (score 1) or something in between?

And how important are their views of these specific welfare and labour market measures to how the party appeals to the public?

a. minimum wage laws

Strongly opposed							Strongly in favour	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q6ia Min Wage
q6iar % valid responses to q6ia

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q6iaimp Saliency Min Wage
q6iaimpr % valid responses to q6iaimp

b. maximum wage laws

Strongly opposed						Strongly in favour	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99
q6ib	Max Wage						
q6ibr	% valid responses to q6ib						

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q6ibimp Saliency Max Wage
q6ibimpr % valid responses to q6ibimp

c. universal or means tested benefits

Favour universal welfare benefits						Favour means-tested welfare benefits	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99
q6ic	Welfare Benefits						
q6icr	% valid responses to q6ic						

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q6icimp Saliency Welfare Benefits
q6icimpr % valid responses to q6icimp

Question 7.

And where do parties stand on the following question? Do they advocate that the government should provide universal free health care (in which case they would score 1) or that medical expenses should be paid by individuals and private insurance (in which case they would score 7) or something in between?

Universal free health care						Individuals and private insurance	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99
q7	Health Care						
q7r	% valid responses to q7						

And how important is the issue of health care provision to the way in which the party appeals to the public?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q7imp Saliency Health Care
q7impr % valid responses to q7imp

Question 8.

And what stance do parties take on support for higher education. Should the state make higher education available free to all who have the appropriate qualifications (in which case they would score 1) or should higher education be paid for (for example, via savings and loans) by individuals (in which case they would score 7) or something in between?

Higher education available free						Higher education should be paid for	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q8 Higher Education
q8r % valid responses to q8

And how important is the issue of charges for higher education to parties?

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99	

q8imp Saliency Higher Education
q8impr % valid responses to q8imp

Question 9.

First, can you say what position a party favours liberal policies on matters such as abortion, equal opportunities for women, homosexuality or euthanasia (in which case it would score 1) or opposes liberal policies on such issues (in which case it would score 7) or something in between?

Liberal policies						Oppose liberal policies	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q9 Higher Education
q9r % valid responses to q8

And how important are issues such as abortion, equal opportunities for women, homosexuality or euthanasia to the party?

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99	

q9imp Saliency Liberal Policies
q9impr % valid responses to q9imp

Question 10.

Next, can you say whether the party supports protection of the environment, even at the cost of some economic growth (in which case it would score 1) or supports economic growth, even at the cost of damage to the environment (in which case it would score 7) or something in between?

Supports protection of the environment						Supports economic growth	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q10 Environment
q10r % valid responses to q10

And how important are issues of the environment to political parties?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q10imp Salience Environment
q10impr % valid responses to q10imp

Question 11.

Can you say whether parties support policies to promote civil liberties, even when this hampers efforts to fight crime and promote law and order (in which case they would score 1) or supports tough measures to fight crime and promote law and order, even when this means curtailing civil liberties (in which case they would score 7) or something in between?

Promote civil liberties						Promote law and order	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q11 Civil Liberties
q11r % valid responses to q11

And how important are issues of civil liberties, crime and law and order to parties?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q11imp Salience Civil Liberties
q11impr % valid responses to q11imp

Question 12.

First, what about the parties' positions on integration with Europe?

Strong opposition						Strong support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q12 West Integration
q12r % valid responses to q12

And how important an issue is integration with Europe to how the party appeals to the public? Again, we use a seven point scale, with 7 meaning very important and 1 meaning not important at all.

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q12imp Saliency West Integration
q12impr % valid responses to q12imp

Question 13.

How about the EU? Regardless of the specific form that integration may take, where do parties stand on creating a politically unified Europe? Do they strongly support a politically unified Europe (in which case they would score 7) or do they strongly oppose a politically unified Europe (in which case they would score 1) or something in between?

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q13 EU Political Unity
q13r % valid responses to q13

Question 14.

To the extent that parties support political unity, do they favour an inter-governmental arrangement where the most important decisions are made by a Europe-wide executive that represents the national governments? Or do they favour a “federal” Europe-wide government where a Europe-wide executive answers to the European parliament? If they favour elements of both, please select the middle category.

Support intergovernmental							Support federal	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q14 EU Political Unity
q14r % valid responses to q14

And how important an issue is the formation of a Europe-wide government (regardless of the specific form) in how the party appeals to the public? Again, we use a seven point scale, with 7 meaning very important and 1 meaning not important at all.

