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The Mainstream Right, the Far Right, and Coalition Formation in Western Europe

by

Kimberly Ann Twist

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Jonah D. Levy, Chair
Professor Jason Wittenberg
Professor Jacob Citrin
Professor Katerina Linos

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The Mainstream Right, the Far Right, and Coalition Formation in Western Europe

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Kimberly Ann Twist

Abstract

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Kimberly Ann Twist

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

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Professor Jonah D. Levy, Chair

As long as far-right parties – known chiefly for their vehement opposition to immigration – have competed in contemporary Western Europe, scholars and observers have been concerned about these parties' implications for liberal democracy. Many originally believed that far-right parties would fade away due to a lack of voter support and their isolation by mainstream parties. Since 1994, however, far-right parties have been included in 17 governing coalitions across Western Europe. What explains the switch from exclusion to inclusion in Europe, and what drives mainstream-right parties' decisions to include or exclude the far right from coalitions today?

My argument is centered on the cost of far-right exclusion, in terms of both office and policy goals for the mainstream right. I argue, first, that the major mainstream parties of Western Europe initially maintained the exclusion of the far right because it was relatively costless: They could govern and achieve policy goals without the far right. During this period of exclusion, however, major parties of both the left and right attempted to win back voters lost to the far right by enacting more restrictive immigration policies; they would borrow from the far right as long as it was beneficial.

Second, I argue that the mainstream right has increasingly treated the far right as it would any other party during coalition decisions. Major mainstream parties prioritize being in government, and will select the coalition that offers both stability and the ability to achieve policy goals in areas of greatest importance to them at the time. As the far right continued to attract voters throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, the mainstream right realized that working with the far right – which was now a more useful partner, as it had more legislative seats – might result in more advantageous policy compromises. Once far-right parties could be useful to the mainstream right, exclusion became a more costly strategy.

Third, far-right parties can be attractive coalition partners to the mainstream right because they are flexible on most issues – immigration excepted – and thus more willing to give the mainstream right its preferred policies in exchange for gains in immigration. Additionally, far-right parties are nearly always smaller than the major mainstream-right parties,

so the mainstream parties are able to carry more weight in coalition decisions and obtain important ministerial positions.

I demonstrate my argument through in-depth case studies of Austria and the Netherlands, from the 1980s through the present. Both countries have had far-right parties in and out of government, providing important variation on the dependent variable. Finally, I show the wider applicability of my argument in two ways by extending my arguments about inclusion and exclusion to coalition-like agreements in the United Kingdom and France, as well as to mainstream left responses to far-left parties in Europe.

To Stephen.

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To my family – Bob, Phyllis, Steph – thank you for always encouraging me and being proud of me. And to Stephen: You've been my biggest cheerleader and my steadfast ally. I dedicate this to you.

Chapter 1

The Mainstream Right, the Far Right, and Coalition Formation in Western Europe

Far-right parties, chiefly known for their vehemently anti-immigration positions, have made significant electoral gains across Western Europe over the past four decades. As early as the mid-1980s, far-right parties were winning enough votes and seats to become a mathematically viable option for governing coalitions in some countries. The traditional major right-wing parties thus had two alternatives: They could isolate the far right within the legislature, citing concerns about democratic acceptability, or they could work with the far right as they would with any other party. Many observers and scholars initially believed that the far right would be rejected as a partner for ideological or normative reasons – particularly because exclusion seemed to be the empirical reality in Europe. Yet, parties on the far right of the spectrum have participated in 17 governing coalitions in Western Europe since 1994.

Why did mainstream-right parties initially exclude the far right, and what prompted the switch to inclusion? What explains why coalitions between the mainstream right and far right form when the mainstream right has other options? And why are far-right parties sometimes excluded, even when they win a significant share of the national vote? As this dissertation shows, the far right has been excluded only when doing so was not costly for the mainstream right, because the right either preferred policy benefits from other coalitions or the far right had too few seats to be mathematically useful in coalition formation. Further, even during the periods of 'exclusion,' mainstream parties on the right (and on the left, as well) attempted to win back voters lost to the far right by adopting more restrictive immigration policies and immigration rhetoric.

Major mainstream-right parties have generally approached the far right as they would any other party when it comes to coalition formation. Far-right parties' ideological flexibility on non-core issues – those not directly tied to immigration – makes them attractive coalition partners for mainstream-right parties interested in pursuing other policy goals, such as

budget cuts or foreign policy changes. Even when the mainstream right has had other viable coalition options, and engaged in negotiations to this end, it has often formed coalitions with the far right rather than other mainstream parties. I argue, therefore, that the mainstream right is unwilling to pay a significant cost – in terms of maximizing office and policy goals – in order to keep the far right in opposition. Although some on the right may have (or have had in the past) ideological objections to forming coalitions with the far right, such considerations tend to take a backseat to the goals of entering government and maximizing policy outcomes. Exclusion may be both a principled strategy (normative, defense of liberal democracy) and a vote-maximizing strategy (telling far-right voters that they are wasting a vote, and should instead vote for the mainstream party), but it has yet to be maintained once it becomes costly for the mainstream right. Mainstream-right parties have backtracked on initial promises of isolation after a period of electoral losses to the far right, as I show in my case chapters.

This project responds to the calls of Mudde (2007, 288), who says more analysis is needed to understand why mainstream parties respond as they do to the far right, and Rydgren (2005, 414), who cautions against ad hoc theories that apply to certain parties at certain times. In this chapter, I begin with an introduction to the mainstream right and the far right, and then explore the latter's participation in government. Next, I present the existing literature and explain how my argument builds on this work. Finally, I provide an overview of the data and methods used, as well as a chapter summary.

1.1 Mainstream-right and far-right parties

Major mainstream parties are the actors of interest when studying coalition formation because these parties are often the center of coalitions, with smaller parties forming around them (Budge and Laver 1993, 510-11).[1] The mainstream right is comprised of three party families: Christian Democrats, Conservatives, and Liberals, though these parties are not always "major" parties in all countries.[2]

Major party leaders face short time horizons and a greater chance of removal if their parties lose seats, so picking a successful coalition is important (see Andrews and Jackman 2005). Mainstream-right leaders have occasionally had to win over sizable segments of their party (e.g. Austria 1999) or other parties necessary for the coalition (e.g. the Netherlands 2010; Norway 2001) to form a coalition with the far right. Members of the party rank-and-file are often less focused on short-term personal or party gains than are elites, and so have sometimes held misgivings about the coalition.

[1] "Mainstream" is typically understood as non-niche, or as catch-all (see Adams et al. 2006, 513).

[2] There is not a dominant scheme for classifying "major" parties. Spoon (2011, 5) draws the line between major and minor at regularly receiving more/less than 10% of the national vote; on the left, major parties are part of the Social Democratic or Socialist families. See Appendix 1 (Table 1.17) for the list of major mainstream-right parties in this study, which follows the list in Meguid (2008).

Western Europe's major mainstream parties' experiences with accommodating fascist far-right parties are still fairly recent history. Notably, King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy allowed Mussolini to become Prime Minister in 1922, despite the National Fascist Party (PNF) winning less than 1%of the vote in 1921, and German President Hindenburg allowed Hitler to form a government after the November 1932 elections, even though the Nazi Party had lost more than 10% of its previous votes. Although democratic institutions are now entrenched, and the far right of today is not perceived to be looking to overturn democracy the way earlier fascist parties were, many expected that today's mainstream parties would avoid repeating past mistakes and thus leave the far right (and its policy goals) out in the cold.

The central issue for far-right parties is the defense of the nation: protecting hard-working British (or Austrian, or Swedish, etc.) people from threats like immigration, the loss of the national culture, economic hardships, and so on. These parties are united by their "pronounced hostility toward immigrants and refugees" (Betz 1994, 172; see also Ivarsflaten 2008). This distinguishes them from regionalist parties, who are "nationalist" in their defense of a common people but are not anti-immigrant (e.g. the Scottish National Party). Another common thread for far-right parties is concern about issues spun off from immigration, such as law and order, that work toward the protection of "us" against "them." Many of these parties are populist and claim to represent the common citizen in a way the political elite does not. Members of the far-right family take varying positions on economic issues (with some more protectionist while others are more liberal) as well as social issues (such as same-sex marriage), so the use of "nativist" as a defining characteristic is well suited to these parties.

There is still no consensus as to the factors that drive far-right support, though dozens have been proposed: levels of immigration and unemployment (Arzheimer 2009), dissatisfaction with the mainstream parties (Van der Brug and Fennema 2003), globalization (Swank and Betz 2003), characteristics of the electoral system (Jackman and Volpert 1996), and so on.[3] There is somewhat more agreement on who tends to vote for the far right (young, white, less-educated males) but there are still challenges to this traditional understanding of the voting bloc (e.g. Mudde 2007, 117-8 on the gender gap), and the composition of the far-right electorate has changed over time. These voters – from whichever groups they come – have defected from both the mainstream right and the mainstream left. Some working-class individuals (who traditionally support Social Democratic parties) have been attracted to the far right's promises of protecting their jobs from immigrant workers, just as some traditional right-wing voters appreciate the far right's stronger stances (relative to the mainstream right) on protecting "us" from foreign outsiders.

The far right is not anti-system or anti-democratic in the way fascist parties were many decades earlier, but promoting the interests of "natives" at the expense of the "others" is at odds with the values, rather than the institutions, of liberal democracy — namely,

[3]See Norris (2005, 9-18) for an overview of the various theories.

a plural society and the protection of minorities.[4] Far-right parties' platforms generally include elements of national priority — ensuring Denmark for the Danes, Austria for the Austrians, and so on — but also pledges to stop all immigration or repatriate immigrants already in the country. Vowing to protect the nation, the far right has sometimes pushed the boundaries of acceptability. For example, Jean-Marie Le Pen, then-leader of the French *Front National* (FN), pledged in the 1990s to retroactively review the past two decades of naturalizations and institute AIDS screenings for anyone wanting to cross French borders (Marcus 1995, 106-7). The focus on immigration and cultural protection has resonated with European voters for decades.

It is these (and related) proposals that have prompted concern from scholars and observers alike. We see this expressed in the introduction to Schain et al.'s (2002, 4) *Shadows Over Europe*:

> [Far right success] has allowed them to expand their organizations, distribute racist literature, and more effectively propagate their extremist views, often at taxpayers' expense. Second, it legitimizes expressions of ethnic hatred and encourages intolerance and violence toward immigrants and those of immigrant decent. Third, and perhaps most important, while the emergence of these parties probably does not constitute a 'democratic crisis' – at least not yet – it has changed the political environment and the political agenda by legitimizing policies founded on racism and intolerance.

Arzheimer and Carter (2006, 440) argue that mainstream parties legitimate the far right when they move to the right, rather than stifle the demand for the far right and its policies. The far right's "demonstrable" influence is called "disturbing" by Hossay and Zolberg (2008, 305). Governmental participation of the far right is thought to both send a strong legitimating signal to voters (Ivarsflaten 2008, 175) and increase the far right's future electoral success (e.g. Kestel and Godmer 2004, on sub-national coalitions). Wilson (1998, 55) says it is "to their credit" that mainstream-right parties have sometimes "disdained cooperation" with the far right. Despite the scholarly consensus that accommodative strategies toward the far right are to be avoided, mainstream-right parties regularly include far-right parties in coalition, even when other coalition options are possible, as I show in the next section.

1.2 The far right in government: A record of growing collaboration

For the analysis of coalitional inclusion, I consider all Western European elections contested by a far-right party, from the 1980s through the present, and the governments that

[4] Mudde (2007, 156) suggests that many authors use "anti-democratic" when they actually mean "anti-liberal democracy."

formed thereafter.[5] For now, I set aside elections in countries with majoritarian electoral laws, which tend to severely limit the far right's legislative representation. While the literature disagrees on whether the proportionality of a system affects far-right vote share and on whether that effect is negative or positive (see Mudde 2007, 234 for a summary), scholars do agree that a proportional system makes the votes more likely to translate into far-right legislative seats. A British far-right party would need to win more votes than any other party in a given constituency to enter parliament, while a Dutch far-right party would need to win only 1% of the national vote, and those votes would not need to be geographically concentrated.

I limit the set of cases to those where coalitions formed after an election, and where the parties were able to select their coalition partners. For the purposes of this project, we can exclude the five Swiss elections (1995-2011) and their resulting coalitions, though the far-right Swiss People's Party (SVP) has participated in all five coalitions and was the largest party in Switzerland for several years. The Swiss Federal Council is comprised of seven members from the largest parliamentary parties; the parties do not choose their partners, so we do not have a decision to explain. The far right has thus been brought into coalition by the mainstream right after twelve elections in five countries, the first, in 1994 and the most recent, in 2013 (Table 1.1).

To understand the frequency with which the far right is included in government, we need to know not how many times the far right has contested elections or entered legislatures, but how many times the far right could have been included – the number of instances when the mainstream right and far right jointly held a majority of seats. This total includes two-party and multi-party combinations, depending on the number of mainstream right and center-right parties in a given country.

Table 1.2 divides the set of 57 PR-system elections (again, including all Western European countries except Switzerland) in which the far right won at least one legislative seat into two categories: elections when the far right and the mainstream right together held a majority of seats, and elections when they did not. The right-far right pairing has held a majority of seats 30 times since the late 1980s, meaning the far right has entered government after 40% of the elections where it realistically could have done so. If the mainstream right and the far right did not jointly have a majority of legislative mandates, it is not surprising that a coalition between the two did not occur.

In Table 1.3, I therefore consider only the 30 cases from "yes" column in Table 1.2: cases in which the mainstream and far right could mathematically form a coalition. The mainstream right has not rejected coalitions with the far right in order to sit in opposition, however: In every case in the "no" column, the mainstream right entered government with a different set of parties. The mainstream right preferred these "no"-column coalitions without

[5] I begin with the first 1980s election in each country, e.g. 1986 for Austria and 1989 for Norway, or with the first election contested by a far-right party, e.g. 1998 for Denmark and 2011 for Finland (the Finns Party has existed since 1995 but were only considered far-right after the 2007 national elections — see (2006) and (2010)). I start in the 1980s because the decade was the beginning of the emergence of far-right parties. For example, the Austrian FPÖ had existed for thirty years, but only solidified its far-right status in 1986.

Country	Coalition	Years	PM party	FR party	Other parties	Type[a]
Austria	Schüssel II	2002-06	ÖVP	FPÖ/BZÖ		Included
Austria	Schüssel I	2000-02	ÖVP	FPÖ		Included
Denmark	Rasmussen III	2007-09	Venstre	DF	KF	Support
Denmark	Rasmussen II	2005-07	Venstre	DF	KF	Support
Denmark	Rasmussen I	2001-05	Venstre	DF	KF	Support
Italy	Berlusconi IV	2008-11	PdL[b]	LN		Included
Italy	Berlusconi II	2001-05	FI	LN	AN	Included
Italy	Berlusconi I	1994-95	FI	AN, LN[c]		Included
Netherlands	Rutte I	2010-12	VVD	PVV	CDA	Support
Netherlands	Balkenende I	2002-03	CDA	LPF	VVD	Included
Norway	Solberg	2013-	Høyre	FRP		Included
Norway	Bondevik II	2001-05	KF	FRP	Høyre, V	Support

Table 1.1: Formal and informal governmental inclusion of the far right

See Appendix 1 (Tables 1.17 and 1.18) for the party names. This table leaves out coalitions that are formally considered "new" coalitions (Müller and Strøm 2000, 12), but without the decisions about coalition partners of interest here: Rasmussen 2009-11 in Denmark, which represented a change of Prime Minister (also from the liberal party, Venstre) but no change in cabinet parties, and Berlusconi III (2005-06), which featured a reshuffling of ministries after a small center-right party left the coalition.

[a] "Support" parties agree to vote with the governing parties on a certain set of issues, usually by signing a formal agreement like that signed by the coalition parties, but do not receive ministerial posts. These coalition arrangements are counted by many who study coalitions and the far right because the dynamics surrounding formation are very similar.

[b] Berlusconi merged his *Forza Italia* with a number of other right and center-right parties to form the People of Freedom (PdL) in 2007. *Forza Italia* and the *Alleanza Nazionale* both ceased to exist as independent parties in March 2009.

[c] The Italian National Alliance is generally considered to have abandoned its neo-fascist legacy (as the Italian Social Movement) and become a mainstream-right party during the period between the 1996 elections – when the coalition lost power – and the 2001 elections, when the right-wing coalition regained power (see, e.g., Ruzza and Fella 2009, 30). The party is thus coded as far right for the 1994 election and as mainstream right for the 2001 election.

	Yes	**No**
Austria	1986, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2008	2013
Belgium	1981, 1985, 1987, 1991, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007	2010, 2014
Denmark	2001, 2005, 2007	1998, 2011
Finland		2011, 2015
Greece	2007	2009, 2012, 2015
Italy	1994, 2001, 2008	1983, 1987, 1992, 1996, 2006, 2013
Netherlands	1982, 1989, 2002, 2003, 2012	1994, 2006, 2012
Norway	2001, 2013	1989, 1993, 1997, 2005, 2009
Sweden		1991, 2010, 2014

Table 1.2: Elections: Would a mainstream-far right coalition have a majority of seats?

See Appendix 2 (Table 1.19) for the seat shares driving these categorizations.

	Yes	**No**
Austria	1999, 2002	1986, 1990, 1994, 1995, 2006, 2008
Belgium		1981, 1985, 1987, 1991, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007
Denmark	2001, 2005, 2007	
Greece		2007
Italy	1994, 2001, 2008	
Netherlands	2002, 2010	1982, 1989, 2003
Norway	2001, 2013	

Table 1.3: Elections: If the mainstream right and far right had enough seats to govern, did a coalition form?

the far right to the far-right-included coalitions, either because the expected policy benefits (i.e. what the far right's backing would enable them to pass) were preferable, or because the far-right coalition was thought to be less stable (see Chapters 5 and 6 for details on these decisions).

Table 1.4 further breaks down the election cases in Table 1.3 into situations in which a right-wing coalition was possible without the far right, and in which the far right was essential to forming a coalition with other ring-wing parties, if desired.

	Yes	**No**
Austria		1986, 1990, 1994, 1995, **1999**, **2002**, 2006, 2008
Belgium	1981, 1985, 1987, 1991, 1995, 2003, 2007	1999
Denmark		**2001**, **2005**, **2007**
Greece	2007	
Italy	**1994**	**2001**, **2008**
Netherlands	1982, 1989	**2002**, **2003**, **2010**
Norway		**2001**, **2013**

Table 1.4: Elections: Could a right-wing coalition be formed without the far right?

Coalitions that included the far right, either as a formal coalition member or as a support party, are in bold.

Of the 30 instances when the mainstream right and far right had a legislative majority (the "yes" column of Table 1.2), 11 featured a superfluous far-right party (the "yes" column of Table 1.4). The far right could have been included in a right-wing coalition, but the other parties had enough seats to exclude it; the far right was only included after one of these eleven elections.[6] However, the far right was included in 11 of the 19 instances where the right and far right held a legislative majority, and the far right was not mathematically superfluous (the "no" column of Table 1.4). Again, in the other eight cases where the far right was not superfluous but was not included, the mainstream right still joined a governing coalition – these parties were not sitting in opposition.[7]

This section has demonstrated the frequency with which parties of the mainstream right have included the far right in coalition. After more than half of the elections where the right and far right held a majority, and where a right-wing coalition was not possible without the far right, the far right was indeed included in government. Knowing whether the right and

[6]The Italian LN provided a strategic regional advantage to Berlusconi in 1994, as its base was in the northern region of Italy where the *Forza Italia* and *Alleanza Nazionale* were not as strong.

[7]Seven of the eight cases are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. The other, the 1999 Belgian coalition, left the Belgian Christian Democrats in opposition for the first time since 1958, after severe losses (more than 30% of its 1995 seats for the Flemish CVP, and 20% for the Wallonian PSC. The mainstream-right liberal parties formed a government with the Socialists and the Greens.

far right had a legislative majority is, on its own, still not enough for us to explain when the far right is included or excluded. In the next two sections, I outline the three groups of coalition theories (both general theories and theories specific to far-right inclusion) that attempt to move beyond this, explain where they fall short, and then introduce my own argument, which explains inclusion both across Europe and over time.

1.3 Existing literature

Previous work on coalitions and on the far right can be grouped into three categories, based on what each piece suggests about when the far right will be included. The first hypothesizes that, because of history, the mainstream right will never ally with the far right, or, in more recent work, only ally with "moderate" far-right parties. The second, following the office-oriented tradition, posits that the mainstream right will ally with (electorally) larger far-right parties. The third strand of the literature hypothesizes that the mainstream right will ally with the far right when the parties are generally proximate, following the policy-oriented school of coalition theories. I address each strand of the literature in turn, beginning with general coalition theories before moving to arguments specific to the far right.

Mainstream right will exclude certain far-right parties for historical reasons

Coalition theorists in the 1990s offered the concept of "unavailable" coalitions to explain the "systematic exclusion of certain parties from coalition bargaining," such as the Communists or the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement. (Strøm, Budge and Laver 1994, 317). These ideas were motivated by the legacy of World War II in many countries and the then-lack of far-right parties in government, but do not hold up as well today. The concept of "unavailable" coalitions was formalized and extended, with scholars arguing that the far right was beyond the threshold of acceptability for mainstream parties. For example, scholars sometimes tout the willingness of the Belgian major mainstream parties to form "uncomfortable" coalitions between left and right in order to leave the Vlaams Belang outside government (e.g. Downs 2002, 40).

These theories conflate a rare occurrence (at the time) with a theoretical impossibility, or with a normative commitment. Coalitions including these parties were not "unavailable" – they were unnecessary. Although the Italian Social Movement (MSI) was excluded from government for decades, scholars often overlook that the Italian Christian Democrats (DC) relied on the MSI's votes during the 1950s, just a decade after the end of World War II, and came to power with the MSI's support (see Art 2011, 210). Had the DC needed the votes or seats of the MSI during the 1970s and 1980s, we can plausibly imagine that the parties would have again worked together. Similarly, the French and Italian Communist parties were viewed as potential coalition partners when, respectively, the French Socialists and

the Italian Christian Democrats realized how beneficial such partnerships could be.[8] One might imagine a counterfactual world in which the Belgian mainstream right could not find common policy ground with the left, or in which the *Vlaams Belang* became too electorally successful to ignore, and the *cordon sanitaire* therefore abandoned, despite scholars' frequent citations of the Belgians as committed to exclusion. The Belgian far right has yet to win enough seats to make coalition formation without it truly difficult.

More recent work, benefitting from the knowledge that the far right has joined multiple governing coalitions, has updated these traditional theories to argue that certain "types" of far-right parties are likely to be included in coalitions, while others are likely to be excluded. For example, Minkenberg (2013, 18) argues that only "ethnocentrist" (racist but not fascist) and "populist" far-right parties have entered government, with "autocratic-fascist" parties always excluded. The same dynamic exists with other typologies: Ignazi's (1992) and Kitschelt's (1995) "old" right, Taggart's (1995) and Golder's (2003) "neo-fascist" groups, and Carter's (2005, 30) "classical racist" parties. To use the words of Strøm et al. (1994), these kinds of far-right parties are always "unavailable" coalition partners.

There are two major problems with using far right "types" as the explanation for coalition formation. First, this conflates two related variables, ideology and vote share: The "autocratic-fascist" parties consistently win a lower share of the national vote than do the "ethnocentrist" and "populist" groups, likely a result of their ties to fascist parties or their overly racist slogans. Voters may, of course, be turned off by the rhetoric of these parties – such as the British National Party's 2013 Christmas card, which featured a young blonde girl and the wish to "Have a white Christmas" – but we should not confuse this with mainstream parties' actions. Minkenberg's "autocratic-fascist" parties (along with the comparable categories in the other typologies) win few, if any, seats in Western European parliaments, so there is no reason for the mainstream right to strike alliances with them.

A second concern is the potential for tautology. Have far-right parties been classified as more "acceptable" because they have already participated in government? Far-right parties that have participated in government are considered by scholars to be part of the "moderate" far right, with one exception: The National Alliance (AN), successor to the "autocratic-fascist" Italian Social Movement (MSI), was was initially considered an extreme party. The MSI/AN leader, Gianfranco Fini, referred to Mussolini as the "greatest statesman of the [twentieth] century" in 1994, the year his party entered a coalition with Berlusconi's party.[9] The AN then began to be classified as a "moderate" far-right party, despite many scholars' assessments that the AN did not moderate its stances for several more years (e.g. Art 2011, 223). This suggests that scholars' decisions may be influenced by the far right's alliances with mainstream parties, rather than based solely on ideology.

