

Committee: SPECPOL 2

Topic: The Question of the Rise of Far-right Groups in Europe

Chair: Alvar Ehrnrooth

School: International School of Helsinki

Summary

The rise of far-right groups in Europe is a problem that has been steadily increasing in magnitude. Far-right political ideologies, which tend to promote xenophobia, nationalism, racism, anti-immigration and often sparks extremism, presents a very real danger to the politics of the EU and Europe considering the economic and socio-political stance and threatens to diminish globalization. Many far-right groups around Europe have been established, as well as strengthened in recent years, mainly due to the increase in immigration. The issues with strong far-right political ideologies is the unwillingness to globalise with the intent of ‘defending’ the people, thus damaging economic policies currently put in place. Furthermore, they tend to have strong anti-immigration stances and thinking in terms of hostility with a ‘us versus them’ conception. Thus, it becomes a problem which must be solved as it threatens to throw the EU and Europe off balance economically, socially and politically.

The term “**far-right**” or “**extreme right**” or “**radical right**” refers to the political ideology which is further than the standard political right. Far-right politics often imply extreme nationalism, nativist ideologies, and authoritarian tendencies and usually describe fascism, Nazism and other ideologies which contain ultranationalist, chauvinist, xenophobic, racist, anti-communist, or reactionary views.

Definition of Key Terms

Fascism: A form of radical right-wing authoritarian ultra-nationalism which includes dictatorial rule, forcible suppression of opposition and strong division of the society and economy.

Ultra-nationalism: A type of extreme nationalism that puts the interest of one state or people higher than all the others.

Nazism: The political principles of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, which is seen as having extremely racist and/or authoritarian views.

Chauvinism: A type of excessive and aggressive patriotism or also for one's own cause, group, race or sex.

Xenophobia: Hate or discrimination against people of other nationalities.

Racism: Hate or discrimination against people of another race.

Anti-Communist: The opposition of communism.

Reactionary views: A person or entity that has political views which wish to return to a previous political state of society that they believe is better than their current one.

Right-wing: Politics maintain that hierarchies and social orders are to be expected, which they support based on natural law, economics, or tradition. Right-wing politics are usually referred to as the conservative part of the political system.

Populism: A political view which pushes to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are disregarded by established elite groups.

Right Wing Populism: A political ideology which combines both right-wing politics and populism. Right wing populism mostly consists of anti-elitism, opposition to the dominant group or 'establishment' (which supposedly holds the power and authority of a nation), and speaks to the 'common people'.

Background Information

Europe consists of 72 currently active nationalist parties, 44 of which have 1 or more seats in parliament. 4 of these parties are currently the governing parties of their nation: 'Fidesz' in Hungary, 'Law and Justice' in Poland, 'Swiss People's Party' in Switzerland and 'Lega Nord' in Italy. ^[1] Some of these nationalist parties are further right-wing than others, such as the 'Law and Justice' in Poland which has formed a coalition with the far-right League of Polish Families and populist Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland. Though they all have similar ideals.

One of the largest driving forces for the increase in far-right nationalist political parties is the rise in immigration in Europe. As more immigrants arrive in European nations, many people may feel that their nation is being threatened of the immigrant culture. There are also concerns about how they will affect the economy, for example taking jobs from the 'native' people. According to

Terri E. Givens, writer of 'Voting Radical Right in Western Europe', "Radical right parties in the 1980s and 1990s appealed to voters who felt threatened by economic modernization and globalization. They used immigrants as scapegoats for rising unemployment and underemployment as well as addressed fears that new immigrants were a threat to cultural homogeneity." ^[2] However, due to the recent influx of immigration, his research is still very relevant. Recent surveys also show that immigration is a top priority for most voters in the EU.

The divide between countries who support the left, and those who support the right are superbly high at the moment. Countries like the ones listed below, as well as countries like Denmark, are struggling to oppose the oncoming storm that is the far-right. The stances of countries like Denmark, which are strictly against 'migration pressure' are very harsh. These include the allowance of police to seize migrant's property to pay for their upkeep as well as pledging to boost contraception aid to developing countries in an effort to reduce the migration. In contrast, Switzerland has around 20% of their population made up of immigrants. The far-right is often seen as an issue in most countries as they have been seen to cause a lot of issues in Europe in the past. This has not stopped the far-right to rise in recent years, however, many countries in Europe do not wish to be run by the far-right. Considering, however, the democratic nature of Europe, it is the people's vote and thus most nations are somewhat powerless to the decision, but can try to mitigate the rise of far-right extremists with counter measures stated later in this report.