Not at all important							Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q14imp Saliency EU Political Unity
q14impr % valid responses to q14imp

Question 15.

Where do the parties in [country] stand on creating a Europe-wide, integrated market for the European Union?

Strong opposition						Strong support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q15 Market Integration
q15r % valid responses to q15

And how important an issue is the formation of a Europe-wide market in general to how the party appeals to the public? Again, we use a seven point scale, with 7 meaning very important and 1 meaning not important at all.

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q15imp Salience Market Integration
q15impr % valid responses to q15imp

Question 16.

And where do parties stand on the question of foreign ownership of land?

Strong opposition						Strong support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q16 FO Land
q16r % valid responses to q16

And how important an issue to the party is foreign ownership of land?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q16imp Salience FO Land
q16impr % valid responses to q16imp

Question 17.

And what about foreign ownership of industrial enterprises?

Strong opposition						Strong support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q17 FO Industrial Enterprises
q17r % valid responses to q17

And how important an issue to the party is foreign ownership of industrial enterprises?

Not at all						Very	No position
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important							important	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q17imp Salience FO Industrial Enterprise
q17impr % valid responses to q17imp

Question 18.

And what about parties' positions on Immigration of people in and out of [country]?

Strong opposition						Strong support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q18 Immigration of People
q18r % valid responses to q18

And how important to the party is the issue of Immigration?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q18imp Salience Immigration of People
q18impr % valid responses to q18imp

Question 19.

First, what about the party's view of how well democracy works in [country]? Do parties hold positive (7) or negative views (1)?

Strongly negative						Strongly positive	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q19i1 Democracy Nation
q19i1r % valid responses to q19i1

And what about the party's view of how well democracy works in the EU?

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q19i2 Democracy EU
q19i2r % valid responses to q19i2

Question 20.

First, would you indicate whether parties in [country] are nationally organized (as opposed to simply regionally).

q20 Nationally Organized 0 No 1 Yes

Question 21.

And does the party have a ‘significant’ membership base in terms of numbers? We realize that the determination of a ‘significant membership base’ is somewhat arbitrary and may vary from country to country depending on its population. Our main concern is to distinguish between parties that have few members and those that relatively large numbers of members. We are interested in your expert judgment in this regard.

q21 Significant Numbers 0 No 1 Yes

Question 22.

Does the party have an organisational affiliation with any interest group or civil society group, such as trade unions, business associations, church groups, etc?

q22 Organisational Affiliation 0 No 1 Yes

Question 23.

Would you please estimate the extent to which each ‘face’ of the party is strong in determining party policy? A 1 would indicate “Not at all important”; a 7 would indicate that a party section is very important.

a. Party membership

Not at all important							Very important	No position	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99	
q23iaimp	Party Membership Important								
q23iaimpr	%valid responses to q23iaimp								

b. Party apparatus

Not at all important							Very important	No position	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99	
q23ibimp	Party Apparatus Important								
q23ibimpr	%valid responses to q23ibimp								

c. Party leadership

Not at all important							Very important	No position	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99	
q23icimp	Party Leader Important								
q23icimpr	%valid responses to q23icimp								

Question 24.

Can you say how divided each party in [country] is in policy terms? A division means that there are significant and public disagreements among party members at any level (leaders, apparatus, membership) about policy issues. These disagreements may also take numerous forms. Please provide an “average” assessment across those policy domains you deem central to the party where a 1 would indicate a “strongly divided” party and a 7 a “strongly united” party.

Strongly divided						Strongly united	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q24 Policy Divisions
q24r %valid responses to q24

Question 25

Thinking now about social differences between individuals and groups, do the parties make explicit claims about the importance of such social differences in their programmes? Please select from the list one that is most strongly appealed to in the party’s programme.

q25_chall	Catch All	0 No 1 Yes
q25_econ	Economic Class	0 No 1 Yes
q25_eth	Ethnic Group	0 No 1 Yes
q25_reg	Regional Group	0 No 1 Yes
q25_gen	Gender	0 No 1 Yes
q25_age	Age	0 No 1 Yes
q25_cul	Cultural (i.e. education, taste, etc)	0 No 1 Yes
q25_none	No appeal to social differences	0 No 1 Yes

Question 26.