Even if the classification is not tautological, knowing that a far-right party is more 'moderate' than others does not help us explain why that party was included after Election 1

[8]The French Socialists and Communists did form a government, though the would-be Christian Democratic / Communist coalition in Italy fell apart after the assassination of the Christian Democratic leader.

[9]Original: "Mussolini è stato il più grande statista del secolo."

but excluded after Election 2. This is not, of course, to say that ideology is unimportant – certainly, ideology impacts vote share, and ideology dictates that certain coalition pairings (e.g. between the mainstream right and far left) are highly unlikely to form due to a lack of common ground. However, an exclusive focus on ideology misses key drivers of far-right inclusion: the far right's usefulness, both in terms of its size and flexibility, and the mainstream right's desire for office.

Mainstream right will include the far right based on its size

A series of theories about coalition formation, some dating back nearly seventy years, have shaped the way scholars think about formation today. Müller and Strøm (2000, 7) offer a simple characterization of existing formal coalition theories, saying they vary in the amount of weight given to the "two things that determine a party's bargaining power – its share of seats and its position relative to the other parliamentary parties." Policy-oriented theories (discussed in Section 1.3) typically give some weight to both, while the early office-oriented theories believed that seat share always trumps position.

The earliest of the office-oriented theories, Von Neumann and Morgenstern's (1944) minimal winning theory, expects that a coalition will not include any unnecessary (or surplus) parties. Relatedly, Riker's (1962) "minimum seats" theory expects coalitions will have the smallest number of seats over 50%, and Leiserson's (1968) "minimum parties" expects the smallest number of parties possible in a coalition.[10] The basic logic of all three theories is accurate for major mainstream parties – these parties do want to be in office rather than in opposition. The singular focus on office seeking, however, presents a problem for coalition prediction because office-seeking theories may predict coalitions that would never form owing to the fact that there is no common ground between parties' positions (see Section 1.4). These critiques are well documented in the literature; in recent work, de Lange (2008, 149, 155) and Dumont et al. (2011, 7-10) discuss a number of issues raised by scholars.

Recent work on far-right inclusion, specifically, suggests that far-right parties' vote share matters for coalitional inclusion, with mainstream-right parties more likely to include far-right parties that have won a greater share of the national vote (e.g. Bale 2003, 70; van Spanje 2010; de Lange 2008). These scholars, observing the number of coalitions that have already formed between the mainstream right and far right, have adapted older theories (such as the early office-oriented theories that expected parties to form any coalition with a majority of seats, with no thought to ideology) to fit this reality. Focusing on vote share misses the point that the far right will not be included if the mainstream right prefers the expected policy outcomes of a different coalition option.

Moreover, what matters is not how large the far-right party is, but how important the party is for coalition formation. Even small far-right parties may be included if they provide the necessary numbers for the mainstream right, or the possibility of attractive policy wins. The Austrian FPÖ entered government in 2002 with only 10% of the vote (compared to

[10]The terminology is borrowed from De Winter (2002, 173-6).

its 17.5% average, 1986-2013) because the mainstream right felt it could achieve more of its policy goals by working with the far right, as opposed to working with the mainstream left or the Greens (see Chapter 5, Section 3). Likewise, the Italian *Lega Nord* twice entered government with less than 10% of the vote (8.3% in 2008, and only 3.9% in 2001).

Independent variable	**Means**		**t-test sig.**
	Included	**Excluded**	
FR vote share	13.2	10.5	0.16
FR seat share	15.4	10.4	0.04
Right-wing seat share	44.3	34.7	0.01

Table 1.5: Replication of de Lange's (2008) results: Variables affecting far-right inclusion

Right-wing seat share is the combined total of the far-right party and the largest right-wing party.

Table 1.5 shows that the vote share of the far right is not significantly larger in years when the far right is included in coalition, compared to years when it is in opposition. Seat share is statistically significant, because it is related to a stronger, more significant variable: the combined vote share of the far right and the largest right-wing party. However, the size of the correlation between far-right inclusion and the parties' combined seat share (0.37, compared to 0.20 for far-right vote share alone) suggests that something else – namely, decisions about a coalition's likely policy outcomes relative to a party's ideal policies – is driving many of these coalition outcomes.

Mainstream right will include proximate far-right parties

Three prominent theories were generated in response to the office-oriented school. They form part of the "policy-oriented" group of theories, as they believe parties care about policy outcomes, and so they consider parties' proximity to one another on a standard left-right one-dimensional scale. Axelrod's (1970) minimal connected winning coalitions predict that members will be adjacent on this left-right scale; De Swaan (1973) adds that these coalitions will also have the smallest ideological range ("minimal range"). Coalitions with the minimum number of parties and/or minimum ideological diversity ("minimum distance") have been thought to be more stable than other coalitions (Laver 1974, 12). More recently, Laver and Schofield (1990, 111) offered a policy-seeking theory of the median legislator, or the "policy dictator" in the legislature.[11] To determine which party holds the median position, parties are arranged on the left-right scale and their delegates counted; in the 183-seat Austrian legislature, for example, the party with the 92nd legislator from the left/right would hold the median position. In the policy distance tradition, Zaslove (2012) suggests that the increasing co-optation of the far right by the mainstream right in the 1990s and 2000s brought the two sets of parties closer together, thus making far-right inclusion more appealing. This group of

[11]The terminology is again borrowed from De Winter (2002, 173-6)

theories offers one advantage over the previous group, as these hypotheses allow for variation over time.

Policy distance theories have three main limitations: They neglect parties' willingness to trade one issue in order to make gains in another, regularly fail to predict empirical outcomes, and often rely upon data that has been frequently criticized for lacking validity. First, policy-based theories assume that parties are concerned with a general left-right distance between themselves and other parties. Even when scholars do consider multi-dimensional policy spaces (e.g. Grofman 1982), the assumption remains that general proximity between parties drives formation. The far-right-specific theories tend to overlook that immigration, though central to the far right and its voters, is not necessarily driving coalitional decisions by the mainstream right. The mainstream right campaigns on a small set of issues (often involving the economy) and then seeks to form a government that allows it to achieve its top priorities (e.g. budget cuts or lowering taxes). When negotiating with the far right, the mainstream right regularly trades immigration restrictions to receive assurance that the far right will support these goals (Akkerman and de Lange 2012, 580).

Second, some of the theories do not accurately predict the coalitions we see in reality. De Lange's (2008) models show support for the far right being included in government when the policy distance between it and the prime minister's party is smaller. Focusing on the mainstream parties' perspective, van Spanje (2010) concludes that mainstream-right parties with a smaller ideological distance between themselves and far-right parties (either because the mainstream party is more right-wing, or the far-right party is more moderate) are less likely to ostracize the far right. However, the results of these studies only maintain their statistical significance when a full set of parties (and not just right-wing parties) are included. Table 1.6 shows logit coefficients for four basic models of distance: the distance between the far-right party and the prime minister's party and the distance between the far-right party and the largest mainstream-right party, with both a full sample of parties (left and right) and with a restricted sample of only right-wing parties.

Independent variable	**Full set**	**Right only**
FR-PM distance	−0.64∗∗	−0.34
FR-Right distance	−0.22	−0.29

Table 1.6: Test of party distance as a predictor of far-right inclusion

Logit coefficients presented; CMP data used to replicate data from de Lange 2008, placement variables rescaled to 0-10

The coefficients are negative, meaning inclusion is more likely when there is a smaller distance between the far right and the other party (either the party of the prime minister, or the largest mainstream-right party). As in the de Lange (2008) and van Spanje (2010) studies, the relationship between far right-prime minister party distance is significant, but

only for the full sample. When we consider only mainstream right and far right pairings, the significance of distance between the two falls away. It is unsurprising that mainstream-right parties are more likely to include the far right than are mainstream-left parties. The potential for mainstream-left parties to achieve policy goals with far-right parties is smaller than with a right-far-right coalition. Distance between far-right parties and the largest right-wing party after an election also is not significantly related to far-right inclusion, although using only right-wing parties is more theoretically justifiable, again suggesting that we need to move beyond these distance measures.

Lastly, the accuracy of Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP, Volkens et al. 2013) coding, the main source for ideological distance measures, has often been called into question.[12] CMP coders assign a score for each of 56 categories (for Western European countries) to parties, based on the percentage of "quasi-sentences" in that party's election manifesto determined to belong to that category (e.g. "decentralization," "political corruption"). The more times an issue (such as national defense, or the welfare system) is mentioned in a given party's manifesto, the more important it is deemed to be for the party. CMP data only captures frequency of terms, plus a general positive/negative dimension (e.g. favors more government spending versus opposes more government spending), rather than an actual position, making it unable to truly measure change. We can examine two features of the CMP data – simple left-right party placement, and parties' issue priorities – and their predictions against the coalitions that actually formed. I use Austria in this example for simplicity; there are a small number of parliamentary parties in Austria, and two-party coalitions can always be formed.

Table 1.7 shows the distance between the parties that make up each of the mathematically possible two-party coalitions from 1986-2002 (in 2006, 2008, and 2013, only one two-party coalition was possible). The CMP left-right placement runs from a theoretical minimum of -100 (most liberal) to 100 (most conservative), and I have rescaled these placements to a 0-10 scale for ease of interpretation.

Of the six elections, only one coalition was "correctly" predicted by the CMP data (1999). A simple policy distance model would predict the Austrian far right, for example, to have worked with the Austrian right in 1995. Instead, the right-wing ÖVP governed with the "further-away" left-wing SPÖ. Similarly, CMP placements show a smaller distance between the SPÖ and FPÖ in 2002, compared to the ÖVP and FPÖ, though the latter coalition formed and the former was never considered. Of the ÖVP's two options, the SPÖ and FPÖ, the ÖVP "should" have selected the closer SPÖ (see Chapter 5, Sections 2 and 3 for explanations of why these coalitions did or did not form). Further, the far right's stances on immigration largely determine its left-right placement, so to use these one-dimensional measures, though convenient, is to overemphasize the role of immigration.

Pulling the three categories for each party with the largest percentage of quasi-sentences, I lay out the top priorities (according to CMP data) of each Austrian party for three elections

[12]See, for example, Pelizzo (2003), Dinas and Gemenis (2010), and Gabel and Huber (2000). Pelizzo finds CMP data is highly inconsistent with scholarly opinion in evaluating Italian parties, concluding that CMP measures direction but not actual position; Dinas and Gemenis find the same for Greece. Gabel and Huber show that CMP data places extreme parties closer to the center than scholars do (see also Table 1.11).

Election	Coalitions	Distance
1986	**SPÖ-ÖVP**	-1.81
	SPÖ-FPÖ	**-0.06**
	ÖVP-FPÖ	1.75
1990	SPÖ-FPÖ	-1.13
	SPÖ-ÖVP	-0.62
	ÖVP-FPÖ	**-0.51**
1994	SPÖ-FPÖ	-2.94
	SPÖ-ÖVP	-1.78
	ÖVP-FPÖ	**-1.16**
1995	SPÖ-FPÖ	-1.75
	SPÖ-ÖVP	-0.98
	ÖVP-FPÖ	**-0.77**
1999	SPÖ-FPÖ	-2.21
	SPÖ-ÖVP	-1.72
	ÖVP-FPÖ	**-0.49**
2002	SPÖ-ÖVP	-0.85
	SPÖ-FPÖ	**0.02**
	ÖVP-Grüne	0.81
	ÖVP-FPÖ	0.87

Table 1.7: Austrian coalitions and CMP distance measures

Coalitions that formed in bold; smallest distances in bold.

(Table 1.8). The number in parentheses indicates the percentage of quasi-sentences in that category. In 1990, there is overlap between the SPÖ and the Greens ("environment," "social justice") and between all parties and the ÖVP ("environment," "free enterprise"). None of the parties have the EU as a "top" issue, despite the importance of the EU accession process at the time (see Chapter 5, Section 3).

SPÖ	ÖVP	Greens	FPÖ
Environment (17.8)	Environment (14.2)	Environment (20.9)	Gov't efficiency (11.9)
Gov't efficiency (8.6)	Free enterprise (9.1)	Democracy (15.2)	Free enterprise (7.3)
Social justice (6.9)	Technology (6.0)	Social justice (6.9)	Democracy (7.1)

Table 1.8: CMP most-important issues for Austrian parties, 1990 (CMP scores in parentheses)

In 2008, all five parties have "social justice" as their top issue (Table 1.9).[13] There is

[13]Coded as "Concept of equality; need for fair treatment of all people; special protection for underpriv-

some overlap between the ÖVP and FPÖ ("welfare state expansion") and the ÖVP and BZÖ ("law and order"). We are once more unable to determine which coalitions might form from this data, and again, the issues indicated as being of the most importance were not actually instrumental in coalition talks.

SPÖ	**ÖVP**	**Greens**
Social justice (16.6)	Social justice (14.3)	Social justice (18.4))
Labour - positive (6.5)	WS expansion (11.6)	Environment (12.2)
Democracy (6.1)	Law & order (10.0)	EU - positive (8.2)
FPÖ	**BZÖ**	
Social justice (10.8)	Social justice (17.7)	
WS expansion (7.1)	Gov't efficiency (9.6)	
Non-econ. groups (6.7)	Law & order (8.1)	

Table 1.9: CMP most-important issues for Austrian parties, 2008 (CMP scores in parentheses)

The CMP dataset, as we see in Tables 1.8 and 1.9, is not well suited for understanding coalition decisions. There are too many categories for overlap to be meaningful, yet the categories are also sufficiently vague (and the specific content of the manifestos unknown) to glean case knowledge from the coding. The discrepancies between the CMP data and the established facts in the scholarly literature suggest that these data should not be used for this purpose.

Fortunately, there are other sources of data, both quantitative and qualitative, that allow us to better predict which coalitions will form after elections. In the next section, I explain how we can use these data to understand not only coalitions with the far right, but major mainstream parties' coalition decisions, generally. Combined with some of the key insights from the office- and policy-oriented schools, we have a powerful explanation for coalition formation.

1.4 My argument

How, then, should we understand major mainstream parties' decisions about which coalitions to form, and thereby, when to include or exclude the far right? In this section, I first offer a general coalition theory – my argument about how major parties try to achieve their goals of office and policy – and then build to a far-right-specific argument, or why the far right can be a particularly appealing coalition partner. I then outline the four possible scenarios in which a mainstream right party may find itself with respect to the far right, and whether we should expect the scenarios to result in inclusion or exclusion.

ileged; need for fair distribution of resources; removal of class barriers; end of discrimination such as racial or sexual discrimination, etc." (Volkens et al. 2013, 12).

A key piece of my argument is that the mainstream right treats the far right as it would any other party when negotiating governing coalitions. By what process do major parties choose coalitions? Major mainstream parties will, first, look for a mathematically-viable coalition; depending on the system, this either means a coalition with a majority of seats or a coalition that does not face opposition from a parliamentary majority. Given multiple mathematically possible coalitions, major parties will then try to form the coalition that gives them the best policy outcomes (which are also influenced by their share of the cabinet positions), keeping in mind their key issues of importance at that time.

Many formal theories of coalition formation exist, as discussed in Section 1.3, and I draw on the core insights from both the office- and policy-oriented literatures: Major parties care about office (entering government and being the senior partner), but they also care about policy. They are willing to take part in a more of the mathematically possible coalitions than are smaller, more policy-focused parties. Why, then, do we not just rely on some of the core formal theories to determine coalition formation? The reason has nothing to do with the far right in particular, but with the inability of these theories to help us pinpoint the coalition that is most likely to form. Table 1.10 illustrates seven of these theories using the Austrian legislature after the 2008 election; it is easiest to see the predicted outcomes when there are only five parliamentary parties.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Office-oriented theories</th><th colspan="2">Policy-oriented theories</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="7">Minimal winning</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td><td rowspan="2">Minimal connected winning</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td></tr>
<tr><td>SPÖ-BZÖ-FPÖ</td><td>ÖVP-BZÖ-FPÖ</td></tr>
<tr><td>SPÖ-FPÖ-Grüne</td><td rowspan="2">Minimal range</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td></tr>
<tr><td>ÖVP-BZÖ-FPÖ</td><td>ÖVP-BZÖ-FPÖ</td></tr>
<tr><td>Grüne-SPÖ-BZÖ</td><td>Minimum distance</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td></tr>
<tr><td>Grüne-ÖVP-FPÖ</td><td rowspan="4">Median legislator</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td></tr>
<tr><td>Grüne-ÖVP-BZÖ</td><td>ÖVP-BZÖ-FPÖ</td></tr>
<tr><td>Minimum parties</td><td>SPÖ-ÖVP</td><td>Grüne-ÖVP-FPÖ</td></tr>
<tr><td>Minimum seats</td><td>Grüne-ÖVP-BZÖ</td><td>Grüne-ÖVP-BZÖ</td></tr>
</table>

Table 1.10: Predictions of coalition formation, Austria 2008, using traditional theories

Taken together, we can perhaps deduce that the SPÖ-ÖVP coalition is most likely, as it is one of the predicted outcomes for six of the seven theories. On their own, however, we would have no way of knowing which theory is "best" – and the problem only becomes more difficult as the number of parliamentary parties increases. The argument I present in this section helps navigate this problem by drawing on the essential logic of these theories, while offering more specific criteria to determine which coalitions are likely to form.

Prioritizing office

I begin with the framework outlined by Müller and Strøm (1999, 5-9), who, in summarizing the existing literature, offer three motivations of parties: Parties can seek office, policy, or votes. While studies of a particular country, or a particular party at one time, may discuss the tensions between these goals and how parties decide to achieve them (e.g. Müller and Strøm 1999; Andeweg, De Winter and Dumont 2011), the cross-national, broad theories discussed in this section often overlook the varied goals parties have, or consider all types of parties at once, not just major mainstream parties.

Major mainstream parties are often distinct from smaller parties in that they want to be in government, first and foremost. They would, within reason, trade policy concessions for participation in a governing coalition; Luebbert (1986, 46, 49) identifies several substantial reasons why this is true. In opposition, the party may grow politically weaker, the party may be further from its policy goals as the government enacts its own preferences. Governing parties may attempt to co-opt the positions of an opposition party, and in so doing, make inroads into its voters or discourage its base from continuing to vote for that party. Laver and Hunt's (1992, 267) expert survey identifies parties' policy/government preferences on a 1-20 scale, where 1 means unwilling to make any policy concessions in order to govern, and 20 means willing to accept any policy concessions in order to govern. At the time, for example, they placed the major Dutch parties between 11 and 16 on this scale (the center-left PvdA at 11.3, Christian Democratic CDA at 14.8, and the liberal VVD at 15.9). In contrast, the Dutch Communists were rated a 2.8, largely unwilling to make policy concessions in order to join a government.

Once in government, major parties want office benefits. This could mean a majority of portfolios, or the ability to hold particular portfolios of interest (such as the prime minister's position, or other prominent ministries, such as finance), because these portfolios contribute to a party's policy influence. All else equal, a major party would prefer to work with a smaller party (like the far right) rather than a party of equal or comparable size, in order to receive a larger share of the office spoils.

Making policy tradeoffs

To help achieve policy aims, major parties would prefer to be the largest party in the coalition, which usually guarantees the head of government will come from their ranks. Outweighing other parties (with respect to seat share) helps a party achieve more of its goals, both because it holds more ministry portfolios, and because its preferences may have a corresponding amount of weight, even when another party's minister oversees that area.

When major mainstream parties have multiple coalition options, what matters most is not general left-right position, but how mainstream parties see their potential partners' relative distance from them on the issue or issues of greatest importance at that time (for example, wanting to pass a series of tax cuts). This follows Luebbert's (1986, 46) assertion that a party's set of "decisive preferences" during coalition formation is small. I determine the

most important issues using scholarly election analyses and end-of-year country reviews (see Chapters 5 and 6). These issues are often not the "top" issues identified in CMP data, but even using the "top" issues in the CMP data, we have difficulty predicting which coalitions will form, as shown in Tables 1.8 and 1.9.

Expert party placements provide an improvement over CMP data for this purpose; in Table 1.11, I show the positions of the Dutch parties using the 2010 CMP placements, compared to the 2009 European Election Study (European Parliament 2010; a mass survey) and the Benoit and Laver data (2006; an expert survey). The expert data places parties as slightly more extreme than does the mass survey data (though they were conducted five years apart, so some difference is to be expected), but what is truly striking is the narrow band in which CMP data place all ten parliamentary parties from 2010 (from 4.4 to 5.7, on a 0-10 scale).

Party	**CMP**	**EES**	**B&L**
Socialists	4.4	2.9	1.5
Greens	5.1	3.0	2.5
Party for the Animals	5.1	3.6	
Labour	5.1	4.1	4.3
Social Liberals (D66)	5.2	4.9	5.2
Christian Union	6.0	5.7	6.1
Christian Democrats	5.5	5.9	6.8
Reformed Protestants	6.2	6.0	8.2
Liberals	6.0	6.5	8.2
Freedom Party	5.7	7.2	

Table 1.11: Three measures of party placements, Dutch parliamentary parties

Sources: Volkens et al. (2013), rescaled to 0-10, European Election Study (2010), Benoit and Laver (2006).

However, overall left-right distance is less relevant to coalition formation than parties' positions on certain issues. To achieve policy goals, parties must consider not only what position their potential partners will take, but how firmly they hold that position. A party may be able to get more from Partner A than Partner B, even if Partner A is further from its ideal point, if Partner A cares very little about certain issues (and will let the other party have its way) while Partner B is unwilling to compromise on its position.

Recent expert survey data (Benoit and Laver 2006; Bakker et al. 2012) has asked respondents to rank parties' positions on a series of policy issues, as well as the importance that party places on the issue. These data are only available for recent years (early 2000s in Benoit and Laver, and the 2006 and 2010 waves of Bakker et al.), and their timeframes do not match perfectly with the dates of national elections, but they do give us some sense of what issues are important to parties. Importantly, for the purposes of this dissertation, we

can see that parties tend to form coalitions where there is overlap on issues of importance to the major party.

Using these data where available, I show that the major mainstream parties have a small set of issues rated of "high" importance at the time, and that the coalitions that did form feature combinations of parties with similar positions on an issue, or disparate positions, but with only one of the parties attaching high importance to that issue. Two examples are below: Benoit and Laver (2006) data on the Netherlands from the 2003 election, and Chapel Hill data on the Netherlands from 2006, around the time of the election. I have pulled the two most important issues for each of the major mainstream right parties (the Christian Democrats and the Liberals) and listed the position and attached importance for all available parties in those countries.

	Deregulation		**Social issues**	
Party	Position	Importance	Position	Importance
Socialists (SP)	1.2	8.4	3.7	4.3
Liberals (VVD)	**8.4**	**8.1**	**2.4**	**5.6**
Pim Fortuyn (LPF)	8.2	7.2	4.4	3.5
Greens (GL)	2.4	7.0	1.3	6.9
Labour (PvdA)	4.1	6.6	2.6	5.1
Christian Democrats (CDA)	**6.2**	**6.4**	**6.6**	**6.9**
Social Liberals (D66)	**6.2**	**5.5**	**0.8**	**7.7**
Christian Union (CU)	4.8	4.6	8.7	8.9
Mean	5.2	6.7	3.8	6.1

Table 1.12: Dutch party positions and issue importance, 2001

Source: Benoit and Laver 2006, rescaled to 1-10; governing parties in bold

Deregulation: 1 = favors high levels of state regulation and control of the market, 20 = favors deregulation of markets at every opportunity

Social issues: 1 = favors liberal policies on matters such as abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia; 20 = opposes liberal policies on matters such as abortion, homosexuality, and euthanasia

Table 1.12 shows that the three-party coalition of CDA-VVD-D66 (Christian Democrats, Liberals, Social Liberals) attached average or higher-than-average importance to the two issues: The VVD cared most about deregulation, according to the data, and the CDA about social issues. All three parties took right-of-center positions on deregulation. Although the VVD and D66 do not line up well with the CDA on social issues, social issues were not of primary importance at the time of the 2003 election (see Chapter 6, Section 3), explaining the seeming discrepancy between the coalition partners' positions. We can also see why the CDA and VVD might have wanted to collaborate with the far-right LPF in 2002 – all three parties held right-of-center positions on deregulation, with the LPF thought to prioritize it

nearly as much as did the VVD. The LPF was also closer than most other parties to the CDA on social issues.