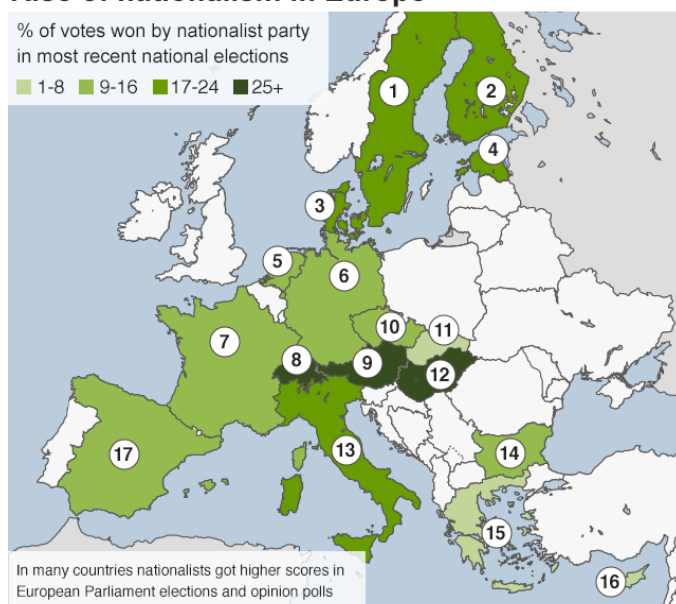
Major Countries and Organizations Involved

France: With the current strength of the National Front (FN), a right-wing political party which is currently run by Marine Le Pen, who have done well in recent elections, it is fair to say that France is, and could become more involved in this issue.

Poland: The current ultranationalist, anti-pluralist Law and Justice Party, Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (PiS), which was founded in 2001 and has been in power since 2015, which recognizes itself as 'national conservative' instead of extremist is moving towards illiberal authoritarianism, where it no longer recognizes the rulings of the constitutional court, and has weakened the media. This has mostly happened due to many reasons, but also because of their discontent with democracy and the EU.

Hungary: The current governing party 'Fidesz' has been moving towards a similar illiberal authoritarianism, and have adopted a new constitution and restricted the freedom of the media. They have also adopted policies from the right-wing extremist party 'Jobbik' and are changing the country's political system, which in turn heavily damages especially the Roma minority. Due to the recent influx of refugees, the government has increased its anti-EU and anti-immigrant views.

Rise of nationalism in Europe



① Sweden Sweden Democrats 17.6%	⑩ Czech Republic Freedom and Direct Democracy 11%
② Finland The Finns 17.7%	⑪ Slovakia Our Slovakia 8%
③ Denmark Danish People's Party 21%	⑫ Hungary Fidesz 49% , Jobbik 19%
④ Estonia Conservative People's Party 17.8%	⑬ Italy The League 17.4%
⑤ Netherlands Freedom Party 13%	⑭ Bulgaria United Patriots 9%
⑥ Germany Alternative for Germany 12.6%	⑮ Greece Golden Dawn 7%
⑦ France National Rally 13%	⑯ Cyprus ELAM 3.7%
⑧ Switzerland Swiss People's Party 29%	⑰ Spain Vox 10.3%
⑨ Austria Freedom Party 26%	

Last updated: April 2019

BBC

https://ichef.bbci.co.uk/news/624/cpsprodpb/F373/production/_106632326_eu_far_right_map_280419_640-nc.png

An image showing the popularity of far-right political parties in the most recent elections is increasingly alarming due to the high percentage of votes in most countries. The most troubling and major countries involved are Hungary, Austria and Switzerland.

For a detailed and comprehensive list of far-right parties in Europe, see Table 2 in

<https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/dice-report-2017-4-davis-deole-december.pdf>

or see heading 3 on https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_active_nationalist_parties_in_Europe#List