Some distinctions have been made in writing on parties between different ideal-typical ways in which parties may build ties with the electorate. First, parties may appeal to the electorate through broad electoral programmes that specify alternative ways of running the country. Second, parties may appeal to specific social or geographic constituencies on the basis of providing them with targeted benefits (generally economic). Third, parties may appeal to the electorate on the basis of the charisma of the party leader. Please indicate the importance of each factor on a 7 point scale. A 1 means a factor is not important at all, a 7 means it is very important.

a. Broad electoral programmes that specify alternative ways of running the country

Not at all important						Very important	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	99

q26iaimp Party Appeal: Program
q26iaimpr %valid responses to q26iaimp

b. Specific social or geographic constituencies on the basis of providing them with targeted benefits

Not at all important						Very important	No position
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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99
q26ibimp	Party Appeal: Targeted Benefits								
q26ibimpr	%valid responses to q26ibimp								

c. Charisma of the party leader

Not at all important							Very important		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
q26icimp	Party Appeal: Charismatic Leader								
q26icimpr	%valid responses to q26icimp								

Question 27.

In [country], parties may be located to the left or the right of the political spectrum. In general terms, please locate each party on the ideological spectrum in [country], with 1 standing for left wing, and 7 standing for right wing.

Left wing							Right wing		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
q27	Ideology								
q27r	% valid responses to q27								

And what would you say is the position taken by parties on the introduction of the Euro in [country x]? And how important an issue to the party is the introduction of the Euro?

Oppose							Support		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
Not at all Important							Very important		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
q11_03	Euro								
q11_03r	% valid responses to q11_03								
q12_03	Salience of Euro								
q12_03r	% valid responses to q12_03								

And what about parties' positions on EU directives on the rights of ethnic minorities? And how important to the party is the issue of EU directives on the rights of ethnic minorities?

Oppose							Support		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
Not at all important							Very important		No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			99
q13_03	EU Directives Minorities								

q13_03r % valid responses to q13_03
q14_03 Salience of EU Directives Minorities
q14_03r % valid responses to q14_03

And now what about their position on NATO? And how important an issue is NATO to the party?

Oppose							Support	No position
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99
Not at all							Very	No position
important							important	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		99

q21_03 NATO
q21_03r % valid responses to q21_03
q21imp_03 Salience NATO

Chapter 6

Appendix C: List of Key Variables

Chapel Hill Expert Survey 1999–2007 Trend Dataset

Dependent variables:

% Vote Share Radical Right Parties (1999 – 2007) National Parliamentary Elections:

The overall percentage of aggregate votes for radical right parties in the 1999 – 2007 electoral period.

% Vote Share Center-Right Parties (1999 – 2007) National Parliamentary Elections:

The overall percentage of aggregate votes for center right parties in the 1999 – 2007 electoral period.

% Vote Share Center-Left Parties (1999–2007) National Parliamentary Elections: The overall percentage of aggregate votes for center left parties in the 1999–2007 electoral period.

Independent variables:

Left Right Economic Position: (1999 – 2006)

0= Radical Left

5= Center

10= Radical Right

Spend vs Taxation (Anti-Taxation): 2006

0= Strongly favors improving public services

10= Strongly favors reducing taxes

Immigration Position: Tough Policy: (1999 – 2006)

0= Strongly opposes tough policy

10= Strongly favors tough policy

European Union (EU) Integration: Opposition (Eurocepticism) (1999 – 2006)

1= Strongly opposed

2= Opposed

3= Somewhat opposed

4= Neutral

5= Somewhat in favour

6= In favour

7= Strongly in favour

Law and Order: (1999 – 2006)

0= Strongly promotes civil liberties

10= Extremely important

Salience: Immigration (1999 – 2006)

0= Not important at all

10= Extremely important

Salience: European Union (EU) Integration (1999 – 2006)

0= European Integration is of no importance, never mentioned

10= European Integration is the most important issue

Western Europe (1999–2006)

1= Western Europe

0= Central-Eastern Europe

Change in Disproportionality Index (Electoral System, 1997–2007) Gallagher Index

Source:

https://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/staff/michael_gallagher/EISystems/Docts/ElectionIndices.pdf

Incumbents (1999–2006)

■ 1= Incumbent Party

■ 0= Non-Incumbent

Source:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTRES/Resources/469232-1107449512766/DPI2012.dta>