	Deregulation		Social issues	
Party	Position	Importance	Position	Importance
Socialists (SP)	1.1	8.8	2.6	4.8
Liberals (VVD)	8.0	7.6	2.9	5.4
Greens (GL)	3.1	6.6	2.0	5.4
Labour (PvdA))	**3.6**	**6.6**	**3.2**	**4.6**
Social Liberals (D66)	5.1	5.6	1.1	7.4
Christian Union (CU)	**4.2**	**5.6**	**9.0**	**8.8**
Christian Democrats (CDA)	**5.3**	**4.6**	**2.8**	**6.3**
Party for Freedom (PVV)	8.4	4.0	2.8	6.3
Mean	4.9	6.2	3.8	6.2

Table 1.13: Dutch party positions and issue importance, 2010

Source: Bakker et al. 2012; governing parties in bold

Redistribution: 0 = strongly favors redistribution, 10 = strongly opposes redistribution

Religion: 0 = strongly opposes religious principles in politics; 10 = strongly supports religious principles in politics

After the 2006 elections, the CDA formed a government with the PvdA (Labour Party) and CU (Christian Union). Table 1.13 shows that the Chapel Hill experts believed religion was the most important issue to the CDA, which found a like-minded partner in the CU, and redistribution was most important to the PvdA. The CDA preferred this combination of parties over a more left-leaning alternative (e.g. PvdA plus the Greens), as policies would likely be closer to its preferred points. Although there was overlap among the right-wing parties (VVD, CDA, PVV), the three did not have enough seats to form a coalition. Expert data, though useful, cannot on its own tell us when certain coalitions are likely to form, as is clear from Tables 1.12 and 1.13, where multiple combinations of parties show overlap on certain issues. For this, we need substantive case knowledge; the remainder of this section lays out an argument that relies on this knowledge.

A formalization of coalition-formation decisions

We can think formally about the three steps in major parties' approaches to coalition formation. Each step is illustrated below with quotes from members of parliament in Austria and the Netherlands:

1. Major parties prefer governing to sitting in opposition:

> We want to have the power to change things for people the way we see it as good for the people, and if you want to really change something, it's always better to be in government than out. (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011)
>
> [Going into opposition because they are unable to get what they want in negotiations is] unlikely. That was not an option from my list... You can still achieve more, even if it's less than you expected, when you're in government. (Interview with VVD MP, 2011)

2. If possible, major parties would like to be the senior coalition partner:

   > [Whether we'd want to work with the FPÖ or SPÖ] depends on whether we have more voters than they have or not. (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011)
   >
   > The ideal position [in a coalition] is the... largest possible number of seats [relative to other parties]. (Interview with VVD MP, 2011)

3. Major parties will consider mathematically possible combinations, but want to achieve as much as they can in a few key areas; this is influenced by other parties' positions and the firmness with which the positions are held:

   > We have points where we work together with the Socialists well and there are other points where it is just unbearable to be in coalition with them, it's very hard to find compromises... We have some points where we work together with the Green Party perfectly, and then on social issues, they are way too left wing. (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011)
   >
   > The socialist parties are more left wing, it's more difficult to form a coalition with them, so the CDA, it's easier. On the other hand, it's sometimes more difficult with them on the ethical issues, abortion, euthanasia, and those subjects. In periods when they are important in policy-making, it is very difficult to cooperate with those parties; we have to cooperate with left-wing parties. Now, it's about the economy, safety and security, immigration, so for us our natural partners on those issues are more the CDA and the PVV. (Interview with VVD MP, 2011)
   >
   > And then we start the negotiating with, in mind, in which coalition we would best be able to fulfill our party program. (Interview with VVD MP, 2011)

Like major parties of the left, the mainstream right wants to be in government, but it also wants to achieve as much as possible in key issue areas while in government. If the far right will help the mainstream right achieve its policy goals more so than will other mathematically possible coalitions, the mainstream right is likely to include it, and, historically, has often done so.

What role, if any, do voters' concerns play in mainstream parties' decisions? The existing literature has not yet addressed whether mainstream right voters – unhappy with their party forming a coalition with the far right – defect to other parties, thus adding a cost to the mainstream right's calculations. Certainly, votes matter to major parties, as they are the tool for achieving office and policy goals (Müller and Strøm 1999, 9). Yet, there are reasons to believe voters would not behave in this way. For coalition partners to matter to voters, they would have to, first, care more about their preferred party's coalition partners than they do about the policies enacted by the coalition, and second, then vote in response to this concern (i.e. switch their vote to another party).

We do know that leaders have short time horizons – even if they thought their party might lose some voters as a result of the coalition with the far right, they might not care, or might make this a much lower priority. As an example, one of the high-ranking members of the Dutch Liberal Party (VVD) said, in response to how voters responded to the 2010 coalition with the far-right PVV, "Our voters are very satisfied with that choice. There has been very little opposition and the polls are fairly constant for us" (Interview with VVD MP, 2011). Whether voters actually defect is unknown, but party elites do not seem to believe this is a problem.

The far right as governing partner

Far-right parties can be particularly attractive partners on policy grounds because they seldom have fixed, unchanging positions on issues outside the realm of immigration. Benoit and Laver's (2006) expert study helps to illustrate this point: Looking at far-right parties' stances on three major political issues (Table 1.14), we can see that the parties are clustered at the top of the 1-10 scale on immigration, both in terms of positioning and importance to the party, which is not true of the other issues (taxes and social concerns).

Issue	**Avg.**	**Min.**	**Max.**	**Importance**
Taxes	6.1	2.8	9.0	5.8
Social	8.3	5.3	9.6	6.8
Immigration	9.7	9.3	9.9	9.5

Table 1.14: Far right party positioning and issue importance

Source: Benoit and Laver 2006, rescaled 1-10

These data include the far right in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, and Switzerland. For importance, 1 is the least important and 10 the most important. On the substantive issues, 1-10 represents wanting to raise taxes to support public services vs. wanting to cut taxes; favoring liberal politics on abortion and homosexuality vs. opposing them; favoring policies to help immigrants/asylum seekers integrate vs. sending them back to their country of origin.

Far-right parties have often flipped on non-core policies like economics in order to secure assurances for their key issues. For example, the Italian *Lega Nord* adopted an anti-Europe

stance to form a coalition with Berlusconi (see Chari, Iltanen and Kritzinger 2004), and, after the 2010 Dutch election, Geert Wilders' PVV abandoned its opposition to lowering the retirement age when it became clear that the mainstream right would grant concessions on immigration in return.

Further, only in Switzerland has a contemporary far-right party won more votes than the major mainstream right party. Working with the far right, then, means the mainstream right is likely to have more positions within the government (and, in particular, the prime minister's post) and more weight by which to see its policy goals achieved. All else equal, a mainstream right party would prefer to work with a smaller far-right party than a comparably-sized mainstream left party. The latter would result in a more equal division of power, while the former would be a lopsided split in favor of the mainstream right.

Deciding whether to govern with the far right

The cost of far-right exclusion paid by the mainstream right varies from one election to the next, so even within a particular country, the mainstream right may move from inclusion to exclusion and back over the span of just a few elections. Table 1.15 outlines the four scenarios in which a mainstream-right party will find exclusion either very costly, somewhat costly, or not costly during the formation process.

Scenario	**Cost of exclusion**	**Expected result**
1. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right	Costly	Inclusion
2. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right, *but* concerned about stability	Somewhat costly	Exclusion
3. Have majority with far right, *but* prefer policy benefits from coalition without far right	Not costly	Exclusion
4. Far right not mathematically part of coalition options	Not costly	Exclusion

Table 1.15: Expectations: Mainstream right inclusion of the far right

First, the most costly of the four scenarios: After an election, the mainstream right and far right have enough seats to form a coalition, and this coalition is the most-preferred by the mainstream right for policy reasons (Scenario 1). If the mainstream right opted to exclude the far right, expressing concerns about the far right's appropriateness as a governing party, the mainstream right would then have to settle for a second-best coalition option. In practice, parties usually have fairly strong policy-based preferences among their coalition options, as

we will see in Chapters 5 and 6, so foregoing policy gains to exclude the far right is costly. We should therefore expect the mainstream right to include the far right in this scenario.

What happens if the mainstream right has concerns about the stability of a coalition with the far right? This situation (Scenario 2) may arise if the parties hold a bare majority of seats in the legislature, requiring extreme party discipline on important votes, or support from non-governing parties. This would make any dissent within the ranks – either from a mainstream MP who feels the far right should have been left in opposition, or from a far-right MP who feels his party has now become part of the political establishment – potentially devastating for the government. Even if this coalition would allow the mainstream right to achieve its most-preferred policy outcomes, a coalition that breaks apart shortly after its installation will not produce many policy changes. The alternative is to form a second-best, likely-to-be-stable coalition, sacrificing some policy gains for (more) security in office. Though exclusion is somewhat costly in this scenario, it is the most likely outcome.

In the other two scenarios, exclusion is not costly and is therefore the likely outcome. If a coalition with the far right could be formed, but the mainstream right prefers the policy benefits it expects from a different majority coalition (Scenario 3), it has a policy-based incentive to form the second coalition and exclude the far right. Lastly, if the mainstream right is unable to form a coalition with the far right that has enough seats, or when the far right would be a surplus member of a right-wing coalition (Scenario 4), exclusion does not affect the mainstream party's pursuit of office.

Budge and Laver (1992, 8) stress the need to balance real-world challenges in theories of formation with avoiding ad hoc explanations for why a particular coalition did not form. My argument does just this, and holds in the PR systems across Western Europe. I present my case studies in Chapters 5 and 6, and together they represent all four scenarios from Table 1.15.

1.5 Data and methods

To answer my motivating question – what drives far-right inclusion or exclusion by the mainstream right – I first needed to establish three core pieces: 1) the context in which the mainstream parties have operated, 2) the actions they have taken, and 3) the motivations for these actions.

For the context, I compiled a dataset of public opinion about immigration, the most comprehensive of its kind, to my knowledge. It spans all Western European countries from the 1960s (where available) through the present. I pulled questions from the major cross-national surveys (the European Election Study, European Values Survey, European Social Survey, and the Eurobarometer) as well as national-level surveys (national election studies, other nationally-funded surveys, and surveys fielded by academic researchers). Complementing this dataset are data on class- and religious-based voting patterns, levels of party membership and attachment, and public feelings of dissatisfaction with 'politics as usual.' These data allowed me to establish the framework in which mainstream parties were operat-

ing by the 1980s, one where they could no longer rely on a sizable majority of the vote and thus needed to address public concerns with new issues, such as immigration.

For a full picture of mainstream parties' actions, I collected party memos, newspaper articles, and formal coalition agreements. These data are supplemented with secondary sources dealing with both party positions on immigration and immigration policy changes, as well as accounts of coalition formation. I also added legislative records of immigration policy proposals and translated party manifesto data from my country cases (discussed below). I hope to expand this portion of the dataset to other Western European countries in the future, as it allows for a more nuanced picture of immigration responses than is offered by existing datasets, such as the data from the Comparative Manifesto Project.

Finally, I needed to understand the motivations of the mainstream parties. I began by assembling two datasets, one for proportional systems and one for majoritarian systems. The first contains the election results from all Western European countries from the 1980s through the present, alongside the sets of mathematically viable coalitions that could have formed after each election, and relevant information about the coalitions that did form (e.g. included parties, number of ministries for each). The second collects coalition-like agreements between the mainstream right and the far right in the two majoritarian systems in Western Europe, the United Kingdom and France, since the 1980s. I combine this with constituency-level electoral results to identify the electoral threat posed by the far right to the mainstream right at different points in time, the constituencies where both 1) the mainstream right did not win a constituency and 2) the far right's vote total was larger than the margin of victory for the winning party over the mainstream right. Together, these data provide the foundation for why mainstream parties behave as they do, and allow us to identify the cost of excluding the far right.

Interviews with members of parliament and party elites provided the most crucial party-motivation data. I conducted more than fifty interviews in my two country cases (Austria and the Netherlands), primarily focused on representatives of right and far-right parties, but with left-wing parties, as well, to ensure a full range of perspectives on the coalition formations. I have a total of 17 coalition cases in my two country cases, each of which helps to illustrate my arguments about far-right exclusion and inclusion.[14] Both countries have had far-right parties in and out of government, providing important variation on the dependent variable. In addition, coalitions regularly include parties from the left and from the right in these countries, which means the mainstream right has more options from which to choose. The Austrian and Dutch mainstream-right parties have each opted to ally with the far right at times rather than the left or center-left, despite having these other parties as willing and viable options. Additionally, the Netherlands has two major mainstream-right parties, the Liberals and the Christian Democrats, which allows me to explore variation in the mainstream right's willingness to accommodate the far right. Table 1.16 shows the

[14]Fourteen of these cases are discussed in detail in Chapters 5 and 6. Chapter 6 focuses primarily on the period since 2002 in the Netherlands, as the far right was not relevant for coalition formation prior to that time.

coverage of the four scenarios from Table 1.15 from my 17 coalition cases.

Scenario	**Austrian elections**	**Dutch elections**
1. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right	**1999, 2000**, *2006, 2008*	**2002, 2010**
2. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right, *but* concerned about stability	1995	2003
3. Have majority with far right, *but* prefer policy benefits from coalition without far right	1986, 1990, 1994	1994,[a] 2006, 2012
4. Far right not mathematically part of coalition options	2013	1982, 1989[a]

Table 1.16: Coalition cases, by country and scenario

Cases in bold are instances of far-right inclusion; cases in italics do not fit the predicted theory.

[a] These cases are only briefly covered in Chapter 6, given the small number of seats won by the CP/CD in these elections, which made the far right irrelevant during coalition formation.

Of these 18 cases, 16 follow the expected outcomes of inclusion for Scenario 1 and exclusion for Scenarios 2-4. However, two cases – the 2006 and 2008 coalitions in Austria – are cases of far-right exclusion when inclusion was predicted. These off-path cases are explained in detail in Chapter 5 (Section 3); briefly, the far right competed as two separate parties in these elections, and each refused to form a coalition with the other due to personality clashes, as well as legal battles about which party could claim the name and trademarks. After these two elections, the mainstream right ÖVP could have formed a coalition with the support of both the far-right FPÖ and the breakaway far-right BZÖ (96 seats combined in 2006, 106 seats combined in 2008, with 92 needed for a majority), but not with the support of only one of the two far-right parties. Concerned about the stability issues that would arise if it tried to force the two far-right parties together, the ÖVP opted for a coalition with the SPÖ.

There is not something specific about Austria and the Netherlands that makes their right-wing parties more amenable to far-right accommodation; parties in other countries would likely behave in the same manner if the need arose. For example, Norwegian Christian Democratic leader Kjell Magne Bondevik had initially ruled out any possible collaboration with the far-right Progress Party (Downs 2002, 46). However, he reversed position and actually joined the Progress Party in a coalition after the 2001 elections.

1.6 Chapter overview

This chapter has outlined the history of far-right inclusion in government and explains why this is an important topic: Namely, concerns from both scholars and political observers suggest that the mainstream right will not or should not form coalitions with the far right. Yet, this is counter to reality, as we have seen – the far right joins governments across Western Europe in half of the instances when such a coalition is possible.

In Chapter 2, I begin by explaining the old political realities of the major mainstream parties, spanning the first several post-war decades: class- and religious-based voting, high levels of party membership and party loyalty, and sizable parliamentary majorities. These realities began changing in the 1970s as voter dissatisfaction with the major parties grew. Voters now expected parties to deal with new political issues (such as environmental protection, women's rights, and immigration) and to fix the economic crisis befalling Western Europe. This chapter makes use of the public opinion dataset I compiled, and I show that opinion about immigration was consistently negative prior to the rise of the far right, though immigration was not a salient issue in many countries until the 1980s.

Chapter 3 provides the necessary background information to understand the core empirical chapters, with the history of the major parties in each country as well as how elites have dealt with the politics of World War II. In the Netherlands, political leaders and Queen Wilhelmina made it clear that anyone associated with the wartime fascist party would not be welcome in public life. By contrast, in Austria, former Nazi members were soon reincorporated into the major parties. I also explain the rise and success (or lack thereof) of the various Dutch and Austrian far-right parties, concluding with a comparison of far-right support in the two countries.

Prior to coalitional responses to the far right, the major mainstream parties across Europe made decisions about whether (and how) to respond to the far right's appeal on the basis of immigration. Chapter 4 considers these decisions in Austria and the Netherlands, showing that concerns about losing electoral support to the far right drove mainstream positions on immigration. While still keeping the far right out of government, the Austrian mainstream right – working alongside the mainstream left – passed a series of immigration policies that grew more restrictive during the 1990s in an effort to gain back voters lost to the far right. The Dutch mainstream right (again, alongside the left) made some moves toward more restrictions in the 1990s, but only began to do so in earnest once the far right made an electoral breakthrough in 2002. For this chapter, I translated the relevant immigration pieces from all major and far right party manifestos from the 1980s through the present, and supplement these with extensive primary (legislative records) and secondary research.

Chapters 5 and 6 follow the same format: I examine every coalition formed in in Austria from 1986 through 2013 and in the Netherlands from 2002 to 2012, classifying each by the scenario in which the mainstream right found itself.[15] Data for these chapters come from

[15]The Dutch case studies focus on these coalitions, rather than the 1982-98 coalition formations, because the far right featured in coalition options for the 2002-12 period and did not in the previous two decades.

interviews with dozens of members of each parliament and party elites, as well as secondary research on coalition formation. As noted in the previous section, my two cases cover all four possible scenarios in which mainstream parties can find themselves after an election. I make use of important similarities – the far right has been included when it could have been excluded, and excluded when it could have been mathematically useful – as well as differences between the cases. The most important differences are how political elites dealt with the legacy of World War II (with more tolerance for their history in Austria than in the Netherlands) and the issue of immigration (which became a concern in the 1970s for Dutch politicians, but was not on the agenda until the 1990s in Austria) – yet, far-right parties have been included in multiple coalitions in both countries.

Chapter 7 shifts focus to majoritarian electoral systems. Two Western European countries with far-right parties (France and the United Kingdom) also have majoritarian systems that make governing coalitions a rare occurrence. However, as I show, this does not mean far-right parties cannot pose significant threats to the mainstream right. I illustrate how both the French and British right have altered their immigration stances and willingness to form electoral pacts as the electoral threat posed by the far-right parties increased, using secondary research mapped onto my constituency-level data. In France, the mainstream right and far right have sometimes agreed to run just one right-wing candidate in the second round of elections in an effort not to lose the seat to the Socialists. In the UK, the Conservatives have discussed similar electoral deals with UKIP since the latter's electoral growth after the 2010 elections – despite David Cameron's description of UKIP as a party of "fruitcakes, loonies, and closet racists" in 2006.

I extend my argument in Chapter 8 to the major mainstream-left parties in Western Europe and their dealings with the parties to the extreme end of their spectrum, the far left (which tend to be Communist or Left-Socialist parties; see March 2008). I again show that the mainstream left responded to the far left in comparable ways to the mainstream right and far right, forming coalitions with the far left (e.g. the coalition between the French Socialists and Communists from 1981-84) and adopting parts of their policy agenda. As with the right and far right, the mainstream left tends to ignore the far left until the latter poses a significant electoral threat (though the far left has not had nearly as much electoral success as the far right). Chapters 5-8 draw upon my datasets of coalition possibilities and far-right threat since the 1980s.

1.7 Appendix: Party names

Country	Far-right party	Abbr.	English name	Election(s)
Austria	Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs	FPÖ	Freedom Party of Austria	1986-
	Bündnis Zukunft Österreich	BZÖ	Alliance for the Future of Austria	2006-08
Belgium	Vlaams Belang[a]	VB	Flemish Interest	1987-
Denmark	Dansk Folkeparti	DF	Danish People's Pary	1998-
Finland	Perussuomalaiset	PS	Finns Party	2011-
France	Front National	FN	National Front	1988-
Germany	Republikaner	Rep.	Republicans	1990-
Greece	Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós	LAOS	Popular Orthodox Rally	2004-
	Anexartitoi Ellines	ANEL	Independent Greeks	2012-
Italy	Movimento Sociale Italiano	MSI	Italian Social Movement	1987, 1992
	Alleanza Nazionale	AN	National Alliance	1994, 1996
	Lega Nord	LN	North League	1994-
Netherlands	Centrumpartij	CP	Center Party	1982, 1986
	Centrumdemocraten	CD	Center Democrats	1989, 1994
	Lijst Pim Fortuyn	LPF	Pim Fortuyn's List	2002, 2003
	Partij voor de Vrijheid	PVV	Party for Freedom	2006-
Norway	Fremskrittspartiet	FRP	Progress Party	1989-
Sweden	Sverigedemokraterna	SD	Sweden Democrats	1988-
	Ny Demokrati	NyD	New Democracy	1991, 1994
Switzerland	Schweizerische Volkspartei	SVP	Swiss People's Party	1995 -
United Kingdom	UK Independence Party	UKIP		2010 -

Table 1.17: Far-right parties in Western Europe, 1980s-present

This table includes only far-right parties that have either won seats in parliament or received at least 3% of the vote in one or more national elections.

[a]The *Vlaams Belang* was formerly known as the *Vlaams Blok* (Flemish Block) and changed its name in 2004 after being found to violate various anti-racism laws (see Erk 2005).

Country	Party	Abbr.	English name
Austria	Österreichische Volkspartei	ÖVP	Austrian People's Party
Belgium	Christen-Democratisch & Vlaams	CD&V	Christian Democratic & Flemish
	Centre Démocrate Humaniste	CDH	Democratic Humanist Centre
	Mouvement Réformateur	MR	Reform Movement
	Open Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten	Open VLD	Open Flemish Liberals & Democrats
Denmark	Det Konservative Folkeparti	DKF	Conservative People's Party
	Venstre	V	Liberals
Finland	Kansallinen Kokoomus	KOK	National Coalition Party
France	Union pour un mouvement populaire	UMP	Union for a Popular Movement
Germany	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands	CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany
Greece	Néa Dimokratía	ND	New Democracy
Italy	Il Popolo della Libertà	PdL	People of Freedom
Netherlands	Christen-Democratisch Appèl	CDA	Christian Democratic Appel
	Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy
Norway	Høyre	H	Conservative Party
	Kristelig Folkeparti	KF	Christian Democratic Party
	Venstre	V	Liberal Party
Sweden	Kristelig Folkeparti	KF	Christian Democratic Party
	Folkpartiet Liberalerna	FP	Liberal People's Party
	Moderaterna	M	Moderate Party
Switzerland	Christlichdemokratische Volkspartei der Schweiz	CVP	Christian Democratic People's Party of Switzerland
	FDP - Die Liberalen	FDP	Free Democratic Party - The Liberals
United Kingdom	Conservative Party	Conservatives	

Table 1.18: Current major mainstream-right parties in Western Europe

1.8 Appendix 2: Mainstream-right and far-right seat shares

Country	Year	MR parties	MR seats	FR parties	FR seats	MR + FR[a]	Total vs. maj.
Austria	1986	ÖVP	77	FPÖ	18	95	3
	1990	ÖVP	60	FPÖ	33	93	1
	1994	ÖVP	52	FPÖ	42	94	2
	1995	ÖVP	52	FPÖ	41	91	1
	1999	ÖVP	52	FPÖ	52	104	12
	2002	ÖVP	79	FPÖ	18	97	5
	2006	ÖVP	68	FPÖ, BZÖ	25	93	1
	2008	ÖVP	51	FPÖ, BZÖ	55	106	14
	2013	ÖVP	46	FPÖ	42	88	-4
Belgium	1981	CVP, PVV, PSC, PRL	113	VB	1	114	7
	1985	CVP, PVV, PSC, PRL	113	VB	1	114	7
	1987	CVP, PVV, PSC, PRL	110	VB	2	112	5
	1991	CVP, PVV, PSC, PRL	103	VB	12	115	8
	1995	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	80	VB	11	91	15
	1999	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	73	VB	15	88	12
	2003	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	78	VB	18	96	20
	2007	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	81	VB	17	98	24
	2010	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	57	VB	12	69	-7
	2014	CD&V, VLD, PSC, PRL	61	VB	3	64	-12
Denmark[b]	1998	V, DKF	61	DF	13	74	-14
	2001	V, DKF	72	DF	22	94	6
	2005	V, DKF	70	DF	24	94	6
	2007	V, DKF	64	DF	25	89	1
	2011	V, DKF	55	DF	22	77	-11
Finland	2011	KOK	44	PS	39	83	-18
	2015	KOK	37	PS	38	75	-26
Greece	2007	ND	152	LAOS	10	162	11
	2009	ND	91	LAOS	15	106	-45
	2012	ND	129	ANEL	20	149	-2
	2015	ND	76	ANEL	13	99	-52
Italy	1983	DC, PLI	241	MSI	42	283	-33
	1987	DC, PLI	267	MSI	11	278	-38
	1992	DC, PLI	223	MSI	34	257	-59
	1994	FI, UDC, CDC / PdL	324	AN, LN	42	366	50
	1996	FI, CDC-UDC / PdL	285	AN, LN	87	372	56
	2001	FI, AN / CdL	282	LN	0	282	-34
	2006	FI, AN, CDC-UDC	255	LN	26	281	-35
	2008	PdL, MpA	284	LN	60	344	28
	2013	PdL, FdI-AN	107	LN	18	125	-191
Netherlands	1982	CDA, VVD	81	CP	1	82	6
	1989	CDA, VVD	76	CD	1	77	1
	1994	CDA, VVD	65	CD	3	68	-8

Country	Year	MR parties	MR seats	FR parties	FR seats	MR + FR[a]	Total vs. maj.
	2002	CDA, VVD	67	LPF	26	93	17
	2003	CDA, VVD	72	LPF	8	80	4
	2006	CDA, VVD	63	PVV	9	72	-2
	2010	CDA, VVD	52	PVV	24	76	0
	2012	CDA, VVD	52	PVV	15	69	-7
Norway	1989	KF, H	48	FRP	22	70	-15
	1993	KF, H, V	42	FRP	10	52	-33
	1997	KF, H, V	54	FRP	25	79	-6
	2001	KF, H, V	62	FRP	26	88	3
	2005	KF, H, V	44	FRP	32	82	-3
	2009	KF, H, V	42	FRP	41	83	-2
	2013	KF, H, V	67	FRP	29	96	11
Sweden	1991	MP, FP, KD	139	NyD	25	164	-11
	2010	MP, FP, KD	150	SD	20	170	-5
	2014	MP, FP, KD	119	SD	49	168	-7

[a] The "MR + FR" column represents the total share of mainstream-right and far-right seats, and the "total vs. maj." column shows how that total compares to the total seats needed for a majority. A negative number indicates that the combined right and far-right seat share was not enough for a governing coalition.