Timeline of Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>
1789	During the French Revolution, the terms 'left' and 'right' were first used to describe the different political views. These were based on the physical seating positions of the people who either were for the monarchy (right) and those who were against it (left).
1919	The beginning of the Nazi party, or the nationalist and anti-semitic 'German Worker's Party' was founded in 1919. By 1920 they were renamed the National Socialist German Workers' Party, which was done in hopes of getting more people into their group, as opposed to the Social Democrats or the Communists. The National Socialist Program (the Nazi's party program for the elections) was adopted in 1920 and began such malicious deeds as denying citizenship to Jews, as well as many other racist, xenophobic or anti-semitic acts. They were formed or described to unite all Germans and to gain more territory for Germany and to exclude all those they deemed as 'inferior' races. Essentially, Nazism brought upon the horror that was World War 2.
1922	At this time, the fascist party in Italy took off. This is because the leader of the Italian Fascist movement, Benito Mussolini became prime minister of Italy. The actions of Italy during these times were not benevolent and were, in fact, quite horrific. This did not stop the far-right fascist party from staying in power until around 1946 as well as the current threat of a new rising far-right power.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- [A/RES/43/150](#): Measures to be taken against Nazi, Fascist and neo-Fascist activities and all other forms of totalitarian ideologies and practices based on apartheid, racial discrimination and racism, and the systematic denial of human rights and fundamental freedoms
- [A/C.3/70/L.59](#): Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Solutions to the problem of the rise of the far-right are extremely hard to put into place, or to even think of. A big reason that this problem is so hard to treat is due to the defence of human rights such as that of free speech. In trying to find a solution to this issue, one may end up breaching the right to free speech since one cannot deny another's right to their own political opinion. This is why most of the suppressions of the far-right in the past have failed. Recently in Germany Angela Merkel attempted to form a coalition with several other parties, however was unable to do so. She hoped that through a coalition, she may be able to get more votes and essentially overpower the far-right's votes, but considering the results, it was a failure. This has been reflected before, and since the situation is so tough, previous attempts have been unsuccessful due to the reasons stated above, as well as the fact that the more you attempt to forcibly suppress a people, the more they will likely try to fight back.

Possible Solutions

Addressing the problem of the rise of the far-right can be very tricky. This is because if you try to fix the issue, often times there can be a backlash from the far-right due to them seeing that as taking away their rights or being against them in an unfair manner. To them, fighting back can often be what they want so it "reinforces their message of being outsiders marginalized by an overpowering and corrupt elite." ^[3] Though there are still possible methods to overcome this.

A large part of the right-wing and far-right strategy is the large media coverage that they often receive due to their radical views. The media, likely due to controversies stemming from the far-right views, tend to report on such stories and give a lot of coverage and media attention to these individuals and parties. a possible solution here would be to limit media coverage on such issues. Though that may then give rise to other issues like whether that is truly democratic, as well as allowing the far-right to criticise and maintain that it is an act of trying to suppress them.

Likely the most effective way to combat radical right-wing views is through education, mainly political and civic education. Through the use of education, we can lead people from an early age to be taught how the world works and how best to combat political and social issues through respectable manners.

Bibliography

- “List of Active Nationalist Parties in Europe.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 18 June 2019, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_active_nationalist_parties_in_Europe#European_Nationalist_political_party.
- Givens, Terri E. “The Radical Right, Immigration and the Future of the EU.” *OpenDemocracy*, 14 Feb. 2019, www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/radical-right-immigration-and-future-of-eu/.
- Greven, Thomas. “The Rise of Right-Wing Populism in Europe and the United States A Comparative Perspective.” *FESDC*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, May 2016, www.fesdc.org/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/RightwingPopulism.pdf.
- “Europe and Right-Wing Nationalism: A Country-by-Country Guide.” *BBC News*, BBC, 24 May 2019, www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006.
- “Extreme Right / Radical Right / Far Right.” *Anti-Defamation League*, www.adl.org/resources/glossary-terms/extreme-right-radical-right-far-right.
- “Far-Right Politics.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 1 June 2019, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Far-right_politics.
- Greven, Thomas. “The Rise of Right-Wing Populism in Europe and the United States A Comparative Perspective.” *FESDC*, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, May 2016, www.fesdc.org/fileadmin/user_upload/publications/RightwingPopulism.pdf.
- Ray, Michael. “National Front.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 2 May 2017, www.britannica.com/topic/National-Front-political-party-France.
- “Right-Wing Populism.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 28 June 2019, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right-wing_populism.
- Davis, Lewis, and Sumit S Deole. “Immigration and the Rise of Far-Right Parties in Europe.” *IFO DICE Report*, Information Und Forschung (IFO), Dec. 2017, www.ifo.de/DocDL/dice-report-2017-4-davis-deole-december.pdf.
- Givens, Terri E. “The Radical Right, Immigration and the Future of the EU.” *OpenDemocracy*, 14 Feb. 2019, www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/radical-right-immigration-and-future-of-eu/.
- “Right-Wing Politics.” *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right-wing_politics#History.
- Federation, Anarchist. “Against Nationalism.” *The Anarchist Library*, Sept. 2009, theanarchistlibrary.org/library/anarchist-federation-against-nationalism.
https://search.un.org/results.php?tpl=dist_search&tplfilter=documents&lang=en&advanced_search=true&adv_exactPhrase=far-right&adv_resultsperpage=10&adv_sortby=score
<https://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/43/a43r150.htm>
<https://undocs.org/A/C.3/70/L.59>