Party Family: Radical Left, Center Left, Center Right and Radical Right

Country-Level Variables

Change in Unemployment (2002–2007): World Bank data, *Source:*

www.worldbank.org/data.html

Change in GDP annual growth (2002–2007): World Bank data, *Source:*

www.worldbank.org/data.html

Table A: Measurement of Variables

Variable Name	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Minimum	Maximum
% Vote Share Radical Right Parties (1999–2007)	8.50	7.3	84	0.3	32.11
% Vote Share Center-Right Parties (1999–2007)	20.4	13.7	147	0.4	45.4
% Vote Share Center-Left Parties (1999–2007)	24.2	13.1	134	1.5	45
Saliency: Immigration (1999–2006)	5.42	1.95	280	1	10
Spend vs Taxation (Anti-Taxation) (2006)	4.44	2.18	234	0.14	0.4
Immigration Position: Tough Policy (1999–2006)	5.11	2.09	227	0.71	10
EU Position: Opposition (1999–2006)	2.41	1.17	547	1	10
Position: Law and Order (1999–2006)	5.16	2.28	232	0.5	10
Incumbents (1999–2007)	0.30	0.46	503	0	1
Change in Disproportionality, Electoral System (1997–2007)	-2.21	3.13	524	-10.14	2.63
Change in Unemployment (2002–2007)	-2.49	3.46	524	-11.2	3
Change in GDP Growth (2002–2007)	1.99	1.80	524	-4.4	5.9

Classification of Parties and Countries II: CHES 1999–2007

Central-Eastern Europe:

Country	Party Name in CHES (1999–2007)	Label
Bulgaria	The Coalition for Bulgaria	KzB
Bulgaria	Bulgarian Socialist Party	BSP
Bulgaria	Bulgarian National Movement	G-VMRO
Bulgaria	Lider	L
Bulgaria	Union of Democratic Forces	SDS
Bulgaria	National Union Attack	NOA
Bulgaria	Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria	DSB
Bulgaria	United Democratic Forces	ODS
Czech Republic	Freedom Union-Democratic Union	US-DEU
Czech-Republic	Civic Democratic Party	ODS
Czech-Republic	SNK European Democrats	SNK-ED
Czech-Republic	Czech Social Democratic Party	CSSD
Czech-Republic	Tradition Responsibility Prosperity	TOP 09
Czech-Republic	Green Party	SZ
Estonia	Estonian Centre Party	EK
Estonia	Pro Patria and Res Publica Union	IRL
Estonia	Social Democratic Party	SDE
Estonia	Estonian Greens	EER
Hungary	Democratic Coalition	DK
Hungary	Hungarian Socialist Party	MSZP
Hungary	Politics Can Be Different	LMP
Hungary	Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Union	FIDESZ-M
Hungary	Alliance of Free Democrats	SZDSZ
Hungary	Hungarian Democratic Forum	MDF
Hungary	Christian Democratic People's Party	KDNP
Hungary	Hungarian Justice and Life Party	MIEP
Latvia	Harmony Centre/Social Democratic Party “Harmony”	SC/SDPS
Latvia	People's Party	TP
Latvia	Union of Greens and Peasants/Farmers	ZZS
Latvia	Zatler's Reform Party	ZRP
Latvia	New Era	JL
Latvia	Harmony Centre	SC
Latvia	Latvia's First Party / Latvia's Way	LPP
Latvia	Fatherland and Freedom	TB/LNNK
Lithuania	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party	LSDP
Lithuania	New Democratic Party	NDP