[b] There are 179 seats in the Danish parliament, including 2 from each of Greenland and the Faroe Islands. In practice, the balance of power has sometimes fallen with these 4 seats. The totals presented in the "MR + FR" column are for the three parties listed only, but support from smaller right-leaning parties, the right-wing alliance has had the following totals (with 90 seats needed for a majority): 75 in 1998, 95 in 2001, 95 in 2005, 90 in 2007, and 87 in 2011.

Chapter 2

Changing Electoral Realities and the Mainstream Right

Contemporary Western European far-right parties emerged beginning in the early-to-mid 1980s, around the time that traditional patterns of voting – party support driven, in large part, by social class and religion – began to decline. The major parties of both left and right found themselves in an increasingly uncertain world, one where their parliamentary majorities were no longer guaranteed. As these major parties lost voters, and as the far right profited from these losses, the former could not easily ignore the latter. Large mainstream-right parties, in particular, now had a pressing need to develop responses to the far right, both in terms of rhetoric/policy and coalitional inclusion or exclusion. Mair et al. (2004, 2) say that there has been "surprisingly little attention... paid to the question of how political parties have responded to [the] decline [of voter loyalties]," a gap this dissertation aims to fill.

In the sections below, I explore, first, the reasons why the ties between major mainstream parties and their voters weakened. Second, I show how the major mainstream parties opened the door to new parties, and in particular to the far right, which was able to capitalize on the electoral changes and the immigration issue. Finally, I explain how some far-right parties became an electoral threat – and potential governing partner – to the mainstream right in many Western European countries.

2.1 Mainstream voters up for grabs

After World War II, major mainstream parties were dominant in Western Europe. This resulted from high levels of economic prosperity and voter satisfaction, as well as the encapsulation of citizens within the parties' subcultures. Large majorities of religious and rural voters supported Christian Democratic parties, and comparable proportions of working-class voters supported Social Democratic parties. Lipset and Rokkan (1967) saw these fundamental social cleavages – church vs. state, urban vs. rural, owner vs. worker – as evidence

for systemic "freezing." With certain groups of voters essentially guaranteed, these traditional parties routinely commanded a combined share of more than 60% of the national vote, sometimes upward of 90%.

By the 1980s, however, the ties between voters and parties had loosened considerably. There were fewer working-class voters and fewer church-going voters than in the past, groups that typically voted for the major right and left parties. Voters started to look for new parties, both as a result of their dissatisfaction with the major parties and because new issues (such as environmental concerns) were placed on the political agenda. This section looks, first, at the decoupling of voters and parties as a result of changes in class- and religious-based voting, and second, at declining party membership.

Working class voters have been the traditional core voters of the major mainstream-left parties (Socialist and Social Democratic), just as Catholic and Protestant voters have been the key group for Christian Democratic and Liberal parties. In many countries, citizens had party ties in all aspects of life, rather than just union or church ties. Children grew up with their parents voting for a particular party and participating in youth organizations affiliated with that party, and as adults, would be surrounded by their party in daily life, both at work and in leisure activities. As shown in this section, the religious and working-class groups have declined as a percentage of the electorate and in terms of their loyalty to the major mainstream parties.

Looking first at the left of the political spectrum, scholars typically rely on the Alford index to understand changes in class-based voting. The Alford index subtracts the percentage of the middle class that voted for left wing parties at a particular election from the percentage of the working class that voted for left parties. Clark and Lipset (1991, 403) find a differential of between 40 and 50% in Sweden and the UK, and more than 30% in Germany and France (Figure 2.1).

The Alford index does not allow for the fluctuation of the sizes of these groups over time, which leads some scholars to dismiss it as uninformative (e.g. Dogan 2001, 99). However, we know that the size of the working class has been shrinking since the 1950s, dropping to an average of two-thirds of its earlier size by the 1980s (Table 2.1).

Core conservative voting blocs also became much smaller. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the percentage of agricultural workers across Europe had dropped to about 20% of its 1960s size (e.g. Dogan 2001, 94). Europeans were also becoming more secular, weakening the ties between once-sizable religious groups and the Christian Democrats. Table 2.2 shows the decline in religious identifiers (accompanied by an increase in the number saying they did not identify with a particular religion) from the 1970s through the late 1990s.

Whether we use individuals' stated religious beliefs or another common measure, attendance of religious services, the public's move away from traditional religious practices is clear. Table 2.3 shows the percentage of people who attend religious services at least once per week, with an average decline of about one-third of the 1970s average, by the 1990s.

Just as it is true that class and religion used to drive voice choice for many individuals, it is now true that both cleavages have declined in importance since the 1980s, for two reasons. Working class and religious voters are less likely to 'automatically' support the left

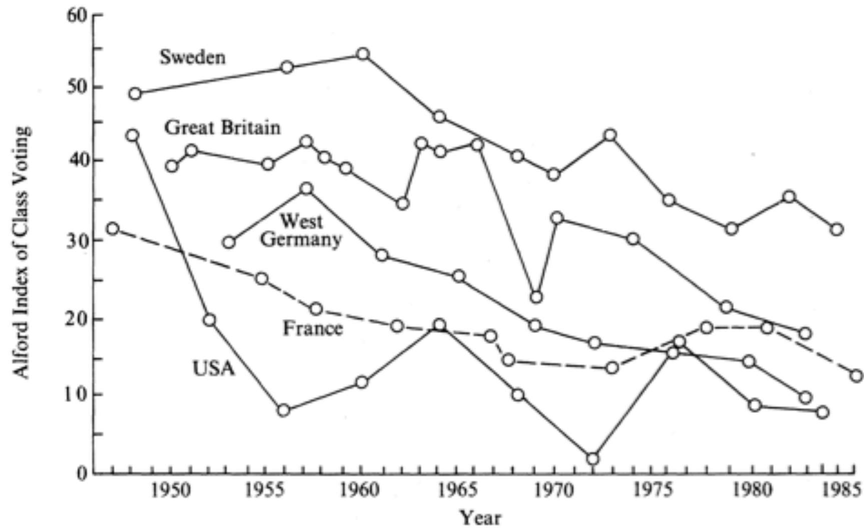

Figure 2.1: Alford Index, 1947-1986

Source: Clark and Lipset (1991, 403).

Country	**Early 1950s**	**Early 1960s**	**Early 1970s**	**Early 1980s**	**Late 1980s**	**% Change**
Austria	40.9	42.3	41.5	37.0	35.0	-14.4
Belgium	52.3	46.9	44.7	32.1	30.2	-42.3
Denmark	50.6	44.2	41.8	27.2	31.5	-37.7
France	43.5	40.2	34.6	30.9		-29.0
Germany	50.9	47.8	40.7	38.4	33.3	-34.6
Italy	47.0	46.9	46.3	38.0		-19.3
Netherlands	48.3	46.2	40.2	27.0	26.3	-45.5
Norway	46.0	44.9	45.4	38.5	27.7	-39.8
Sweden	54.0	43.2	45.6	36.3	29.4	-45.6
UK	41.7	45.8	38.1	30.2		-27.7
Average	47.5	44.8	41.9	33.5	30.5	-33.6

Table 2.1: Working-class as percent of active work force, 1950s-1980s

Source: Kitschelt (1994, 42).

Country	% Change, Catholic	% Change, Protestant	% Change, no denomination
Belgium	-13.9	0.3	11.3
Denmark	1.1	-8.8	7.1
France	-20.7	-0.3	19.0
Germany	-2.7	-8.5	10.4
Italy	-2.1		1.8
Netherlands	-9.2	-10.1	17.8
UK	1.7	-11.8	11.8
Average	-6.5	-6.5	11.3

Table 2.2: Change in religious affiliation of Europeans, 1970-97

Source: Knutsen (2004, 102-3).

Country	1970-79	1980-89	1990-90	% Change
Belgium	47.6	32.2	23.3	-51.1
France	22.0	13.2	10.0	-54.5
Germany	27.9	19.4	17.2	-38.4
Great Britain	13.6	8.2	9.2	-32.4
Italy	44.4	39.0	43.3	-2.5
Netherlands	43.6	30.8	28.0	-35.8
Average	33.2	23.8	21.8	-34.3

Table 2.3: Percent of population attending religious services at least once per week, 1970-98

Source: Norris and Inglehart (2004, 72).

and the Christian Democrats, respectively, and the number of working-class and religious voters has declined. These groups make up both a smaller percentage of the population as a whole and of the voters (Best 2011). The decline of religious voting is attributed to the secularization of society and the lower levels of religiosity amongst the public, as well as the decline of farming and rural populations, and the decline of class voting to increases in both deindustrialization and issue-based voting. The shrinking working class has been offset by the growing middle class, a group less likely to identify with left-wing parties, particularly if they envision themselves as future members of a group that would benefit from low taxes and a right-wing government (e.g. Brooks, Nieuwbeerta and Manza 2006, 92). As people became more affluent and the percentage of the population living in urban areas grew, people no longer needed to rely on their party's subculture as they went through daily life. They had new employment and entertainment alternatives available to them.

As reliance on the cleavage-based heuristics declined, citizens no longer felt the need to be members of political parties, just as parties were less reliant on membership for funding

and activist work (Mair and van Biezen 2001, 14). The number of individuals with party memberships declined between 1960 and 1980, with, for example, Social Democratic and Conservative parties losing more than 50% of their previous totals in a number of countries, such as Denmark, the United Kingdom, and Norway (Katz et al. 1992, 336-7). These membership numbers continued to drop – both as a percent of the voting population and in absolute numbers – throughout the 1990s (Mair and van Biezen 2001). Table 2.4 below shows the percent change in the electorates and party membership from 1980 to 2000, as well as the ratio of party members to the total electorate in 1980 and 2000.

Country	**% Change, Electorate**	**% Change, Members**	**M/E 1980**	**M/E 1999**
Austria	12.6	−30.2	28.5	17.7
Belgium	6.8	−22.1	9.0	6.5
Denmark	5.7	−25.5	7.3	5.1
Finland	7.6	−34.0	15.7	9.6
France	14.0	−64.6	5.1	1.6
Germany	40.6	−8.9	4.5	2.9
Italy	15.6	−51.5	9.7	4.0
Netherlands	17.1	−31.7	4.3	2.5
Norway	10.3	−47.5	15.3	7.3
Sweden	9.3	−28.1	8.4	5.5
Switzerland	18.9	−28.8	10.7	6.4
UK	6.6	−50.4	4.1	1.9
Average	13.7	−35.3	10.2	5.9

Table 2.4: Percent change in number of party members, 1980-2000

Source: Mair and van Biezen (2001, 15-16).

Over the last two decades of the 20th century, electorates grew by an average of nearly 14%, as party membership shrunk by 35%. Party members represented more than 10% of the 1980 electorate, a figure that dropped by almost half, to 5.9%, by 2000.

For much of the early post-war period, a voter's election-day choice was primarily determined by his loyalty to a particular party, rather than opinions about the candidates or issues of the day (Zuckerman and Lichbach 1977). The situation had changed by the 1980s, and by the end of the 1990s, levels of partisan attachment had declined sharply across Western Europe. The decline – or partisan dealignment – typically came from a smaller percentage of strong or close party identifiers, though also sometimes from a decline in sympathizers, or both (Schmitt 1989). In the two-party dominated British system, for example, identifiers with either the Conservative or Labour Party decreased from 81% of the public in 1964 to 67% in 2001, and "very strong" identifiers dropped from 44 to just 15% (Webb 2004, 24).

Scholars also point to improvements in voters' "cognitive mobilization" (Dalton 1984), or ability to evaluate party platforms rather than relying on class or religion as a heuristic. Even in Italy, with its strong Catholic traditions, religion took a backseat to issue and/or problem-based voting (e.g. corruption, distrust of major parties) in the 1980s (Dogan 2001, 106). Voters "no longer sign[ed] a blank check" when casting their vote (Ignazi 1996, 550) and many were unhappy with what they found. The next section discusses the reasons why.

2.2 Opportunities for new parties

Voter dissatisfaction stemmed from three sources: economic problems (and the major parties' handling thereof), the emergence of new political issues not addressed by the major parties, and voters' sense that major parties were both out of touch and not particularly distinct from one another. One reason for voter dissatisfaction with the major parties stemmed from the economic crisis that began in the 1970s. The average unemployment rate in Western Europe in the 1980s was double the 1974-79 average, rising from 4.4 to 8.5% (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development 1991, 40). Several countries saw negative GDP growth in the 1970s, and average growth rates in the period 1973-89 were one-third to one-half what they had been from 1960-73 (Table 2.5).

Country	**1960-68**	**1968-73**	**1973-75**	**1975-79**	**1979-83**	**1983-89**
Austria	4.1	5.6	1.8	3.5	1.4	2.5
Belgium	4.6	5.6	1.3	2.8	1.3	2.6
Denmark	4.4	4.0	-0.8	3.3	1.0	2.1
Finland	3.9	6.6	2.1	2.4	3.4	3.8
France	5.4	5.5	1.4	3.5	1.5	2.6
Germany	4.0	4.9	-0.6	3.9	0.6	2.8
Greece	7.3	8.2	1.1	5.0	0.6	2.3
Italy	5.7	4.6	1.3	4.9	1.7	3.1
Netherlands	5.0	4.7	1.9	3.0	0.1	2.7
Norway	4.4	4.1	4.7	5.0	2.5	3.1
Sweden	4.4	3.8	3.0	1.2	1.1	2.6
Switzerland	4.4	4.6	-2.8	1.1	3.5	2.8
United Kingdom	3.0	3.3	-1.1	2.9	0.5	3.4
Average	4.7	5.0	1.0	3.3	1.5	2.8

Table 2.5: Real GDP growth, 1960-1989

Source: OECD (1991, 35).

As economic conditions failed to improve, voters blamed the major parties, which seemed incapable of fixing the crisis. Major parties on both the left and the right had their turns in office during this period, and neither social democracy nor neo-liberalism seemed able to

right the economic situation. In contrast, the far right would soon propose simple (if not always economically viable) strategies – protect native workers by getting rid of immigrants, thereby freeing up jobs for the unemployed – that especially appealed to voters concerned about unemployment.

A second reason for dissatisfaction was the sense that the major mainstream parties were not addressing the new "post-material" issues of importance to voters (and in particular, to younger voters). Inglehart's (1971) theory of "post-materialism" is based on the voter cohorts that came of age in the 1970s, groups who were raised in a time of economic prosperity such that social issues were able to take priority for them as new voters. These issues included women's rights, environmental protection, and immigration, and were key areas for the "new left." The "old left," in contrast, stresses class issues and is the traditional home of blue collar workers (Inglehart and Flanagan 1987, 1990; Clark and Lipset 1991, 403).

Although Inglehart (1986) divides society into old (material) and new (post-material) politics, for him, the "new politics" half of the cleavage is synonymous with "new left" – there is no "new right." Flanagan (1987, 1304-5) adds a second dividing line to this old/new cleavage, leaving three sectors: the materialist "old politics," Inglehart's postmaterialist "new left," and the authoritarian "new right." Conflicts over lifestyle issues are said to have replaced the traditional conflicts of religion and class in society (e.g. Inglehart and Rabier 1986; Green-Pedersen 2007). Flanagan's two "new politics" sectors reflect the parties that emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the ecological and far right families. Both of these families focused primarily on non-material issues, namely, the environment and the protection of the nation; the following section explores the far right and immigration in detail.

The third main reason for dissatisfaction was that major parties were seen as out of touch: They were reluctant to address the new issues – in particular, immigration – and seemed immune to the problems of the average citizen, such as unemployment and rising crime (particularly in urban areas). There were also concerns about government corruption stemming from party dominance of public life; in Austria, for example, the corporatist arrangement meant the two major parties had strong ties to banks, unions, and corporations. In France, three ministers from the Socialist government were charged with knowingly allowing for HIV-tainted blood to be provided to hemophiliacs in the mid-1980s, though they were later found "guilty, but not responsible" by the French Court of Justice. This prompted outcry from citizens and from the far right, calling this another instance of elites protecting one another. Concern about corruption was perhaps greatest in Italy, where the *Tangentopoli* (or "bribesville") scandal involving kickbacks from government contracts and party ties to the Mafia resulted in the end of not only the dominant Christian Democrats, but the entire political system. Italian voters approved a referendum in 1993 to move from a proportional system to a more majoritarian system, and the major mainstream governing parties were wiped off the electoral map.

Across Europe, politicians were thought to be inattentive to domestic problems and levels of distrust in both parties and other governmental institutions grew. To cite just a few examples: By the late 1980s, more than a third of the French population, and nearly

half of the Italian population, felt the major mainstream parties were "absolutely incapable" of representing their opinions on the important issues of the day (Betz 1993*a*, 419). In Germany, the percentages who felt parties cared more about votes than about voters and felt that politicians did not care what voters thought jumped between 1980 and 1989 from 63 to 75%, and 58 to 81%, respectively (Betz 1993*b*, 671).

Because the far right was not part of the political establishment, it offered voters a break from 'politics as usual.' Umberto Bossi, leader of the Italian Lega Nord, told voters that he was the only person who could deliver "honesty, cleanness, transparency, and above all, true democracy" (Betz 1993*a*, 418). Similar statements were made – and positively received – by far-right leaders Jean-Marie Le Pen in France and Jörg Haider in Austria. These leaders were expertly able to portray themselves as willing to protect the 'average citizen' in a way the major parties could not (or would not). Populism is thus often used as part of the definition of "far right," with some scholars preferring the term "populist radical right" (e.g. Mudde 2007; de Lange 2008). Populism is not, however, a necessary feature of a far right party, common though it has been in some countries.

Finally, voters saw major mainstream parties as essentially interchangeable. In the 1970s and 1980s, many major left parties abandoned the more radical items in their programs (in particular, economics), increasing the perceived overlap between themselves and the major parties of the right (Dogan 2001, 104-5; Sani and Sartori 1983). The Italian Socialists joined a coalition with the Christian Democrats (DC) in 1983 and "rapidly moved to the center of the spectrum" in an effort to counter the DC's dominance (Lipset 1991, 62). The Socialists supported privatization and increased the retirement age while in office. The patterns are much the same throughout Western Europe: Under Mitterrand, the French Socialists backpedaled on their commitments to income redistribution and public ownership in the early 1980s. Social Democratic parties cooperated with Christian Democrats in Belgium and the Netherlands to pursue policies of economic austerity in the 1980s (Kitschelt 1999, 335), and the Austrian Social Democrats likewise moved toward deregulation and privatization. The Swedish Social Democrats, according to Lipset (1991, 68, 70), privatized more than the major right-wing parties when in government, and the Norwegian party, following this model, worked against wage increases.

Table 2.6 shows the distance between the major parties of left and right in 1983 and 1993 (from expert surveys); the only country where left and right were viewed as moving a significant distance apart during this period is Italy, which was in the middle of political upheaval at the time of the second survey.

Major parties of the left and right were increasingly likely to form coalitions with each other, beginning as early as the 1960s. In both the Netherlands and Belgium, the Socialists/Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and Liberals all worked with the other two major parties in their respective countries, and the German and Austrian left and right formed joint coalitions. Although the Scandinavian left and right parties have long been divided into clear blocs, Mair (1995, 49) notes that even the Swedish Liberals and Social Democrats seriously considered forming a coalition together. He places blame on this "pattern of promiscuity in the formation of governments" for voters' increasing inability to see

Country	**1983**	**1993**	**% Change**
Austria	2.8	1.7	-39.3
Belgium	3.4	2.0	-41.2
Denmark	3.5	3.6	2.9
Finland	4.2	3.3	-21.4
France	5.6	4.2	-25.0
Germany	3.4	2.9	-14.7
Italy	3.8	4.2	10.5
Netherlands	3.1	2.3	-25.8
Norway	4.7	4.3	-8.5
Sweden	4.8	4.7	-2.1
UK	5.5	3.6	-34.5
Average	4.1	3.3	-18.1

Table 2.6: Left-right distance between the major parties of left and right, 1983 to 1993

Source: Mair (1995, 48).

distinctions between left and right (Mair 1995, 49). Kitschelt (1995, 48) says that new parties, and in particular, the far right, can more successfully mobilize the "anti-party" sentiment where the major parties of left and right have formed coalitions. If left and right have enough overlap to form joint coalitions, a reasonable assumption may be that the parties are truly not very different from one another.

A reduction of loyalties to (and unhappiness with) traditional major mainstream parties, alone, would not have posed a severe challenge to these parties if voters did not have alternatives. The move right by major mainstream-left parties has been identified as a primary cause for the emergence and success of the "left-libertarian" parties in many countries, such as the Greens and some left-socialist parties (Kitschelt 1989). Ignazi (1992) says that the feelings of neglect and disillusionment with respect to the traditional parties – Inglehart's (1971) theory of the "silent revolution" that produced the new left parties – also gave rise to the new right parties in the "silent counter-revolution." The major parties neglected the spaces on the extremes of the political spectrum, providing an opening for the far right by the 1980s.

Voters responded to the new political options available to them. Gone were the days when each party had a "natural" constituency that would "rarely, if ever" vote for a different party (Mair 1995, 49). There are disagreements in the literature about the appropriate way to measure electoral volatility and, as a result, no consensus about whether party systems were "frozen" or fluctuating during the 1945-70 period. Drummond (2006) uses multiple measures to analyze the 1970-95 period and finds significant changes in party support over this time, both for new parties and traditional parties. Mair (1993, 124-5) argues that, to the extent that there has been fluctuation, voters are more likely to switch "between friends,

not enemies." He identifies more change on the right and on the left than from the right to the left, or vice versa, in the year 1945-89.

Adjudicating between the "frozen" and "changing" literatures is beyond the scope of this chapter, but two points need to be made: First, most of the traditional parties (i.e. the major mainstream parties of the left and the right) have lost votes since 1980, compared to the 1945-1980 period. This is particularly true if we consider the periods before/after the emergence and/or success of the far right. Second, the far right has taken votes from both the left and the right, perhaps the exception to the pattern noted by Mair (1993). Table 2.7 comes from Mair (1995, 128), who includes all parties that contested the elections closest to 1960 and 1990 in their respective countries (not only the major parties). These "old" parties had lost an average of almost 11% of their 1960s vote share by 1990.

Country	**1960**	**1990**	**Change**
Austria	99.5	92.0	-7.5
Belgium	97.1	76.1	-21.0
Denmark	94.8	81.5	-13.3
Finland	94.5	90.8	-3.7
France	75.4	66.8	-8.6
Germany	94.3	90.6	-3.7
Italy	97.4	90.9	-6.5
Netherlands	90.5	84.9	-5.6
Norway	96.9	84.7	-12.2
Sweden	99.9	80.4	-19.5
Switzerland	96.3	78.1	-18.2
UK	99.4	87.6	-11.8
Average	94.7	83.7	-11.0

Table 2.7: Vote shares for "old" parties, 1960 and 1990

Source: Mair (1993, 128). These totals include both major and smaller parties.

Tables 2.8 and 2.9 show the vote shares of the major mainstream-left and mainsream-right parties, from 1945 through the present, around two cut-points: before and after 1980, and before and after the first 'successful' election of the far right (meaning the far right – one or more parties – won at least 5% of the vote). In many countries, the major mainstream parties' vote shares decreased after 1980 compared to before, with an average loss of 5% compared to their post-war but pre-1980s averages.

The second cut-point (Table 2.9) is more telling, as the major parties of left and right in every country (except France) lost votes after the far right's first successful election, even when the same was not true before/after 1980. The average vote loss after the far right's initial success, compared to before, was 15.7%; the "after" column includes the vote share from the first election when the far right received at least 5% of the vote. These two tables

Country	**1945-79**	**1980-present**	**Change**
Austria	90.1	69.4	-23.0
Belgium	48.3	41.3	-14.6
Denmark	71.4	64.4	-9.9
Finland	41.0	44.2	7.7
France	52.5	64.3	11.8
Germany	83.1	81.3	-2.2
Greece	67.6	79.4	17.5
Italy	51.1	48.6	-4.9
Netherlands	67.5	70.3	4.1
Norway	63.3	55.8	-11.8
Sweden	60.7	61.4	1.1
Switzerland	47.3	36.8	-22.2
UK	87.7	71.2	-18.9
Average	63.7	59.6	-5.0

Table 2.8: Vote shares of the major left and right parties before and after 1980

suggest that major parties have not received as many votes since the 1980s and that the emergence of the far right is a major reason why.

Country	**Before FR success**	**Since FR success**	**Change**
Austria	90.2	67.0	-25.7
Belgium	46.7	39.1	-16.4
Denmark	69.7	62.5	-10.3
Finland	42.5	39.5	-7.1
France	56.1	60.9	4.8
Greece	80.9	59.7	-26.3
Netherlands	71.2	61.7	-13.4
Norway	64.6	51.8	-19.9
Sweden	47.3	36.8	-22.2
Switzerland	45.2	35.5	-21.3
UK	90.3	74.4	-17.6
Average	61.1	50.5	-15.7

Table 2.9: Vote shares of the major left and right parties before and after the far right's first successful national election ($> 5\%$)

How did the far right have such an impact on major mainstream parties' vote shares? The desire for political change across Western Europe was strong enough that early work on

the far right pointed to its success purely as a manifestation of "protest" voting (e.g. the definitional criteria in Ignazi 1992), or a vote that signals "discontent to the political elite by voting for a party that is an outcast in the political arena" (Van der Brug, Fennema and Tillie 2000, 82). In addition to protest, Mudde (1996, 186) finds that immigration is the top issue cited by far-right supporters. Yet, merely talking about immigration was not enough to guarantee success for the far right – voters needed to believe the issue was salient. Some earlier incarnations of far-right parties suffered for this reason (Ignazi 1996, 556). The next section gives an overview of the opinion about and salience of immigration beginning in the 1980s and how the far right was able to use this to its advantage.

2.3 The importance of immigration

In the immediate post-war years, economies were booming and governments needed more labor. They recruited guest workers from Southern and Eastern Europe to fill the shortage, and when that supply dwindled, looked to workers from Turkey and North Africa to make up the remainder. The German government, for example, celebrated the arrangement, going so far as to gift the millionth *Gastarbeiter* with a new motorcycle. Native workers did not feel particularly threatened by the economic migrants as long as the economy was strong (Hansen 2003, 25, 27-8).

Not protesting their government's actions, however, should not be mistaken for positive feelings toward immigrants. The few pieces of data that do exist from before the 1980s strongly point to negative views of immigrants – but, crucially, also to a low level of public concern about immigration. Table 2.10 shows results from a British Election Study question asking respondents if they feel that too many immigrants have been let into the UK (response options: yes or no). They were then asked if they held that opinion very, fairly, or not at all strongly. Overwhelming majorities felt – from 1969 until 1979, the only years this question was asked – that there were too many immigrants in Britain, and about half of the people said they felt "very strongly" that this was the case (about 90% feel either very or fairly strongly; Crewe, Robertson and Sarlvik 1976 and Crewe, Robertson and Sarlvik 1981).

Year	**'Too many'**	**'Too many,' feeling very strongly**
1969	89.5	59.2
1970	88.9	55.4
1974	86.1	48.8
1979	86.1	46.9

Table 2.10: Percent of British respondents feeling there are too many immigrants in the UK

Source: British Election Study 1976, 1981.

In 1971, the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES) asked respondents if people from foreign countries should be allowed to live and work in the Netherlands. More than half of the respondents favored restrictions, either fully (i.e. "not from any country") or partially, wanting to limit immigration from particular countries (Table 2.11). When the latter group was then asked to elaborate and name the countries from which respondents should not be allowed to live and work in the Netherlands, Turkey was the most common first response in 1971 (14%; not asked in 1972-3). Respondents on the 1972-3 survey were asked why they wanted to restrict immigration, and the most common response was that the Netherlands had enough unemployment already (36.1%), with "overpopulation" and "too many foreigners as-is" the next-most common answers.

Year	**Not from certain countries**	**Not from any country**	**Total**
1971	14.4	42.2	56.6
1972-3	16.4	37.6	54.0

Table 2.11: Percent wanting immigration partially or totally restricted

Source: Dutch Parliamentary Election Study 1971, 1972-3.

Table 2.12 shows that few people in the Netherlands felt, however, that immigration was a priority. We see a remarkable spike in importance between 1989 and 1994; the latter survey was taken around the time of Dutch Liberal (VVD) leader Fritz Bolkestein's statements about the immigration problem in the Netherlands and how multiculturalism may have been a failure. The Christian Democrats and Labor were governing together at the time, so the VVD could also point to government failure to handle the issue.

Before the 1980s, immigration was not a salient political issue in most of Western Europe (though see Hansen 2003 on the United Kingdom as the exception), so much so that public opinion data on immigration is seldom found on surveys conducted prior to the mid-1980s. Why did immigration become such an important issue in the 1980s and 1990s? Two explanations are particularly prominent: the economy and the changing composition of the immigrant population. As the economic boom faded, European countries simultaneously faced a surplus of workers, rather than a shortage, and high levels of unemployment. Guest workers had been admitted with the expectation that they would return home after their employment was completed, but many workers decided instead to stay, putting additional strain on the labor markets. The far right's proposals held great appeal for many Europeans: Without immigrants, the far right argued, there will be more jobs for native workers.

Although governments did largely stop new labor migration after 1973 – Table 2.13 shows that much of the immigration came between 1950 and 1970 – the families of immigrants already in Western Europe wanted now to reunite with them. This presented a new dilemma, wherein government efforts to prevent non-economic migration were often stopped by national courts on human rights grounds (Hansen 2003, 26, 27). Increased levels of family

Year	**The top issue**	**One of the top 5 issues**
1971	2.2	4.7
1977	1.3	6.6
1981	2.6	4.1
1982	1.0	3.7
1986	2.5	4.9
1989	2.6	6.8
1994	27.2	50.1
1998	18.0	31.8
2002	12.7	41.2
2003	9.2	40.0
2006	20.6	34.6
2010	11.3	22.6
2012	6.3	14.3

Table 2.12: Foreigners/immigration as an important problem in the Netherlands, 1971-2012

Source: Dutch Parliamentary Election Study. Respondents were allowed to mention any issues, which were then coded as belonging to one of a number of categories. All categories dealing with immigration, foreigners, or asylum are included here. Survey weights were not available until 1986.

Country	**1950**	**1970**	**1982**	**1990**
Austria	4.7	2.8	4.0	6.6
Belgium	4.3	7.2	9.0	9.1
Denmark			2.0	3.1
Finland	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.9
France	4.1	5.3	6.8	6.4
Germany	1.1	4.9	7.6	8.2
Greece	0.4	1.1	0.7	0.9
Italy	0.1		0.5	1.4
Netherlands	1.1	2.0	3.9	4.6
Norway	0.5		2.2	3.4
Sweden	1.8	5.1	4.9	5.6
Switzerland	6.1	17.2	14.7	16.3
UK			3.9	3.3
Average	2.2	5.1	4.7	5.4

Table 2.13: Foreign residents as percentage of the total population, 1950-1990

Source: Fassman and Munz (1992, 460).

reunification meant that new migrants would be disproportionately from outside Western Europe, which was indeed the case. From 1985-1999, non-EU immigrants made up more than 70% of the total new immigrants across Western Europe (Table 2.14).

Country	**1985-89**	**1990-94**	**1995-99**
Austria			81.6
Belgium	50.3	51.5	47.4
Denmark	76.5	74.3	76.4
Finland	83.9	92.9	82.1
France	78.9	84.4	89.7
Germany	80.8	86.5	77.3
Greece	69.6	77.0	77.0
Italy	76.1	89.6	
Netherlands	73.9	76.6	75.7
Norway	71.0	75.8	57.0
Sweden	88.6	91.0	76.3
Switzerland	44.5	55.4	54.9
UK	79.3	79.7	70.1
Average	72.8	77.9	72.1

Table 2.14: Percentage of new immigrants from outside the EU

Source: Eurostat (2002, 23).

Although labor migration was made more difficult in the 1970s and 1980s, the number of refugees admitted into Western Europe grew from about 75,000 in 1983 to almost 320,000 in 1989 (Betz 1993*a*, 415). More than one million individuals applied for asylum between 1985 and 1999, driven in part by political turmoil in the Balkans and the fall of the Soviet Union (Table 2.15). It was easy for the far right to target asylum seekers, and there is a correlation between the level of asylum seekers in the 1990s and countries with successful far-right parties (Mudde 2007, 212).

With the economic downturn and the new patterns of migration – increases in the number of people from outside Europe and in the number of asylum seekers – immigrants could, by the 1980s, fairly easily be painted as different and threatening. Far-right leaders made precisely this link, warning that the economic situation and rising numbers of immigrants were dangerously incompatible. France's Le Pen famously said that "three million unemployed is three million immigrants too many," having previously also used one and two million to match the unemployment figures of the time (DeClair 1999, 124). The Front National also said early in the 1980s that immigration would cause the "thousand-year old [French] identity" to disappear, a sentiment that rang true with many voters (Betz 1993*a*, 417). The elite consensus – that immigration was necessary and useful, and, in some countries, that the

Country	**1985-89**	**1990-94**	**1995-99**
Austria	21.5	25.4	10.7
Belgium	6.3	17.4	18.7
Denmark	6.0	9.0	5.7
Finland	0.1	3.8	1.4
France	35.7	36.9	22.5
Germany	91.1	267.4	108.6
Greece	5.6	2.2	2.4
Italy	5.3	6.8	7.2
Netherlands	9.3	30.2	34.2
Norway	4.6	6.0	4.8
Sweden	19.4	39.4	9.7
Switzerland	14.1	27.3	29.3
UK	8.1	41.0	44.7
Total	227.1	512.8	299.9

Table 2.15: Asylum applications, 1985-99 (in thousands)

Source: Eurostat (2002, 23).

new multicultural society was desirable and unproblematic – fell apart once non-mainstream parties, mostly the far right, picked up the immigration issue.[1]

The key motivation for supporting the far right at the ballot box was (and is) the far right's stance on immigration. Mudde (1996, 185) says that the "large majority" of far-right voters are motivated by their opposition to immigration. Ivarsflaten (2008) finds that opposition to immigration is the one commonality of Western European radical right parties: the parties in her study that mobilized grievances about immigration performed consistently better than those that did not mobilize such grievances, and parties performed well even when they did not address grievances about economics or populist complaints about elitism. An analysis of expert-based party positioning data, compiled by Benoit and Laver (2006), gives support to Ivarsflaten's findings. Far-right parties are clustered at the top of the scale on immigration, both in terms of positioning and importance to the party, which is not true of the other issues (taxes and social concerns; Table 2.16).

Further supporting the centrality of immigration for these parties, Ennser (2012, 12) calculates the mean policy positions and standard deviations for five party families on six issue categories, and the far right position on immigration (19.0 mean, on a 1-20 scale) had a standard deviation of 1.0; the only smaller standard deviation for a party family on any issue was the Greens on the environment (0.7).

Tables 2.17 and 2.18 illustrate the levels of anti-immigrant sentiment in the European

[1]See Marcus (1995) for a detailed description of how (and why) the French Communists were the first party to push the immigration issue.

Issue	Avg.	Min.	Max.	Importance
Taxes	6.1	2.8	9.0	5.8
Social	8.3	5.3	9.6	6.8
Immigration	9.7	9.3	9.9	9.5

Table 2.16: Far right party positioning and issue importance

Source: Benoit and Laver 2006, rescaled 1-10

These data include the far right in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, and Switzerland. For importance, 1 is the least important and 10 the most important. On the substantive issues, 1-10 represents wanting to raise taxes to support public services vs. wanting to cut taxes; favoring liberal politics on abortion and homosexuality vs. opposing them; favoring policies to help immigrants/asylum seekers integrate vs. sending them back to their country of origin.

public since the 1980s. First, Table 2.17 uses a question from the European Values Studies (1981-2008), asked over the four waves from 1981-2008, about whether respondents would not want to have an immigrant as a neighbor. Even here, where respondents may be tempted to lie in order to provide a more socially desirable answer, there is consistently about 10% agreement with this statement. We might expect that the true percentage is even higher, masked by people not wanting to admit they feel this way.

Country	1981	1990	1999	2008
Austria		20.8	12.7	23.5
Belgium	15.4	20.7	15.7	6.6
Denmark	9.3	11.6	10.6	6.9
Finland		4.6	12.7	15.3
France	6.0	12.8	12.1	4.2
Germany	21.1	17.2	11.0	9.7
Greece			13.7	15.0
Italy	3.5	14.6	16.5	16.5
Netherlands	16.5	9.9	5.0	14.1
Norway	9.7	15.8		6.4
Sweden	4.1	8.9	2.9	7.0
Switzerland				3.6
UK	12.9	11.7	15.1	14.2
Average	10.9	13.5	11.6	11.0

Table 2.17: Percent agreeing they "would not want an immigrant" as a neighbor

Source: European Values Study (1981-2008).

Europeans have consistently felt that there are too many immigrants in their country, as

Table **??** shows with Eurobarometer data spanning 1988-2003. The question wording from 1988-1997 asked respondents if there were "too many," "a lot but not too many," or "not a lot" of immigrants in their country, and the "too many" percentages are presented here. There are two included measures from May 2003's Commission, which had a four-point scale: first, only the respondents who "completely agree" that there are too many immigrants in their country, and then "completely agree" and "tend to agree" combined.

The far right attracted voters from both the left and the right on the basis of the immigration issue. Working-class voters disproportionally supported the far right, willing to abandon the mainstream left if they felt the far right was more likely to fight for their threatened jobs. The working class, low-educated, low-income, and unemployed increasingly supported the far right in the 1980s and 1990s (see Norris 2005, 136-46 for an overview). Not coincidentally, these groups are also among the most likely to oppose immigration and to be concerned about crime (Arzheimer 2012, 79).

In France, the percentage of working-class voters supporting the Front National tripled from 1984-97, from 8 to 24%. The percent of unemployed or retired individuals voting for the FN grew from 9 to 15%, and the FN also doubled its share of the voters without a high school education, from 8 to 17% (Rydgren 2004, 94). Over the same time period, Austrian blue-collar voters dramatically shifted from the mainstream left to the far right: In 1986, 10% voted far right compared to 57% for the mainstream left; this jumped to 47% for the far right, versus 35% for the mainstream left by 1999 (Ignazi 2003, 100, 122). Blue-collar workers were significantly more likely to support the far right in the early 2000s than they were any other party in a number of other countries, as well, a trend referred to as "proletarization": Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway; only in Italy was the difference not significant (Ignazi 2003, 251). At the same time, traditional right-leaning voters also agreed that restrictions on immigration were desirable, though they were also motivated by concerns about the impact of immigration on the national culture and way of life (Betz 1994; Kitschelt 1995, Mudde 2007). In the final section, I illustrate how far-right parties have become a significant electoral threat for many major mainstream parties in Europe today.

2.4 The far right beyond immigration

Since the late 1980s, far-right parties have averaged 8.6% of the seats in the elections they have contested across Western Europe (Table 2.19). The Swiss People's Party has been the most successful, while the British far right parties have been the least successful (in part, because of the electoral system in the UK). As the rightmost column of Table 2.19 shows, since 2010, far-right parties have received an average of more than 10% of the national vote, and in many countries, have performed better than their historical average.

This success may have initially been prompted by the link between economic problems and immigration, but the far right has branched out beyond this initial theme. The far right has linked many new issues – threats from crime, terrorism, Islam, and the European

							May 2003	
Country	**Oct 1988**	**Mar 1991**	**Mar 1992**	**Jun 1994**	**Nov 1994**	**Oct 1997**	**Comp Agree**	**Comp + Tend**
Austria						52.8	46.1	84.1
Belgium	44.7	60.3	57.8	62.4	60.5	62.7	56.6	85.2
Denmark	37.1	44.3	47.2	38.4	40.8	47.4	32.2	59.5
France	46.0	59.3	55.9	54.5	57.8	49.7	37.4	76.2
Finland						10.6	16.4	43.6
Germany	48.7	55.9	55.8	49.9	41.5	54.5	53.6	84.4
Greece	21.5	32.8	47.4	63.3	64.9	71.7	84.8	98.9
Italy	35.6	65.3	67.2	58.3	47.5	54.3	45.2	85.1
Netherlands	31.4	46.5	67.2	58.3	47.5	54.3	45.2	85.1
Norway			43.4		49.1			
Sweden						38.7	27.2	51.3
UK	39.0	49.2	53.7	40.6	37.8	45.1	63.2	87.2
Average	38.0	51.7	53.2	51.4	49.9	48.0	45.6	76.2

Table 2.18: Percent saying that there are too many immigrants in their country

Source: Eurobarometers 30 (1988), 35 (1991), 37.0 (1992), 41.1 (1994*a*), 42 (1994*b*), 47.1 (1997), and 59.2 (2003).

Country	**Party**	**Elections**	**Avg. %**	**% Since 2010**
Austria	FPÖ	1986-2013	17.5	21.4
	BZÖ	2006-2008	7.4	
Belgium	VB	1981-2014	6.5	5.7
Denmark	DF	1998-2011	11.4	12.3
Finland	PS	2011-2015	18.4	18.4
France[a]	FN	1986-2012	9.6	13.6
Germany[b]	Rep	1990-2013	1.1	0.2
Greece	ANEL	2012-2015	6.2	6.2
	LAOS	2004-2015	2.8	1.3
Italy[c]	LN	1992-2013	6.9	4.1
	MSI/AN	1983-1994	7.9	
Netherlands	PVV	2006-2012	10.5	12.8
	LPF	2002-2003	11.4	
	CD	1989-1998	1.3	
	CP	1981-1986	0.4	
Norway	FKP	1989-2013	15.8	16.4
Sweden	SD	2002-2014	5.7	9.3
	NyD	1991-1994	4.0	
Switzerland	SVP	1995-2011	23.7	26.6
United Kingdom	UKIP	2010-2015	7.8	7.8
	BNP	1982-2015	0.5	1.0
Average			8.4	10.5

Table 2.19: Far right parties' average vote share in national elections since 1980

See Table 1.17 for party names.

[a] The FN's first-round vote shares are used here.
[b] The totals come from the second-round (party list vote) in Germany.
[c] The PR vote shares from 1994-2001 are used here.

Union – to its core theme of protecting the nation. Members of the Norwegian Progress Party warned that when "different cultures live together, life is characterized by murder, drugs, and other types of crime" (Hagelund 2003, 58). Far right parties express the desire to protect society and punish criminals, calling for an end to early release from prison and any programs aimed at prisoner rehabilitation; the FPÖ called for a focus on the "protection of society [over]...the rehabilitation of the criminal" (Mudde 2007, 147). Common crime-related manifesto proposals include increasing the number of police, stricter punishments for criminals, and a focus on "help[ing] victims, not protecting the criminals," in the words of the Sweden Democrats (Mudde 2007, 147). Some, though not all, far right parties also call for the re-establishment of the death penalty.

Most far-right parties advocate citizens' right to self-defense, whether through a right to bear arms or laws allowing for defense of one's own home. Gun ownership is perhaps most prominent as an issue for the Swiss far right, where parties oppose any restrictions on citizens' ability to bear arms, though support restrictions on the right of foreigners to do so. Far right parties often feel their countries are "incapable of defending themselves" against both internal and external threats (Mudde 2007, 146). Far-right parties have long used anti-Islam and anti-Muslim rhetoric, expressing concerns about the number of Muslims in Western Europe and the threat this group poses to 'European values,' such as women's equality and, particularly in the Netherlands, rights for same-sex couples. Even typically secular parties, such as the *Vlaams Belang*, have made mention of the "Christian essence of Europe" (Mudde 2007, 85). Since 2001, the volume of this rhetoric has increased and the content has expanded to include concerns about terrorism and culture. Some parties have called for all Muslim would-be immigrants to be denied entrance, stricter monitoring of mosques and Islamic gathering places, and immediate deportation of "Muslim fundamentalists" (Mudde 2007, 149).

Far-right parties have called for bans on public wearing of headscarves and/or burqas, which have passed in France and Belgium, and been proposed in parliament in a number of other countries, such as Austria, the Netherlands, and Italy. Perhaps the most notable example of an anti-Muslim campaign was the 2009 referendum passed by Swiss voters, and spearheaded by the Swiss People's Party, banning all new construction of minarets in the country. All of these issues loop back to immigration – immigrants threaten the national language, culture, and way of life; immigrants take jobs that should go to hard-working citizens, and immigrants disproportionately commit crimes.

Opposition to European integration is another common far-right theme, where Europe is set up as an enemy that threatens the nation's ability to make and enforce laws and dilutes the national culture. The EU is also blamed for contributing to the influx of immigrants into the country. Although some far right parties initially held pro-European stances, supporting common policies on policing, terrorism, and defense, the Maastricht Treaty provided incentive for a reversal of position on Europe (Mudde 2007, 159-60; see also Chari, Iltanen and Kritzinger 2004 on the *Lega Nord*). The European Union quickly became an "intrusive supranational body" according to the Danish, and the German *Republikaner* likened Maastricht to "Versailles without weapons" (Mudde 2007, 160).

Far-right parties prepare election manifestos detailing their positions on dozens of topics, but these nativist issues – above all, immigration – form the heart of the parties' agenda. Their economic platforms have moved beyond 'deport immigrants,' though concern about protecting the nation drives the far right agenda, sometimes generating goals that are difficult to reconcile. Most far right parties are supportive of the free market domestically, but opposed to international free markets, while simultaneously calling for a strong welfare state for citizens (and exclusion of immigrants), support for small businesses, and lower taxes (Mudde 2007, 122-28). Perhaps for this reason, these parties are "seldom considered particularly competent" on economic issues when compared to the major mainstream parties (Mudde 2007, 206).