Lithuania	Front Party	FRONT
Lithuania	Moderate Conservative Union	NKS
Lithuania	Fatherland Union	TS-LK
Lithuania	New Union - Social Liberals	NS
Lithuania	Order and Justice - Liberal Democrats	TT
Lithuania	Young Lithuania- New Nationalist and Political Prisoner's Union	JL-PKS
Lithuania	Liberals' Movement of the Republic of Lithuania	LrLS
Lithuania	Labour Party	DP
Lithuania	Lithuanian Liberty Union	LLS
Poland	Union of Labour	UP
Poland	Alliance of Democratic Left	SLD
Poland	Social Democracy of Poland	SDPL
Poland	Coalition Electoral Action Solidarity of the Right	AWSP
Poland	Law and Justice	PIS
Poland	Civic Platform	PO
Poland	Polish People's Party	PSL
Romania	National Union for the Progress of Romania	UNPR
Romania	Social Democratic Party	PSD
Romania	Romanian Democratic Convention of 2000	CDR 2000
Romania	People's Movement Party	PMP
Romania	National Liberal Party	PNL
Romania	Great Romania Party	PRM
Slovakia	Christian Democratic Movement	KDH
Slovakia	Direction – Social Democracy	SMER-SD
Slovakia	Direction – Third Way	SMER
Slovakia	Christian Democratic Movement	KDH
Slovakia	Slovak National Party	SNS
Slovakia	Right Slovak National Party	PSNS
Slovenia	United List of Social Democrats	ZLSD
Slovenia	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	LDS
Slovenia	Active Slovenia	AS
Slovenia	Slovenian Democratic Party	SDS
Slovenia	Liberal Democracy of Slovenia	LDS
Slovenia	Slovenian Democratic Party	SDS
Slovenia	Social Democrats	SD
Slovenia	Slovenian People's Party	SLS
Slovenia	New Slovenia - Christian People's Party	NS
Slovenia	Slovenian National Party	SNS
Slovenia	Democratic Pensioners' Party of Slovenia	DSUS

Western Europe:

Country	Party Name in CHES (1999–2007)	Label
Austria	Social Democratic Party of Austria	SPÖ
Austria	Austrian People's Party	ÖVP
Austria	The Greens	GRUNE
Austria	Freedom Party of Austria	FPÖ
Austria	Alliance for the Future of Austria	BZÖ
Belgium	Christian-Democratic and Flemish	CDV
Belgium	New Flemish Alliance	N-VA
Belgium	Reform Movement	MR
Belgium	Flemish Interest	VB
Belgium	Flemish Liberals and Democrats	VLD
Belgium	Socialist Party	PS
Belgium	Socialist Party. Different	SPA
Belgium	Humanist Democratic Centre	CDH
Belgium	Ecologists	ECOLO
Belgium	List Dedecker	LDD
Belgium	The Flemish Greens	GROEN
Belgium	National Front	FN
Belgium	Citizens' Movement for Change	MCC
Belgium	Green Party	AGALEV
Denmark	Denmark's Liberal Party	V
Denmark	Social Democracy	SD
Denmark	Progress Party	FP
Denmark	Danish People's Party	DF
Denmark	Socialist People's Party	SF
Denmark	Conservative People's Party	KF
Denmark	Radical Liberals	RV
Denmark	Unity List - The Red-Greens	EL
Finland	Finnish Centre	KESK
Finland	National Coalition Party	KOK
Finland	Finnish Social Democratic Party	SDP
Finland	Ecological Party	KIPU
Finland	Green Alliance	VIHR
Finland	The Finns	PS
France	Independent Ecological Movement	MEI
France	Rally for the Public/Union for a Popular Movement	RPR; UMP
France	Socialist Party	PS
France	Liberal Democracy	DL
France	Democratic Movement	MoDem
France	French Communist Party	PCF
France	National Republican Movement	MN
France	National Front	FN
France	The Greens	VERTS
France	Rally for France/Movement for France	RPF/MPF

Germany	Christian Democracy Union	CDU
Germany	Christian Social Union	CSU
Germany	Social Democratic Party of Germany	SPD
Germany	Human Environment Animal Protection	DieTier
Germany	Free Democratic Party	FDP
Germany	The Left (Party of Democratic Socialism, PDS)	DIE LINKE
Germany	Alliance 90/The Greens	GRUNEN
Germany	Republikaner	REP
Germany	German People's Union/National Democratic Party of Germany	DVU/NPD
Greece	New Democracy	ND
Greece	Panhellenic Socialist Movement	PASOK
Greece	Ecologist Greens	OP
Greece	The River	POTAMI
Greece	Political Spring	POLA
Greece	Communist Party of Greece	KKE
Greece	Popular Orthodox Rally	LAOS
Ireland	Soldiers of Destiny	FF
Ireland	Family of the Irish	FG
Ireland	Labour Party	LAB
Ireland	We Ourselves	SF
Ireland	Green Party	GP
Ireland	Communist	SP
Italy	Democratic Party of the Left	PDS/DS
Italy	Democratic Party	PD
Italy	Left Democrats	Left_Dem
Italy	Left and Freedom/Left Ecology Freedom	SL/SEL
Italy	Italian Socialist Party	PSI
Italy	Federation of Greens	FdV
Italy	Italian Popular Party	PPI
Italy	Forward Italy	FI
Italy	Italian Democratic Socialists	SDI
Italy	Party of Italian Communists	PdCI
Italy	Italy of Values	IdV
Italy	New Centre-Right	NCD
Italy	Green Federation	VERDI
Italy	Tricolor Flame Social Movement	MS
Italy	Northern League	LN
Italy	National Alliance	AN
Italy	United Christian Democrats	CDU
Italy	Union of Christian and Centre Democrats	CCD/UDC
Portugal	Socialist Party	PS
Portugal	Earth Party	MPT
Portugal	Social Democratic Party	PSD