Having a full set of policy positions helps the far right present itself as a respectable option for voters; Eatwell (2000, 421) says that the more successful far-right parties are those with broader programs. Having more than a singular focus on immigration allows the far right to attract voters in times when immigration is not a central campaign issue. However, immigration remains the linchpin that holds the rest of their platform together. As evidenced by the 2014 referendum in Switzerland, wherein a majority of votes were cast in favor of a new cap on immigrants and asylum seekers – a referendum supported by the Swiss People's Party and opposed by all other parties, and quickly championed by far-right leaders in other countries – the far right continues to successfully mobilize voters on the basis of immigration.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the decline of mainstream governing parties and the rise of the far right. After the ties between major parties and voters weakened, and voters grew increasingly unhappy with these parties, new parties emerged and took advantage of these electoral realities. The far right was particularly successful, using the newly important issue of immigration to its advantage. As a result, far-right parties' appeal continued to grow, and by the 1990s, the far right had become a legitimate electoral threat to the mainstream parties – and in particular, the mainstream right – in Western Europe. That threat prompted the mainstream right to consider the far right in its coalition decisions and to adapt its positions on immigration to fall more in line with the far right. Chapter 3 introduces the major parties in Austria and the Netherlands, and then Chapter 4 demonstrates how the major mainstream parties have tried to reduce the far right's appeal to voters on the basis of immigration.

Chapter 3

Dutch and Austrian Parties

Before an explanation of why mainstream parties respond as they do to the far right, we need to understand several things: mainstream parties' foundations and groups of voters, how parties have dealt with the aftermath of fascism, and the history and appeal of the far right. This chapter thus begins with an introduction of the major political parties in the Netherlands and Austria, followed by evidence of their decline in the 1970s and 1980s. I then trace the legacy of World War II and the rise of far right parties in both countries, concluding with an overview of voter support for the far right.

3.1 Mainstream parties in the Netherlands

Religious and class conflicts have profoundly shaped the Dutch party system. Since the end of Spanish Habsburg rule in the late 16th century, Protestantism has been the dominant religion in the Netherlands. Under the Republic of the United Netherlands, which lasted until French invasion of the Netherlands in 1795, Catholics were not allowed to hold public office or even practice their religion in public. They were discriminated against in all aspects of life, including being subject to heavier taxes than Protestants, and treated as second-class citizens (see Irwin 1980). Precursors to the current major mainstream parties emerged in the second half of the 1800s, a time when the Liberals dominated politics, largely as a result of the restrictions on voting.

Dutch Protestants, Catholics, and the working class organized politically in response to the dominance of the Liberals, with whom each of these groups disagreed over two major political issues of the day: state subsidies for religious schools, supported by Protestants and Catholics, and universal suffrage, supported by the working class and Catholics. These issues were eventually resolved by the 1917 constitutional changes, known as the "Great Pacification," that instituted universal suffrage and equal funding for secular and religious schools. These negotiations set the precedent for consociational behavior in the Netherlands (Andeweg, De Winter and Müller 2008, 81-2).

Religion and social class were the foundations of political life in the Netherlands from

the late 1800s, and after the turn of the century, formed the boundaries of everyday life. The Dutch party system epitomized Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) "frozen" party system. If you knew someone's religion (or, for the non-religious, his social class), you could be almost certain about that person's vote preferences: Catholics voted for the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (Catholic People's Party, KVP), Dutch Reformed voters supported the *Christelijk-Historische Unie* (Christian Historical Union, CHU), *Gereformeerd* (orthodox Protestant) voters chose the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* (Anti-Revolutionary Party, ARP), and the secular working class voted for the *Partij van de Arbeid* (Labour Party, PvdA). The secular middle class was rather small (about 15% of the population in 1956) and voted either for the PvdA or the *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD), the Liberals (Aarts and Thomassen 2008, 207). Religious voters did not float among the confessional parties: During the 1970s, only 0.5% of religious voters reported voting for a party other than "theirs" (Miller and Stouthard 1975, 226). These patterns formed the basis of Irwin and van Holsteyn's (1989) "structural model" of Dutch voting or the strong links between voters and parties in these camps. The five *zuilen*, or pillars, each had their own schools, health care systems, newspapers, employee and employer organizations, television stations, and leisure groups.

Elites from all pillars recognized the importance of cooperation for political stability, despite their disagreements, fearing that the Dutch political system would otherwise fall apart and not wanting to risk political turmoil on the heels of World War II (Koole 1994, 278). When, in 1946, no single party appeared to have significantly more support than the others, the major parties decided that they could not change the system and opted instead to embrace the "heyday of politics of accommodation" (Tromp 1990, 84).

Major Dutch mainstream parties

The current center-right party, the *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal, CDA), was formed in 1977 after the merger of the *Katholieke Volksparij* (Catholic People's Party, KVP) with two other Christian parties, the *Anti-Revolutionaire Partij* (Anti-Revolutionary Party, ARP) and the *Christelijk-Historische Unie* (Christian Historical Union, CHU). The KVP was formed in 1945 by members of the major pre-war Catholic party (the Roman-Catholic State Party). Like the PvdA, the KVP attempted to broaden its appeal from that of its predecessor by taking more progressive issue positions and by not restricting membership to Catholics. The KVP promoted strong traditional morality and a welfare state alongside more economically liberal positions, such as support for the free market.

Although Protestants had long dominated Dutch politics, the orthodox members of the Dutch Reformed Church felt underrepresented. These Orthodox Calvinist voters broke away from the Protestant groups in the 19th century to form not only the *Gereformeerde* church, but also the first national Dutch political party, the ARP, in 1879 (Irwin 1980, 164). Within the next twenty years, internal disagreements over whether the party should ally with the Catholics and over the appropriate separation between church and state threatened this

breakaway group, leading to several splinter parties. Several such parties merged in 1908 to form the CHU.

Elite liberal parties declined in the 1920s after newly enfranchised voters entered political life, and by the eve of World War II, there were a number of small Liberal parties competing in the Netherlands. One of these parties was uncertain whether a Liberal party was necessary in the present political climate, and worked with the Socialist camp to form the PvdA (Irwin 1980: 165). Another formed the Freedom Party (*Partij van de Vrijheid*, PvdV).[1] The liberal faction within the PvdA broke away two years later, feeling the party was too left wing, and together with the PvdV, formed the major Dutch right-wing party, the *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD), colloquially known as the (economically) Liberal Party. The main party of the left, the *Partij van de Arbeid* (Labour Party, PvdA), was founded in 1946 by members of a number of pre-war parties, most notably the Social Democratic Workers' Party (SDAP). The PvdA's ideological perspective was broadened from that of the Socialist SDAP, with the hopes of drawing some of the religious voters away from the confessional parties (Tromp 1990, 84).

The confessional parties, and primarily the KVP, suffered significant electoral losses in the 1960s as a result of declining religious practice. The reaction to this was a move toward greater cooperation among the three parties, who established a common electoral program in 1975 and a joint list of candidates for the 1977 election. By 1980, the three had formally merged into the *Christen-Democratisch Appél* (Christian-Democratic Appeal, CDA). The CDA took part in every coalition from 1977 through 1994, just as the KVP had participated in all coalitions from 1946-73. The combination of the CDA, VVD, and PvdA was dominant in terms of votes, seats, and government participation, but this dominance began to decline in the 1980s.

The end of *verzuiling* in the Netherlands

The major Dutch parties (five parties until 1973, three since 1977) have averaged nearly 80% of the votes and seats in elections since 1946 (Table 3.1). Looking at the averages pre- and post-late 1980s, however, is telling: These parties won 86% of seats from 1946-86 and 67.8% since 1989, mirroring the decline in votes (from 83.3 to 66.0%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, every coalition since 1946 has included at least two of these major parties; the KVP/CDA participated in every coalition from 1946-1994 (Table 3.2). Not until 1971 did a non-major party enter a coalition (the Democratic Socialists '70, or DS'70), and only five other non-major parties have participated in any coalitions since – the Radicals, D66, and CU (discussed later in this section), plus the far-right LPF and PVV (discussed at length in Section 3.4).

Why were these three parties less dominant than in previous decades? As explained in Chapter 2, the decline of traditional voting patterns are a major reason. Nearly three-quarters of votes cast in the Netherlands in 1956 (72%) fit the structural model of voting

[1]This party is unrelated to the current far-right Party for Freedom, PVV.

Election	**% Votes**	**% Seats**
1946	86.2	88.0
1948	86.9	89.0
1952	86.7	90.0
1956	91.5	94.0
1959	91.7	94.7
1963	88.0	90.0
1967	78.8	82.0
1971	71.6	75.3
1972	73.0	75.3
1977	83.6	86.7
1981	76.4	78.7
1982	82.9	85.3
1986	85.3	88.7
1989	81.8	83.3
1994	66.2	68.0
1998	72.0	74.7
2002	58.5	60.0
2003	73.8	76.0
2006	62.4	64.0
2010	53.7	54.7
2012	59.9	61.3
Average	76.7	79.0

Table 3.1: Major Dutch parties' *Tweede Kamer* votes and seat totals, 1946-2012

(religious voters for the CDA or predecessors, secular working class for the PvdA, and secular middle class for the VVD), a number cut in half by 1994 (Table **??**). Only the secular middle class increased its support for its party (the VVD) over this period, with 30% (up from 23%) of the group voting for the VVD in 1994.

The secular middle class has quadrupled in size since 1956, when it made up 15% of the voters, compared to an average of 59% of voters from 1994-2006, with later years shown in Table **??** (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1997, 95; Aarts and Thomassen 2008, 206). This category, however, is operationalized by scholars to include all citizens who do not fit into either a religious or working-class camp, possibly overstating the true size of this pillar. Since the 1980s, however, even the secular middle class is less loyal to "its" party. As Table **??** shows, every pillar's traditional voting group has voted less and less frequently for their party; this is most pronounced for PvdA voters. The voter cohorts that came of age in the late 1970s and 1980s had a much greater percentage of middle-class voters, and much smaller percentages of religious voters, than older cohorts (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1997, 96-7).

As the religious vote declined, the PvdA attempted to polarize the system by present-

Cabinet	Election	PM Party	Other Parties
Beel	1946	KVP	PvdA
Drees I	1948	PvdA	KVP, CHU, VVD
Drees II	1951	PvdA	KVP, CHU, VVD
Drees III	1952	PvdA	KVP, CHU, ARP
Drees IV	1956	PvdA	KVP, CHU, ARP
de Quay	1959	KVP	ARP, CHU, VVD
Marijnen	1963	KVP	ARP, CHU, VVD
Cals	1965	KVP	PvdA, ARP
de Jong	1967	KVP	ARP, CHU, VVD
Biesheuvel	1971	ARP	KVP, CHU, VVD, DS'70
den Uyl	1973	PvdA	KVP, ARP, D66, PPR
van Agt I	1977	CDA	VVD
van Agt II	1981	CDA	PvdA, D66
Lubbers I	1982	CDA	VVD
Lubbers II	1986	CDA	VVD
Lubbers III	1989	CDA	PvdA
Kok I	1994	PvdA	VVD, D66
Kok II	1998	PvdA	VVD, D66
Balkenende I	2002	CDA	VVD, LPF
Balkenende II	2003	CDA	VVD, D66
Balkenende IV	2006	CDA	PvdA, CU
Rutte I	2010	VVD	CDA, PVV
Rutte II	2012	VVD	PvdA

Table 3.2: Dutch governments, 1946-2012

This table excludes interim and caretaker cabinets.

Election	% Votes
1956	72
1968	60
1977	52
1986	44
1989	42
1994	36

Table 3.3: Percentage of votes accounted for by the 'structural model'

Source: Irwin and Van Holsteyn (1997, 95).

Pillar	**1986**	**1989**	**1994**	**1998**	**2002**	**2003**	**2006**	**% Change**
Practicing Catholics	15	14	13	11	9	9	7	-53.3
Practicing Dutch Reformed	7	7	6	5	6	6	6	-14.3
Practicing Calvinists	5	7	5	5	8	7	2	-60.0
Secular working-class	29	24	23	20	14	14	29	0.0
Secular middle-class	44	48	54	58	63	64	56	27.3

Table 3.4: Percentage of Dutch population in each of the pillars, 1986-2006

Source: Aarts and Thomassen (2008, 206).

Pillar	**1986**	**1989**	**1994**	**1998**	**2002**	**2003**	**2006**	**% Change**
Practicing Catholics	67	72	53	53	66	56	61	−9.0
Practicing Dutch Reformed	59	53	43	44	54	61	53	−10.2
Practicing Calvinists	58	59	52	44	43	61	43	−25.9
Secular working-class	60	64	42	50	34	45	33	−45.0
Secular middle-class	28	23	30	31	20	23	20	−28.6

Table 3.5: Percentage of each pillar voting for its respective party, 1986-2006

CDA for the three religious groups, PvdA for secular working class, and VVD for secular middle class (Source: Aarts and Thomassen 2008, 207).

ing itself as an alternative to a KVP-led government. This contrast grew stronger after the CDA merger (Luebbert 1986, 79). In practice, the PvdA and the VVD, not the CDA, looked increasingly polarized, which led voters to see the CDA's centrist position as stable and appealing (Van der Brug 1999, 183). This held until the Christian Democrats first went into opposition in 1994, after which point the party suffered electorally. This unfamiliar role generated conflict within the party about whether to stay true to the traditional, religious/moral CDA platform or to pursue a modified course that could be more electorally beneficial. As the party has continued to lose voters, this debate has only intensified. From 1977-89, the party averaged 32.4% of the votes (compared to 28% on average for the KVP from 1946-72), and only 20.8% since 1994, dropping to an all-time low in 2010 with 13.6%, and again in 2012 with only 8.5%.

The 1994 election – which resulted in a coalition between the PvdA and VVD, alongside D66 – marked the first time when government performance played a major role in voters' decisions, with many turning against the governing parties, CDA and PvdA (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2008, 191). Before then, the major parties were routinely returned to office (the KVP/CDA in particular), regardless of economic or other challenges facing the Netherlands (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 1997, 99). This election, therefore, represented a culmination of longstanding trends – depillarization, weakening of party-voter ties, and the growing importance of issue-based voting.

A major result of the changing political structure in the Netherlands was the beginning of a more adversarial style of political competition. After the war, the major parties had felt an accommodational style of politics was appropriate for dealing with the post-war rebuilding issues and decolonization (Tromp 1990, 87). Once these problems were in the past, there was room to attack other parties more intensely on the issues of the day. Campaigns that used to be defensive, concerned with turning out the voters in the pillar, were now focused on winning voters (Irwin 1983, 69). This shift paved the way for competition over immigration, in particular, as a way to deal with the growing far right (see Chapter 4, Section 1).

Other mainstream parties

The three major parties have faced competition from smaller parties since the 1980s: the PvdA from *GroenLinks* (GreenLeft, GL), *Socialistische Partij* (Socialist Party, SP), and *Democraten 66* (Democrats 66, D66); the CDA from *ChristenUnie* (Christian Union, CU) and the far right, and the VVD from D66 and the far right (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2008, 185-6). SP and GL are considered left-wing, D66 center or center-left, and CU right-wing. Although the *Socialistische Partij* (SP) only gained its first seats in parliament in 1994, the party was founded more than twenty years earlier as the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of the Netherlands. The Communist ties were slowly abandoned during the 1980s, and by the mid-1990s, the SP began to challenge the PvdA for left-of-center voters (Krouwel and Lucardie 2008, 280, 286). Four small left-wing parties merged in 1989 to form *GroenLinks* (GL), which chose its name to signify its old (left) and new (Green) orientation (Andeweg

and Irwin 2009, 61). Neither SP nor GL has yet entered government, though both have expressed a willingness to do so, depending on the circumstances.

A group of Amsterdam intellectuals formed D66 in 1966, hoping to make the Dutch system more democratic. They campaigned on proposals to create a presidential system in the Netherlands comparable to that in the United States, complete with districts from which MPs would be elected. D66 won seven seats in 1967, just under 5%, which was (until 2002) the best result for a new party in parliament. It successfully advocated for the end of compulsory voting in 1970, though the large majority of its reform aims have failed. The party is now considered progressive and social-liberal (rather than a party aiming to radically reinvent the political system), in contrast to the conservative-liberal VVD (Andeweg and Irwin 2009, 63).

ChristenUnie (CU) was formed in 2000 as a merger of the Reformed Political Union (GPV) and the Reformed Political Federation (RPF), both smaller, fundamentalist Protestant parties that had split from the mainstream confessional parties. Unlike the other small orthodox Calvinist party – the *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij* (Political Reformed Party, SGP) – the CU has entered government. The SGP is unlikely to ever enter a coalition, and is most well-known for a 2006 court ruling that required the party to lift its ban on female members. Secularization, though it had a tremendous effect on the CDA, had very little impact for the SGP and CU. These parties have continued to attract voters from their small niche of the political spectrum and have not attempted to branch out into new areas.

Two other small mainstream parties participated in coalitions – the DS'70 in 1971 and the Political Party of Radicals (PPR) in 1973 – and though neither exists today, both are somewhat noteworthy for this reason. The Radicals offered voters a mix of Christian Democracy and ecological ideologies, and later merged into GL. DS'70 was a splinter party that broke away from the PvdA in 1970, winning eight seats in the 1971 election. It lost seven of these seats in 1977 and the eighth in 1981, and soon after was dissolved.

3.2 Mainstream parties in Austria

Unlike in the Netherlands, where parties need only win 0.67% of the national vote to enter parliament, the Austrian system has a 4% threshold. This is a major reason why the Austrian parliament routinely has one-half as many parties as the Dutch parliament. With a smaller set of parties, the coalition possibilities in Austria are also more limited, allowing the far right to play a more significant role, as will be shown in Chapter 5.

The Austrian party system, like the Dutch, is marked by religious and class cleavages, but also by the national question. After the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, the Austrian First Republic was formed, featuring predecessors to the modern-day parties and *Lager*, or political camps: Socialists, Christian-conservatives, and the pan-German camp. These camps were represented by, respectively, the *Sozialdemokratische Arbeiterpartei Österreichs*, (Social Democratic Workers' Party, SDAPÖ), the *Christlichsoziale Partei* (Christian Social Party, CS), and two pan-German parties, the *Grossdeutsche Volkspartei*

(Pan-German People's Party, GDVP) and the *Landbund* (Agrarian League). Industrial workers typically voted for the SDAP and peasants and middle classes voted for the CS. The pan-German parties attracted a more diverse group of voters: some Protestant academics, liberal Catholics, anti-clerical voters, and German nationalists (Secher 1958, 793).

Only the pan-German camp had adopted the goal of unifying Austria with Germany prior to 1918; during the First Republic, unification became the dominant goal of the Austrian public. The First Republic did not attract the political loyalties of Austrians, who considered their country to be much too small. The Christian-conservative camp felt the First Republic was a reminder of Austria's defeat and the Socialists wanted to pursue unification with Weimar Germany. If remaking the Empire was impossible, becoming part of a pan-Germanic empire seemed plausible (Pelinka 1998, 11-13). Although the public did not feel loyal to the First Republic, the three political camps attracted a tremendous amount of loyalty. Parents would pass their *Lager* loyalty to their children, who would take part in youth groups and other socialization activities, eventually passing this loyalty to their own children. Austrians were socialized into either the Catholic or the Marxist Lager from a young age, but the Austrian camps stood more strongly in contrast to one another ideologically than did the five Dutch pillars.

The Socialists were strong in "red Vienna," but the party apparatus was weak elsewhere in Austria. SDAPÖ was dominant in the period directly following the First World War, as the party capitalized on the excitement generated by the developments in Russia. The party left the Austrian cabinet after the country's constitution was signed in 1920, opting to bide its time in opposition – though the party had won the election – until the voters returned it to government with an absolute majority. The SDAPÖ continued to lose ground to the CS during the 1920s but came in first after the 1930 elections. The Socialists still lacked the majority they wanted, so again remained in opposition. Before the party could achieve its goal, the fascist sentiments spreading throughout Europe gained traction in Austria (Pelinka 1998, 114-16).

Both the SDAPÖ and CS had paramilitary groups (the Schutzbund on the left and the Heimwehr on the right), and violent clashes between the two were not uncommon. By 1930, the Christian Socials faced pressure from the growing National Socialist movement in Austria. Chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss dissolved parliament in 1933 in an effort to create one-party (Christian Social) rule, also banning the Nazi Party. Repression of the Socialists led to five days of fighting between the paramilitary groups in February 1934, after which Dollfuss also banned the Socialists and their trade unions. The Christian Socials replaced the First Republic constitution with an authoritarian constitution in May 1934, and modeled the state after that of the Italian fascists, with inspiration from the papal encyclical of 1931. Pius XI, in *Quadragesimo Anno*, warned of the dangers that would arise from communism and capitalism. The degree of overlap between party elites and the Church meant this encyclical was taken very seriously by the Christian Socials, and they proceeded to dominate the other two Lager until the Anschluss in 1938. The annexation by Germany was supported by many politicians at the time; even those on the left saw elements of socialism they liked from the Nazi government (Pelinka 1998: 182). Supporters on the left included the

SDAPÖ's Karl Renner, who would become the first post-war Austrian chancellor. After the Wehrmacht marched into Austria, the country ceased to exist independently, and fought alongside Germany during World War II. Anti-Semitism was rampant, and much of the Jewish population in Austria, of those who had not managed to flee the country, was sent to concentration camps.

For its role in the war, Austria was occupied by the four Allied powers until 1955, when the State Treaty (signed by the Allies and the Austrian government) gave the country its independence in return for a declaration of neutrality. This neutrality allowed for Austria to be armed, a condition on which the United States insisted, in the hopes of dissuading the Soviet Union from trying to take over. The ÖVP chancellor, Leopold Figl, convinced the Allies to delete a passage in the State Treaty (taken from the Allies' 1943 Moscow Declaration) that read, "Austria has a certain responsibility [for the war]." Another line from the Moscow Declaration did become part of Austria's declaration of independence in 1945, reading "Austria, the first free country to fall victim to Hitlerite aggression, shall be liberated from German domination" (Art 2006, 104-5).

Major Austrian mainstream parties

The post-war political system featured three camps, known as *Lager*, comparable to the Dutch system of pillarization: the right-wing ÖVP (Österreichische Volkspartei, Austrian People's Party), left-wing SPÖ (Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs, Social Democratic Party of Austria), and the pan-German-nationalist camp, which was initially without a party to represent it after the war. Allied forces occupied Austria from 1945 until 1955, and the first postwar government, under the direction of Karl Renner, was arranged by the Soviets. Renner's provisional government had one-third of its members from each of the ÖVP, SPÖ, and the KPÖ (*Kommunistische Partei Österreichs*, Communist Party of Austria), the latter's inclusion supported by the Soviets. The Communists won only four seats in the November 1945 elections, compared to 161 total seats for the ÖVP and SPÖ. They gained one seat in 1949, but lost all of their seats after the 1959 elections and have never returned to parliament.

The SPÖ has its roots in a pre-World War I tradition of leftism, though the present incarnation was founded in 1945. After World War II, the SPÖ moved away from its inter-war Austro-Marxism, a mix of nationalism and socialism, and toward the traditional West European social democracy of the time. The SPÖ by the 1980s supported a strong social welfare system, but also some privatization and deregulation (Luther 1992: 61). The party changed its name from the Socialist Party of Austria to the Social Democratic Party of Austria in 1991, reflecting the end of the Cold War. Like its left counterpart, the ÖVP was founded in 1945. The ÖVP continuously held the chancellor's position from 1945-70, either as part of a coalition or as a single-party government. The ÖVP moved away from its camp's traditional association with the Church but maintained an emphasis on social conservatism, which required a balance with the more economically liberal (and also socially liberal) wing of the party.

While one could join the SPÖ directly, most members of the ÖVP were indirect, meaning they were members of one of the party's three constituent parts (the League of Workers and Salaried Employees, the Business League, and the Farmer's League). Indirect membership meant that members' loyalties were first and foremost to their league, and this internal factionalization limited the scope of policies the ÖVP could propose that would satisfy their members, relative to the SPÖ (Luther 1992, 52, 80). The People's Party has historically been a confessional party, as well as the party of farmers. The agricultural population in Austria, however, has declined (as it has throughout Western Europe) since the war, and though the ÖVP attracts upwards of 80% of all agricultural voters, this group makes for an increasingly small portion of all the party's voters, down to 7% in 2006 (Plasser and Ulram 2006, 310, 313). Today, the ÖVP attracts mostly white-collar workers and members of so-called "liberal professions," meaning lawyers, doctors, and other licensed occupations, while the SPÖ is more popular with blue-collar workers, both skilled and unskilled.

Both major parties adopted what is called "Austro-keynesianism" in the 1950s, which lasted through the 1970s. This economic consensus adopted Keynesian deficit spending to boost employment and low interest rates to stimulate investment, but added twists, such as pegging to the Schilling to the German Deutsche Mark, and a social partnership that set income and price policies (Unger 1990: 68). Austria's version of consociationalism, or the "social partnership," was the way of life after the war, with both "red" (SPÖ) and "black" (ÖVP) banks, media outlets (and so forth) and cooperation between business, labor, and the government. A national *Proporz* system, meaning a relatively equivalent distribution of ministerial positions and party strength, is not unique to Austria, but its relationship to the social partnership is. The country feared returning to the partisan fighting of the interwar period, so *Proporz* worked alongside Austria's brand of consociationalism to ensure stability and compromise.

As many as half of the voters in the early postwar period were card-carrying party members of one or the other, though party membership in Austria did not mean the ideological commitment that party membership implied elsewhere in Western Europe. Recognizing the benefits that came from party membership – better access to desirable civil service jobs, apartments, and lines of credit from banks – Austrians would pick one side or the other (Sully 1997, 29). The First Republic (1918-34) Lager bases were ideological, with Marxists on the left and Catholics on the right, but the Second Republic (1945-) bases were more class-based, with farmers and businessmen on the right and the working class on the left (Höbelt 2003, 5-6). Despite the class divides, and the corresponding ideological divides, the SPÖ and ÖVP have jointly formed 60% of the coalitions during the Second Republic.

Grand coalitions – involving parties from the left and the right – have been the government of choice in Austria since World War II, one of the more unique features of the political system. From 1945-1966, Austrian governments were all grand coalitions; the single-party ÖVP government of Klaus II in 1966 broke this tradition. Following the second Klaus cabinet, the SPÖ headed four successive single-party governments, Kreisky I-IV, from 1970 until 1983 (Table 3.6). It was not until the 1980s that coalition negotiations as we know them today, with parties evaluating multiple options and bargaining over policy, began to take

place.

Cabinet	Election	PM Party	Junior Party
Figl I	1945	ÖVP	SPÖ
Figl II	1949	ÖVP	SPÖ
Raab I	1953	ÖVP	SPÖ
Raab II	1956	ÖVP	SPÖ
Raab III	1959	ÖVP	SPÖ
Gorbach II	1962	ÖVP	SPÖ
Klaus II	1966	ÖVP	
Kreisky I	1970	SPÖ	
Kreisky II	1971	SPÖ	
Kreisky III	1975	SPÖ	
Kreisky IV	1979	SPÖ	
Sinowatz	1983	SPÖ	FPÖ

Table 3.6: Austrian governments, 1945-83

This table excludes interim and caretaker cabinets.

Consensus politics was the state of affairs after war's end, due in no small part to the occupying Allied troops and to the rupture between red and black that led to civil war in the 1930s. The dominant sentiment in Austria was that a broad-based coalition was best suited to deal with the aftermath of the war, and that important decisions should be made with support of a large majority from both the left and the right of the political spectrum.

The decline of the two-party system in Austria

The Austrian party system had six key features during the first three decades of the post-war system: the three *Lager* (of which only two had substantial electoral success), two-party dominance, a small number of parliamentary parties, grand coalitions, a shared commitment to Austrian national identity between the left and right, and the social partnership (Luther 1989, 3). With the end of occupation, one of the key elements that had brought the grand coalition together disappeared, yet both parties feared the other would gain too much power if the grand coalition were ended (Sully 1981, 20). Both the SPÖ and the ÖVP – but the ÖVP in particular – grew unhappy with the lack of progress made by the partnership, which eventually contributed to the first single-party government in post-war Austria.

Luther and Müller (1992, 201-2) cite the forces of urbanization, secularization, and de-ideologization as undermining the traditional *Lager* mentality. As in the Netherlands, Austria has undergone a process of depillarization. Younger generations are increasingly less tied to a particular party and less supportive of consociationalism. This has prompted a move from politics as cooperation to politics as competition, particularly after both the SPÖ and

ÖVP saw the benefits that could be gained from single-party governments in the 1960s and 1970s. Table 3.7, below, shows that, between 1983 and 1990, the two major Austrian parties suffered a combined loss of nearly 17% of the national vote. Their combined membership loss during this period is estimated at about 200,000 individuals (Luther 1992, 51). Both parties experienced comparable decline from the beginning to the end of this period, but the SPÖ was much stronger than the ÖVP from the 1970s-1990s.

	Votes (%)			Seats		
Election	**SPÖ**	**ÖVP**	**Total %**	**SPÖ**	**ÖVP**	**Total %**
1945	44.6	49.8	94.4	76	85	97.6
1949	38.7	44.0	82.7	67	77	87.3
1953	42.1	41.3	83.4	73	74	89.1
1956	43.0	46.0	89.0	74	82	94.6
1959	44.8	44.2	89.0	78	79	95.2
1962	44.0	45.4	89.4	76	81	95.2
1966	42.6	48.3	90.9	74	85	96.4
1970	48.4	44.7	93.1	81	78	96.4
1971	50.0	43.1	93.1	93	80	94.5
1975	50.4	42.9	93.3	93	80	94.5
1979	51.0	41.9	92.9	95	77	94.0
1983	47.7	43.2	90.9	90	81	93.4
1986	43.1	41.3	84.4	80	77	85.8
1990	42.8	32.1	74.9	80	60	76.5
1994	34.9	27.7	62.6	65	52	63.9
1995	38.1	28.3	66.4	71	52	67.2
1999	33.2	26.9	60.1	65	52	63.9
2002	36.5	42.3	78.8	69	79	80.9
2006	35.3	34.3	69.6	66	68	73.2
2008	29.3	26.0	55.3	57	51	59.0
2013	26.8	24.0	50.8	52	47	54.1

Table 3.7: Major Austrian parties' *Nationalrat* vote and seat totals, 1945-2013

The lost voters flocked to two parties: the Greens (*Die Grünen – Die Grüne Alternative*, the Greens – the Green Alternative) and the far-right FPÖ (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, Freedom Party of Austria). The Greens have, since their 1986 founding, received an average of 7.5% of the national vote share, closer to the 10% mark in the three most recent elections, though they have never been in a government coalition. Only once have the Greens had enough votes to potentially form a two-party coalition (in 2002, with the ÖVP). The party has often benefitted electorally from discontent with the grand coalition, providing an option for left-leaning voters unhappy with the SPÖ. Advocating for environmental issues and

opposing anti-immigration measures, Greens attract a younger, more educated base than do the other parliamentary parties.

Austria is notable among Western European countries for its lack of a liberal party, although the Liberal Forum briefly represented this party family in the mid-1990s (discussed in the following section). During the nineteenth century, the Austrian liberal movement was, at its heart, nationalist. The anti-liberal sentiments emerging from the Panic of 1873 (a severe international financial crisis) eventually split the movement into liberal and nationalist factions (Pulzer 1988, 123, 130). By World War I, the three *Lager* of postwar Austria had emerged, taking the forms of Socialism/Marxism, nationalism, and Catholicism; there was no designated space for liberalism, so it was again lumped in with the nationalist group in the third *Lager*. The late 1800s tensions between these two ideologies re-emerged in the post-World War II period, and the nationalist faction eventually was, once again, dominant. Today, economic liberalism can be found in parts of the ÖVP's platforms, while the Greens advocate for the social liberal aspects of contemporary politics.

3.3 The politics of the past

The Dutch and Austrian populations had very different experiences with World War II – the Netherlands was invaded by Germany in 1940, surrendering after a massive bombing campaign destroyed the city of Rotterdam, quite unlike the warm reception German soldiers received when marching into Austria in 1938. This legacy has shaped both how political elites approached the reintegration of those involved with the war and, importantly for this topic, the climate of tolerance (or lack thereof) for far right parties.

Fascist parties never had strong roots in the Netherlands prior to World War II (Lucardie 2000, 2; Mudde and Van Holsteyn 2000, 164). Mussolini's takeover in Italy inspired several groups with "fascist" in their names, though their ideologies were inconsistent (and sometimes not actually fascist). After Hitler came to power, these groups rebranded themselves as National Socialists, alongside new organizations. There was no coordination on the part of these extremist groups, who fought amongst themselves; as many as five organizations called themselves National Socialists at this point (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 2000, 144-5).

Only one of these parties managed minor successes: The *Nationaal Socialistische Beweging* (National Socialist Movement, NSB), founded in 1931, won just over 4% of the national vote in 1937. The NSB's ideology was not racist or anti-Semitic and thus looked less like the NSDAP and more like other fascist groups of the time. NSB founder Anton Mussert was not a follower of Hitler, but was drawn to the label "National Socialist" as an alternative to "fascist" (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 2000, 145). After German occupation, the NSB – the closest Dutch relative of the Nazi Party, despite their ideological differences – became the only political party in the Netherlands and membership quadrupled to about 100,000 (Art 2011: 77). NSB members were placed in mayoral, judicial, and media positions by the Germans, and thousands of them joined the *Nederlandsche SS*, fighting on the eastern front (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 2000, 145).

Many in the Netherlands were appalled by this collaboration with the Nazis, starting with the royal family. Queen Wilhelmina – while in exile – signed the "Resolution Concerning the Dissolution of Treasonous Organizations" in September 1944. This resolution banned some thirty different fascist organizations, including the NSB. After the war, under the so-called 'no tolerance' approach to fascism, more than 100,000 collaborators were interned, and those affiliated with the NSB and the Dutch Waffen-SS lost political rights (Mudde 2000, 117). The 1944 resolution also applied to organizations that attempted to form later; one such party (the National European Social Movement) formed in 1951 and was banned under the resolution in 1955 (Art 2011, 77-8). This prompted some on the far right to seek alliances with people who were not tainted by ties with the NSB or the SS, in an effort to start a party that would not be banned. Their National Opposition Union received only 0.3% of the 1956 vote and faded away soon after (Mudde 2000, 117-8). No extreme- or far-right parties emerged in the Netherlands for more than fifteen years, due to the anti-fascist climate in the country.

The Austrian political elite took a markedly different approach to its past. The postwar victim narrative – the idea that Austria was Hitler's first victim – was adopted by both the SPÖ and the ÖVP, and served two purposes: First, it provided the basis for what was to become consociational democracy in Austria by providing the major parties a shared "other," rather than having the two parties turn on each other. Together, the parties built a new national identity, the cornerstone of which was viewing Austrians as distinct from Germans. Second, the victim narrative allowed former Nazis to be reintegrated into society without much difficulty (Art 2006, 107-9). In Austria, the main parties were left in charge of denazification, and could decide who had been a major player during the war and who was simply a *Mitläufer*, or fellow traveler; in Germany, by contrast, these decisions were made by the Allied powers. The Austrian parties' role meant that nearly half a million individuals were classified as *Mitläufer*, re-enfranchised in 1949, and cultivated by both the left and the right. This group represented more than 70% of the Austrian Nazi Party membership, which itself comprised more than 10% of the Austrian population at the time (Bukey 2002); the prominent Austrian Nazis were not included with the *Mitläufer*. The ÖVP went as far as to attempt brokering secret deals with former SS leaders, promising the ability to name 25 ÖVP candidates in secure seats in exchange for delivering the vote of newly enfranchised Nazis (Art 2006, 110).

This pattern of including former Nazis in the mainstream parties extended to the left. In 1970, the SPÖ (led by Bruno Kreisky) won an absolute majority in the legislature. Four of Kreisky's nominees for ministerial positions were former NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, National Socialist German Workers' Party – or Nazi Party) members. The most controversial of the four was Karl Öllinger, who had been a Waffen SS member. When details of his wartime involvement in massacres were published in the German Der Spiegel, Kreisky replaced Öllinger with another (less controversial) former Nazi member, prompting Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal to release documents about other Kreisky nominees. Even the ÖVP and its allied newspapers supported Kreisky's decision, opting not to use the opportunity to discredit their political rivals.

Discussion of Austria's role in the war was avoided by both left and right until former U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim's bid for federal president in 1986. The role of federal president is, in Austria's parliamentary system, largely ceremonial, though the president is tasked with appointing the chancellor and his ministers. Both the SPÖ and ÖVP attempted to land Waldheim as their presidential candidate in the months before the election, as both sides his U.N. credentials would make him a sure winner. Waldheim opted for the ÖVP, and after thoughts of also supporting Waldheim and not run an opposing candidate, the SPÖ decided to support Kurt Steyrer.

According to Waldheim, his wartime experiences involved writing his dissertation and being away from the front, and he denied involvement in Nazi organizations. Media outlets debunked this story in late 1985. Waldheim was alleged to have spent much of the war serving under a general who had himself been hanged for war crimes and to have been a member of the Nazi Student Union. He was not definitively linked to the committing of atrocities, though many believed he was at least aware of what was happening. Although Austrians rallied behind Waldheim, who nearly won the election outright in the first round (and did win in the second), his international reputation was ruined, as, for example, the US government placed him on its watch list. The ÖVP was predictably outraged, while the SPÖ said little about the controversy.

After Waldheim's election, three-quarters of Austrians agreed that it would be preferable not to talk about Austria's Nazi past, an increase of nearly 20% in the course of two years (Art 2006, 142). Social Democrat Chancellor Franz Vranitzky spoke about Austria's role in the Holocaust during a speech in 1991, acknowledging complicity without apologizing. His comments were not widely published, and Vranitzky did not pursue this line further, likely because the issue had very little support within his own ranks (Art 2006, 133-4). It was not until after the 2000 ÖVP-FPÖ coalition that SPÖ leader Alfred Gusenbauer, in attempt to set itself apart from its right-wing competitors, released statements about the party's "brown spots." These included Karl Renner's – the first post-war president and SPÖ leader – support for the Anschluss and Kreisky's integration of Nazis into the party.

3.4 The far right in the Netherlands

Both the Netherlands and Austria had far right parties emerge in the 1980s, though the far right was electorally significant only in Austria until the 21st century. The Dutch far right averaged 0.4% of the national vote in four elections from 1981-98, while the Austrian far right won an average of 19.5% in five elections in the same two decades (1986-99). However, two more recent Dutch far right parties have achieved electoral success comparable to that of their Austrian counterparts, winning an average of 10.8% in the five elections since 2002. This section begins with the two unsuccessful far right parties in the Netherlands – the Center Party and the Center Democrats – and then explores the two successful far right parties, those led by Pim Fortuyn and Geert Wilders.

The unsuccessful far right in the Netherlands: The CP and CD

The first notable far-right party to emerge in the Netherlands was the *Nederlandse Volks-Unie* (Dutch People's Union, NVU) in 1971. Led by Joop Glimmerveen, the NVU campaigned with slogans such as, "The Hague must stay white and safe! Away with the Surinamese and Antillianese who parasite on our energy and welfare," and the comparable "keep the Netherlands white" in national elections (Husbands 1992, 110; Lucardie 2000, 3). Although an Amsterdam court ruling banning the party from competing in the 1978 local election, on the grounds that the NVU was a "criminal organization," was later overturned by the Dutch Supreme Court, the NVU never topped more than 0.4% in a national election (that result coming in 1977) and soon disappeared (Art 2011, 78-9).

Former NVU members founded the *Nationale Centrumpartij* (National Center Party, NCP) in late 1979, hoping the use of "center" in their name would allow them to distance themselves from the stigma associated with the NVU. This effort was short-lived, as several NCP members attacked Moroccan immigrants sheltering in an Amsterdam church following one of the first party meetings. Public protests and negative media attention prompted the party to disband in March 1980. However, one of the NVU and NCP founders, Henry Brookman, founded the *Centrumpartij* (CP) the next day. The goal of the CP was to "[preserve] Dutch culture" while also advocating for more involvement of average citizens in the political workings of the country; its initial election manifesto in 1981 focused on immigration (Lucardie 2000, 3).

The CP contested the 1981 national election but failed to cross the minimum threshold. The party had another chance in 1982 after the van Agt cabinet fell apart, and it won 0.8% of the vote and one seat in the *Tweede Kamer*. In cities with high immigrant populations, such as Rotterdam, the CP performed much better than its national average, winning as much as 4% of the vote (Art 2011, 80). Brookman was a professor in Amsterdam, and pressure from his university caused him to take a backseat role in his own party. Instead, he put Hans Janmaat – who was somewhat of a political journeyman, having been a member of both left- and right-wing parties, and therefore thought to be flexible in his ideology – forward as the face of the CP (Art 2011, 79).

Janmaat was the first far-right MP to enter the Dutch parliament, but soon found himself without a party. The more extreme faction within the CP felt Janmaat was not similarly extreme and expelled him from the party in 1984. Janmaat almost immediately joined the *Centrumdemocraten* (Center Democrats, CD), formed a month earlier by sympathetic former CP members. Although Janmaat was not involved with the CD's founding, it is usually thought of as his party. The CD's platform called for excluding immigrants and their children – even if born in the Netherlands – from public service, compelling unemployed immigrants to return to their home country, and prohibiting immigrants from receiving social security or health care benefits (Lucardie 1998, 118). Janmaat and the CD lost their single parliamentary seat in 1986, winning only 0.1% of the national vote, largely as a result of competition for voters with the CP (Mudde 2000, 123).

Most of the moderate CP members had, by this point, left the party – some followed

Janmaat to the CD, while others were threatened by their employers unless they ceased their affiliation with the CP. The CP failed to reach the threshold in 1986 and was left outside parliament, despite its efforts just to contest the elections: In order to obtain the required number of signatures to compete, members claimed to be collecting signatures for a petition against rent increases. After a court found the CP guilty of electoral fraud and ordered financial compensation, the party went bankrupt – losing its parliamentary seats meant losing substantial amounts of its funding – and was dissolved in May 1986. Some CP members decide to re-form as the CP'86 later that year, but the party was unable to attract enough candidates to contest the 1989 elections (Art 2011, 80). The CP'86's ideology was largely identical to that of the CP, and it too suffered from a lack of funding, going so far as to rely on the extreme-right German NPD (National Democratic Party of Germany) for financial help with its party materials.

The CD, on the other hand, had a small but dedicated membership and was able to hand out literature to thousands of voters, generating attention from the public and the media (Mudde 2000, 124). In 1989, the party won one seat in the *Tweede Kamer* with 0.9% of the vote. Support for the CD grew as immigration became a mainstream political topic (see Chapter 4, Section 1), and in late 1993, polling suggested the CD could win as much as 5% of the vote in the 1994 election. Instead, a massive wave of negative media attention – in part due to undercover journalists who had infiltrated the party and wrote of the neo-Nazi sympathies and violent actions of some CD members – dropped the CD to 2.5% and three seats in the May 1994 election (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 1994, 131). Though the party performed worse than expected, PvdA leader – and soon-to-be Prime Minister – Wim Kok denounced this result as a "black day in Dutch history" (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 1994, 132).

Janmaat was increasingly anxious about government actions against him and his party, which, by this point, had lost the vast majority of its members. Part of his concern stemmed from the Dutch Supreme Court banning the CP'86 in 1997 for promoting discrimination against immigrants and endangering the public order, charges similar to what Janmaat had himself faced (Lucardie 2000, 4-5). The 1998 elections were the end for Janmaat's party, as the CD came in under the threshold and lost all seats. Part of its late-1990s electoral struggles were the result of new laws requiring more signatures from each district, and the CD – though it bought signatures from drug addicts and the homeless in an effort to reach the minimum – was not able to contest the election nationwide (Mudde 2000, 127).

Why were these parties – the CP, CD, and the CP'86 – unable to succeed, despite widespread concerns about immigration among the public? (see results in Table **??**, and discussion of immigration attitudes in Chapter 2, Section 3, and Chapter 4). Scholars frequently point to the anti-far-right atmosphere pervasive in Dutch political life, which began with Queen Wilhelmina's no-tolerance resolution in 1944. Although extremists may have been unlikely to care about stigmatization or losing their jobs, sympathizers who would have been viable candidates for office were likely dissuaded from joining the party and/or standing for election. Both white-collar and blue-collar members were threatened with unemployment once they became visible members of one of the Dutch far right parties. After losing his

seat in 1986, Hans Janmaat attempted to return to his former job as a schoolteacher, a job to which the courts ruled he was still entitled. The school refused to give Janmaat his job and instead received permission from the court to pay Janmaat's salary without letting him return to work (Art 2011, 83). Some of the threat came from members of the public, as well. During a meeting between the CD and CP'86 in 1986, where the parties planned to discuss a possible merger, anti-fascist activists set fire to the building – one of the most notable examples of anti-fascist-led violence against these parties. Social stigmatization made it difficult for members of far-right parties to maintain relationships with family and friends (Linden and Klandermans 2006). Voting for the NVU, CP, or CD meant you were viewed as part of the "racist electorate" in the 1980s (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 2000, 153).

Party	1981		1982		1986		1989		1994		1998	
CDA	30.8	(48)	29.4	(45)	34.6	(54)	35.3	(54)	22.2	(34)	18.4	(29)
VVD	17.3	(26)	23.1	(36)	17.4	(27)	14.6	(22)	20.0	(31)	24.7	(38)
PvdA	28.3	(44)	30.4	(47)	33.3	(52)	31.9	(49)	24.0	(37)	29.0	(45)
CP/CP'86	0.1	(0)	0.8	(1)	0.4	(0)			0.4	(0)		
CD							0.9	(1)	2.5	(2)	0.6	(0)
SP	0.3	(0)	0.5	(0)	0.4	(0)	0.4	(0)	1.3	(2)	3.5	(5)
GL							4.1	(6)	3.5	(5)	7.3	(11)
D66	11.1	(17)	4.3	(6)	6.1	(9)	7.9	(12)	15.5	(24)	9.0	(14)
Other	12.1	(15)	11.5	(15)	7.8	(8)	4.9	(6)	11.1	(14)	7.6	(8)

Table 3.8: Dutch *Tweede Kamer* results, 1981-98

The table shows percent of votes on the left and number of seats on the right, in parentheses. The *Tweede Kamer* has 150 seats.

It is not the case that the Dutch public was opposed to supporting anti-immigrant parties. Dutch voters lacked 'acceptable' anti-immigrant parties, ones without neo-fascist roots, and were operating in a political environment where the dominant elite consensus made no room for far right parties. Once voters were presented with more acceptable options, and once elite support of multiculturalism wavered, the anti-immigrant right made significant electoral breakthroughs, discussed below.

The successful far right in the Netherlands: The LPF and the PVV

Some of the statements that caused criminal charges and fines to be levied in the 1980s have since become part of acceptable rhetoric on immigration (see Chapter 4, Section 1). As Art (2011, 180) says, the success of the far-right LPF in 2002 shows that there was "significant demand for anti-immigrant parties in the Netherlands," and Mudde and van Holsteyn (2000, 161) argue that Dutch attitudes about immigration were not significantly different from elsewhere in Western Europe during this period, and are thus an inadequate explanation for why the far right did not succeed electorally in the 1980s and 1990s.

The first electorally successful Dutch far-right party was formed in early 2002 by Pim Fortuyn, a former sociology professor. Fortuyn had been tapped to lead a small 'quality of life' movement party, *Leefbaar Nederland* (Livable Netherlands, LN), in 2001. The LN leadership knew Fortuyn from his critical newspaper columns about the "purple" coalitions of PvdA-VVD-D66 under Wim Kok – namely, the government's pro-multiculturalism and pro-European stances – and his book, "Against the Islamization of our Culture" (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2004, 552; Lucardie 2003, 1044). Fortuyn had previously been an active member of the PvdA, leaving the party in 1989 after feeling that Labour was not willing to acknowledge problems involving immigration and integration, also citing personal problems with Kok (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 248).

In February 2002, Fortuyn described Islam as a "backward culture" and said the Netherlands should not admit any new asylum seekers, adding that, if statements such as his were outlawed under the Dutch constitution, that the offending article should be repealed (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2004, 552). He was dismissed by the LN the next day; the day after that, he announced the creation of his own party, *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (Pim Fortuyn's List, LPF). The LPF's ideology has been described as "eclectic but not necessarily incoherent" amalgam of policies – wanting the state heavily involved in regulating immigration and law and order, for example, while completely removed from private matters (such as sexual behavior and drug use). Fortuyn imagined a "contract society" in which every worker would be an "entrepreneur of his own labor," negotiating directly with employers and eliminating the need for unions, and called for "giving the country back to the people of the country" (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 250).