Portugal	Democratic Social Centre	CDS-PP
Portugal	Left Bloc	BE
Spain	Catalan Socialist Party	PSC
Spain	Spanish Socialist Workers' Party	PSOE
Spain	The Greens	VERDE
Spain	People's Party	PP
Spain	Initiative for Catalonia	IC
Sweden	Social Democratic Workers' Party	SAP
Sweden	June List	JL
Sweden	Moderate Rally Party	M
Sweden	Liberal People's Party	FP
Sweden	Christian Democrats	KD
Sweden	Environment Party The Greens	MP
Sweden	New Democracy	NyD
Sweden	Sweden Democrats	SD
The Netherlands	Christian Democratic Appeal	CDA
The Netherlands	Labour Party	PvdA
The Netherlands	Socialist Party	SP
The Netherlands	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	VVD
The Netherlands	Centre Democrats	CD
The Netherlands	Freedom Party	PVV
The Netherlands	Green Left	GL
The Netherlands	List Pim Fortuyn	LPF
The Netherlands	Christian Union	CU
The Netherlands	Democrats 66	D66
The Netherlands	Party for the Animals	PvdD
The Netherlands	Reformed Political Party	SGP
UK	Labour Party	LAB
UK	Conservative Party	CON
UK	Liberal Democrats	LD
UK	The United Kingdom Independence Party	UKIP
UK	British National Party	BNP

Classification of Countries III: Electoral Years (1999–2007)

Austria (1999; 2002; 2006)

Belgium (1999; 2003; 2007)

Bulgaria (2001; 2005)

Czech Republic (2002; 2006)

Denmark (2001; 2005 2007)

Estonia (1999; 2003; 2007)

Finland (1999; 2003; 2007)

France (2002; 2007)

Germany (2002; 2005)

Greece (2000; 2004; 2007)

Hungary (2002; 2006)

Ireland (2002; 2007)

Italy (2001; 2006)

Latvia (1998; 2002; 2006)

Lithuania (2000; 2004)

Poland (2001; 2005; 2007)

Portugal (2001; 2005; 2007)

Romania (2000; 2004)

Slovakia (2002; 2006)

Slovenia (2000; 2004)

Spain (2000; 2004)

Sweden (2002; 2006)

The Netherlands (2003; 2006)

The United Kingdom (2001; 2005)

Chapter 7

Appendix D: Classification of Parties and Countries: Country/Electoral Years/Party

Classification of Parties and Countries IV

Belgium: 2007–2010

Christian-Democratic and Flemish (CD&V)
New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)
Humanist Democratic Centre (cdH)
Ecologists (ECOLO)
National Front (FN)
The Flemish Greens (GROEN)
List Dedecker (LDD)
Reform Movement (MR)
Socialist Party (PS)
Socialist Party Different (SPA)
Flemish Interest (VB)
Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD)

The Netherlands: 2006–2010

Democrats 66 (D66)
Labour Party (PvdA)
Party for the Animals (PvdD)
Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA)
Christian Union (CU)
Green Left (GL)
Freedom Party (PVV)
Reformed Political Party (SGP)
Socialist Party (SP)
People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD)

Finland: 2007–2011

Finnish Centre (KESK)
National Coalition Party (KOK)
The Finns (PS)
Finnish Social Democratic Party (SDP)
Swedish People's Party (SFP)
Left Alliance (VAS)
Green Alliance (VIHR)
Finnish Christian Democrats (KD)

France: 2007–2012

National Front (FN)
New Center (NC)
Left Radical Party (PRG)
Socialist Party (PS)
Union for a Popular Movement (UMP)
The Greens (VEC)