Because the LPF was more socially liberal than many other far-right parties – Fortuyn was open about his homosexuality and support of gay rights – and also more neo-liberal economically, some scholars (e.g. Mudde 2007, 48; Pennings and Keman 2003, 62) consider the party outside the far right. As explained in earlier chapters, far-right parties do not all share one economic stance, and more important than the 'defense of traditional values' is the defense of national values – in the Dutch case, this includes some socially liberal positions not espoused by far right parties in other countries.

While leaving a radio station where he had just been interviewed, Pim Fortuyn was assassinated by an animal rights activist on May 6, 2002. During the trial, the perpetrator said he committed the murder to stop Fortuyn from scapegoating Muslims and scoring political points by targeting the weaker members of society. The shooting came just nine days before the election, and all parties agreed to stop their campaigns. It was too late, by law, to remove Fortuyn's name from the ballot, and the election went on as scheduled. His namesake party received a staggering 17% of the vote, the most ever by a new party in the Netherlands. Immigration, rather than feelings of sympathy or protest, drove voters to the LPF in 2002, most of whom had planned to vote for the LPF prior to Fortuyn's murder (Van der Brug and Fennema 2003, 102; Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 249-50).

Without its leader, the LPF soon splintered. Fortuyn's message drew support from people on both the left and the right of the political spectrum, but opposition to immigration was the only uniting feature for these party members. The day after Fortuyn's murder, LPF leaders

began fighting amongst themselves to determine who would guide the party's direction. Between May and October, the party had multiple leaders and even more would-be leaders, one of whom claimed Fortuyn had previously told her he wanted her to be his successor, a claim other MPs rejected (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 252-4). Complicating matters, the LPF lacked qualified MPs. Fortuyn had less than two months from the formation of his party to the finalizing of his candidate slate, and expressed dismay at the "incompetent" candidates he was thus forced to field (Art 2011, 181). Although the party gained nine ministerial positions in the government, they were pulled from less-than-ideal sources – the economic minister, for example, was recruited because he was a neighbor of an LPF member (Art 2011, 183).

The LPF's short tenure in office was dominated by infighting. The first acting leader resigned in August 2002, a month after the cabinet's swearing-in, after criticisms about his debating in the chamber. A new leadership battle ensued, and the victor faced even more criticism after botching a speech about the government's proposed budget. An assistant to one of the LPF's MPs leaked a memo to the press about the incompetence of the party leadership, spurring even more heated debate and a third leadership change in September. By October, two LPF ministers – the new party leader, and the man who felt he should have been named party leader – were no longer on speaking terms. As neither would resign, and neither would agree to cooperate with the other, the CDA and VVD leadership decided the coalition must be terminated (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 252-4). At the 2003 snap elections, the LPF won one-third of its share from the previous year (5.7%) and lost all seats in the 2006 election before dissolving in January 2008. By this point, a new far-right party had taken over in the space the LPF previously occupied.

During the Dutch presidency of the European Council, in the second half of 2004, a date was set for negotiations to begin between the EU and Turkey about Turkish accession. This was presided over by the CDA-led government, which included the VVD and D66. Strong opposition to Turkish membership led a VVD MP, Geert Wilders, to write a ten-point manifesto calling for the party to move further to the right by adopting a series of policies, including saying no to Turkish membership, cutting foreign aid, and instituting a 'three strikes' rule for criminals. Liberal leaders were unhappy with Wilders and the attention brought to the issue, as they were unwilling to take an anti-Turkey stance. Wilders' dissatisfaction with the VVD prompted him to leave his party in September 2004. He remained in parliament as an independent MP, officially as part of *Groep Wilders*, or Group Wilders. In early 2005, the parliament agreed to set the date for a public referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty (ECT) for June 1. Although the three governing parties and the two main opposition parties (the PvdA and GL) all supported the treaty, they could not agree on a common arguments with which to convince the public, and all of these parties had some number of members unwilling to encourage a yes vote. The "no" camp of smaller parties – SP, CU, SGP – did not have a common message but did have strong MP support for its position. Wilders quickly linked the referendum to his opposition to Turkish membership and embarked on a national bus tour to encourage "no" votes (Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 1202-3).

With a majority of voters (61.5%) voting against the ECT, including most left-leaning voters and many supporters of the governing parties, Wilders capitalized on his ECT campaign momentum and formed his own party, the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (Party for Freedom, PVV) in 2006. The LPF still held parliamentary seats at this point, though no one expected an electoral recovery, and some of its supporters were drawn to Wilders' message. After the government fell and early elections were called for 2006 (see Chapter 6, Section 4), Wilders' party entered parliament with 5.9% of the national vote and nine seats. The PVV won 24 seats in 2010 but dropped to 15 in 2012; the party nevertheless is likely to remain a significant force in Dutch politics.

Perhaps learning from the implosion of the LPF, Wilders keeps a tight reign on his party. Officially, there is only one member of the PVV – Wilders – and as the lone decision-maker, he personally selects and coaches his MPs. Wilders has taken Fortuyn's anti-immigrant stances further, however, protesting that Islam is an ideology, not a religion, and that Muslim immigration is therefore a significant threat to Dutch society and should be prohibited. PVV concerns about Muslim culture include possible economic and security threats, as well as Islamic discrimination against women and gay people, the equal treatment of whom is a fundamental aspect of Dutch society.

Party	**2002**		**2003**		**2006**		**2010**		**2012**	
CDA	27.9	(43)	28.6	(44)	26.5	(41)	13.6	(21)	8.5	(13)
VVD	15.4	(24)	17.9	(28)	14.7	(22)	20.5	(31)	26.6	(41)
PvdA	15.1	(23)	27.3	(42)	21.2	(33)	19.6	(30)	24.8	(38)
LPF	17.0	(26)	5.7	(8)	0.2	(0)				
PVV					5.9	(9)	15.5	(24)	10.1	(15)
SP	5.9	(9)	6.3	(9)	16.6	(25)	9.8	(15)	9.7	(15)
GL	7.0	(10)	5.1	(8)	4.6	(7)	6.7	(10)	2.3	(4)
D66	5.1	(7)	4.1	(6)	2.0	(3)	6.9	(10)	8.0	(12)
CU	4.0	(4)	2.1	(3)	4.0	(6)	3.3	(5)	3.1	(5)
Other	2.5	(4)	2.9	(2)	4.4	(4)	4.1	(4)	6.9	(7)

Table 3.9: Dutch electoral results, 2002-12 (percent of votes, with seats in parentheses)

The table shows percent of votes on the left and number of seats on the right, in parentheses. The *Tweede Kamer* has 150 seats.

Both successful Dutch far right parties have entered national coalitions, and by virtue of their size (see Table 3.9), as well as their ideological separation from the fascist parties of the early twentieth century, have been more readily accepted into political life by the mainstream parties. As an example, a D66 leader expressed his party's "professional respect" for the PVV, saying D66 sometimes supports the PVV's motions and votes the same way on issues (Art 2011, 1987). This is in sharp contrast to statements made by the party's leader in 1994 that the election outcome was "victory for all of us [because] the CD did not win so [many seats]" (Mudde and Van Holsteyn 1994, 132).

3.5 The far right in Austria

The Austrian far right, as noted earlier, has been electorally successful since its establishment in the 1980s, averaging 17.5% of the national vote in nine elections from 1986-2013. It has had the benefit of operating in a far more permissive political context than that of the Dutch far right. The *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (Freedom Party of Austria, FPÖ) is the present incarnation of the historical pan-German *Lager* that has existed for nearly 150 years in Austria. This camp served as a 'national-liberal' alternative to the other two camps – socialism and Catholicism, represented by the predecessors of the SPÖ and ÖVP – in the early twentieth century but became the home of the Nazis in the interwar period. Austrian liberals had, from the time of the Habsburg Empire, believed strongly in German nationalism, and wanted to preserve the dominance of German language and culture in Austria (Höbelt 2003, 8). In the Austrian First Republic, both third Lager parties (the *Grossdeutsche Volkspartei*, or Pan-German People's Party, and the *Landbund*, or Agrarian League) were German-nationalist and anti-Semitic (Mitten 2002, 182).

The pan-German camp's ties to the Nazis meant that Allied occupiers only allowed the first two camps to compete in elections in 1945, but there was a growing desire to have a third option (other than the Communists) for those unhappy with the two dominant mainstream parties. The result was the VdU (*Verband der Unabhängigen*, League of Independents), formed in 1949. Anticipating that the VdU would cut into its voter base, the ÖVP asked the Allies not to allow its formation; the SPÖ expected the same result, and thus lobbied for the VdU's formation. The VdU stood for normalization – ending of wartime restrictions and rehabilitation of former Nazis – and a market-based economic approach (Höbelt 2003, 8). The VdU leader, Herbert Kraus, put forth a vision of Austria as part of a united Europe, where German culture played a major role, but shied away from explicit pan-Germanism (Sully 1981, 100). Kraus had served in the German army but had not been part of the National Socialists.

The VdU contested the 1949 and 1953 elections, winning 11.7 and 10.9% of the vote, respectively, and, contrary to the SPÖ's expectations, took votes from both right and left. Internal tensions started to emerge, however, between the nationalist wing and the more liberal, moderate wing of the VdU. The party soon broke down and merged with the Free Party (*Frei Partei*, FP), which had just formed, to create the FPÖ in 1955. Anton Reinthaller, a former Nazi who had served in the Austrian government after the *Anschluss*, led the new FPÖ. With the SPÖ and ÖVP having tried for a decade to appeal to former Nazis, most of this group had already aligned with one of the two parties. Yet, former Nazis made up a larger percentage of early FPÖ members than they did in either mainstream party. Most of the FPÖ's leadership represented the "war generation," meaning people who had served during the war, though few had reached high-ranking positions within the NSDAP. The underpinnings of the party's first program, targeted at NSDAP supporters, were German nationalism, an opposition to Communism, and a campaign against the two dominant parties; the FPÖ wanted to change the social partnership and the *Proporz* system (Heinisch 2002, 108).

The tensions between the liberal and nationalist wings of the FPÖ have asserted themselves repeatedly throughout the party's history. In the 1960s, the party embarked on a mission to liberalize, which lasted almost without interruption until 1986, when a marked rightward shift took place. Elected in 1959 and representing the liberal wing of the party, leader Friedrich Peter attempted to liberalize the FPÖ in the model of the German Free Democratic Party (FDP) during the 1960s and to free the party of its perceived associations with Nazism. Peter's liberalization brought the party's elites further away from its base, which was not liberalizing (Art 2006, 178). The 1968 party program, for example, identified the FPÖ as occupying the "nationalist-libertarian middle" of the spectrum, and took pages from the playbooks of both the SPÖ and the ÖVP (Heinisch 2002: 108-9). The FPÖ wanted to end the social partnership, reward individual self-reliance and responsibility, and push for the modernization of society.

Under Peter, the FPÖ moved from what Luther (2000, 428-9) called its "ghetto" period, marked by declining votes (see Table 3.10) and political exclusion, into its "normalization" period, during which its vote share stabilized and its relations with the other parties became somewhat less hostile. Peter was succeeded by Graz mayor Alexander Götz, from the right wing of the FPÖ, in 1978. Götz resigned a year later, feeling the party was not unified in supporting him, and was succeeded by Norbert Steger, Peter's preferred successor, who ushered in the era of "acceptance" (Luther 2000). As part of the post-war generation, Steger was personally untainted by allegations of war crimes or fascism. He represented, like Peter, the liberal wing of the FPÖ, and he criticized the party's direction under Götz's brief tenure, feeling it had moved too far to the right. Under his leadership, the FPÖ – declared a "national-liberal" party by Steger – entered a coalition with the SPÖ in 1983 (see Chapter 8, Section 1).

At the same time, a young nationalist-wing FPÖ member from the province of Carinthia was growing in popularity in his home region. Carinthia had long been a stronghold of the nationalist wing of the party, and as a result, Jörg Haider's overtures to Nazism were particularly welcome. Speaking to crowds of Austrian World War II veterans – some from the SS – he would make statements such as, "you have created the foundation of peace and freedom" (Heinisch 2002, 87). In addition to the strong German nationalist presence, Carinthia was also home to a large number of ethnic Slovenes as a result of its shared border with Slovenia. Linguistic and cultural tensions between the Carinthian Slovenes and the majority German-speaking population are a regular feature of life in the state. Haider once sparked a national debate on the meaning of Austrian national identity after saying that "if somebody is free to consider himself a Slovene-Austrian... it must be possible to consider oneself a German-Austrian" (Heinisch 2002, 88).

Pandering to the nationalists paid off. Haider took over as Carinthian party leader in 1983 and, in his first provincial election, won 16% of the votes, the then-largest total ever for the FPÖ in the region (Table 3.11; the VdU received 20.6 and 16.9% of the votes in 1949 and 1953, respectively). Haider thus won the loyalty of this important provincial party base, and with backing assured, set his sights on Steger and the national chairmanship. The FPÖ had dropped below the 4% threshold in recent polls, and many in the party knew something had

Election	**Vote %**
1956	6.5
1959	7.7
1962	7.0
1966	5.4
1970	5.5
1971	5.5
1975	5.4
1979	6.1
1983	5.0
Average	6.0

Table 3.10: FPÖ's national vote share, pre-Haider period (1956-83)

to be done. The nationalist wing of the party and the majority of the base supported Haider, who had turned the party's fortunes around in Carinthia. At the FPÖ party conference in September 1986, Haider was elected as the new leader with 58% of the members' vote. The clear swing back toward its nationalist camp meant immediate improvement in the party's vote share, but raised questions both within Austria and throughout Europe about the appropriateness of such a party in a democratic system. Within a few years, the liberal elements of the FPÖ had defected, leaving only the nationalists behind. In 1985, only 30% of respondents saw the FPÖ was "rather right" or "very right," a number that jumped to 70% by 2000 (Plasser and Ulram 2000, 236).

After Haider's first national election in 1986, the party nearly doubled its previous vote share from 5% in 1983 to 9.7% in 1986 (Table 3.12). Haider fully embraced the party's nationalist roots, though began to distance the FPÖ from traditional German ethnic nationalism, moving instead toward a cultural nationalism belonging specifically to Austria. The FPÖ abandoned the third *Lager*'s anti-clerical position, talking about itself as an "ideal partner of Christian churches" (Ellinas 2008, 12). From the opposition, the FPÖ became a strong critic of the government – both the red and black dominance as well as corruption – and the government's inability to represent the Austrian people. These changes allowed the party to appeal to more voters, and to take full advantage of the "foreigners issue" in the 1990s (Ellinas 2008, 11). The hallmark issue for far right parties in Western Europe – opposition to immigration, in the form of a xenophobic nationalism – was picked up by the FPÖ in the early 1990s. The breakup of the Soviet Union and the war in Yugoslavia created a massive exodus, and Austria, positioned on the northern border of Yugoslavia, was the first destination for those fleeing their country. One of Haider's most famous immigration proposals, "Austria First," was launched in 1993, with twelve proposals to limit immigration, including adding "Austria is not a country of immigration" to the constitution, ensuring that the ten-year waiting period for citizenship is followed, and establishing a foundation for Eastern European would-be migrants to prevent them from coming to Austria (Sully 1997,

Election	Vote %
1956	15.7
1960	14.9
1965	13.4
1970	12.1
1975	11.8
1979	11.7
1984	16.0
1989	29.0
1994	33.3
1999	42.1
2004	42.4
2009	3.8

Table 3.11: FPÖ's results in Carinthian *Land* elections, 1956-2009

The BZÖ won 44.9% of the Carinthian vote in 2009, siphoning off almost all of the FPÖ's support in the state.

87-8; see Chapter 4, Section 2).

For a brief time, the FPÖ was joined by a second far-right party, the BZÖ (*Bündnis Zukunt Österreich*, Alliance for the Future of Austria). While governing alongside the ÖVP, Haider split from the FPÖ in 2005 to form the BZÖ, claiming that the anti-coalition forces within the FPÖ, who vehemently protested against the party's governmental participation and wanted a return to opposition, had "irreparably damaged" the party's name (Luther 2008, 1004-5). This new party continued governing with the ÖVP until elections in 2006 (see Chapter 5, Section 3). The BZÖ's agenda was nearly identical to that of the FPÖ, now led by its Viennese party boss, Heinz-Christian Strache, though Haider vigorously campaigned as the true successor to the FPÖ's legacy. The party adopted blue (the FPÖ's color) instead of its original orange, and campaigned as "the Freedomites" and "the original." Haider wanted Strache to be seen as an uninspiring imitator. After a lawsuit from the FPÖ, the BZÖ was ordered to remove the "Freedomites" logos and slogans from its election materials (Luther 2008, 1007-8). Tensions between Haider and Strache meant that the two parties refused to cooperate, though relations had thawed a bit after the 2008 elections. Discussions of collaboration (or even a merger) were cut short by Haider's death just days after the election.

The new leader, Josef Bucher, steered the party away from far-right positions and toward a more mainstream right-wing position of social conservatism and economic liberalism, thereby effectively ending the BZÖ's categorization as far right. This change of direction prompted the Carinthian wing of the BZÖ to defect and campaign as an independent party, the Freedom Party of Carinthia (FPK) in 2009. After several years of cooperating with the national FPÖ, the FPK officially merged into the FPÖ before the 2013 elections.

Party	1986		1990		1994		1995		1999		2002		2006		2008		2013	
SPÖ	43.1	(80)	42.8	(80)	34.9	(65)	38.1	(71)	33.2	(65)	36.5	(69)	35.3	(68)	29.3	(57)	27.1	(53)
ÖVP	41.3	(77)	32.1	(60)	27.7	(52)	28.3	(52)	26.9	(52)	42.3	(79)	34.3	(66)	26.0	(51)	23.8	(46)
FPÖ	9.7	(18)	16.6	(33)	22.5	(42)	21.9	(41)	26.9	(52)	10.0	(18)	11.0	(21)	17.6	(34)	21.4	(42)
BZÖ													4.1	(7)	10.7	(21)	3.6	(0)
Grüne	4.8	(8)	4.8	(10)	7.3	(13)	4.8	(9)	7.4	(14)	9.5	(17)	11.1	(21)	10.4	(20)	11.5	(22)
LIF			6.0	(11)	5.5	(10)	3.7	(0)	1.0	(0)			2.1	(0)				
Other	1.0	(0)	3.7	(0)	1.6	(0)	1.4	(0)	2.0	(0)	0.7	(0)	4.1	(0)	4.0	(0)	12.6	(20)

Table 3.12: Austrian *Nationalrat* results, 1986-2013

The table shows percent of votes on the left and number of seats on the right, in parentheses. The *Nationalrat* has 183 seats.

3.6 Voter support for the far right

The "typical" far-right voter looks very much the same in both Austria and the Netherlands: male, with lower levels of income and education, likely living in an urban area, and with higher-than-average levels of dissatisfaction with politics and concerns about immigrants. These individuals are not, of course, the only far-right voters, but this profile remains the dominant one. In 2002, for example, the overwhelming majority of LPF voters had not attended college (83.7%) and identified themselves as middle-class, lower-middle class, or working class (78.7%). When PVV voters were asked to identify their social class, almost all said middle-class or lower (94% in 2006, 95% in 2010). In 2010, voters were classified by their position into socio-economic classes, and 52% of PVV voters were working class. Dutch far-right voters since 2002 have been split fairly evenly across age cohorts, but remain mostly male: 62% in 2002, 63.4% in 2006, and 56% in 2010 (Dutch Parliamentary Election Study 2002, 2006, 2010).

The FPÖ's far-right transformation – and subsequent electoral success – was driven by its new support base, the working class. These voters have continued to support the FPÖ since 1986, mostly at the expense of the SPÖ (Table 3.13). The FPÖ fundamentally changed the long-standing voter dynamics in Austria after its rightward move in the 1980s. Austria's Alford index was above average, compared to most Western democracies, through the 1970s. It began to drop in the 1980s and, by 1999, was negative for the first time (Plasser and Ulram 2000, 18). This indicates that blue-collar workers have defected in large numbers to the right – specifically, to the FPÖ. The FPÖ has, in fact, won more working-class voters than any other party in the last two elections.

Year	**SPÖ**	**ÖVP**	**FPÖ**
1979	65	29	4
1983	61	28	3
1986	57	26	10
1990	52	22	21
1994	47	15	29
1995	41	13	34
1999	35	12	47
2002	47	26	18
2006	51	23	13
2008	21	16	34
2013	24	18	33

Table 3.13: Blue-collar workers in Austria: Percent supporting each party (1979-2013)

Source: Plasser and Ulram (2000, 18).

Immigration is consistently the most important factor for voters of the far right, though

lower-ranked concerns include a desire for change and unhappiness with the system / major parties (e.g. Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 250; Plasser and Ulram 2008, 20). Dutch voters' unwillingness to vote for the far right *Centrumdemocraten* (CD) in the 1980s and 1990s – which won one seat in 1989 and then was promptly ostracized by the mainstream parties – stands in contrast to the level of anti-immigrant sentiment in the population (see Chapter 2, Section 3). In 1986, 95.4% of respondents said they would "certainly never" vote for the *Centrumpartij* (CP), the CD's predecessor (ranking the probability at a 1 on a 1-10 scale), a level that dropped somewhat to 90.1% "certainly never" voting for the CP or the CD in 1989, but rose again to 95.7% in 1994 when asked about the CD (Dutch Parliamentary Election Study 1986, 1989, 1994). This has little to do with feelings about immigration and much to do with the perceived acceptability of the CP and CD.

All of the far right parties discussed in this chapter have produced election manifestos detailing plans for a variety of issues, but the focus is – and remains – immigration. These parties have generally supported welfare chauvinism for citizens (e.g. Mudde 2000, 135-6 on the "Center" parties), though Haider's FPÖ often proposed an uneasy mix of tax cuts and new economic measures for citizens, such as the *Kinderscheck*, a fixed amount provided to all women with children. Distinctions are regularly drawn between deserving natives and undeserving immigrants for the purposes of economic benefits, with the FPÖ even drawing the line between "native" minorities and immigrant minorities (Heinisch 2002, 109).

Common themes for the Dutch and Austrian far right parties include opposition to the EU, connections between immigration and crime, and concerns about Islam. Euroskepticism was initially explained by the far right as a concern about losses of national sovereignty. The Dutch CD argued for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing Dutch state sovereignty and referenda for any ceding of national competency to the EU (Mudde 2000, 132-3). The FPÖ's opposition to EU membership (in the 1990s) nearly caused the Austrian membership referendum to fail – not unlike the Dutch constitutional treaty failure in 2005. The far right's EU opposition has, in the past ten years, been increasingly motivated by cultural concerns. Haider's opposition to EU eastern accession (in the early 2000s) was a contributing factor to the fall of the first ÖVP-FPÖ government in 2002 (see Chapter 5, Section 3), and as noted above, one of Geert Wilders' motivations to form the PVV was refusal to go along with the VVD's acceptance of Turkish membership negotiations.

The CP newsletters would include copies of newspaper stories about crimes committed by immigrants (Mudde 2000, 153). After immigration, crime was a top motivation for FPÖ and BZÖ voters in 2006 and 2008 (Luther 2008, 1011; Luther 2009*b*, 1055). Fortuyn helped put concerns about crime on the political agenda in 2002 by linking crime and immigration, forcing the major parties to defend an issue they thought had been settled long ago (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2004, 553). The LPF's platform stressed "repression rather than prevention and social reforms" for criminals (Lucardie and Voerman 2007, 251). In addition to crime, Islam became a major political issue in the Netherlands after Fortuyn, although the far right parties of the 1980s had also included it in their programs. The CD proclaimed that, "wherever there is Islam on earth, there are problems," and warned of the potential for the reversal of women's rights, concerns later announced loudly by Wilders (Mudde 2000, 134-5).

The FPÖ focused specifically on Muslim immigration later than the Dutch far right, but campaigned in 2006 with the slogan, *"Daham statt Islam,"* (roughly: "at home, not Islam").

Even while maintaining these positions, the far right may lose votes when running as an incumbent party. Scholars expect that far-right parties will perform better when remaining in opposition, because governing requires them to abandon their criticism of 'politics as usual' when they are part of the coalition (e.g. Heinisch 2003). The LPF was so problematic as a governing partner that it lost more than two-thirds of its voters. Analysis of the PVV's fortunes in 2012 are currently limited, though the traditional Dutch expectation that voters punish the party responsible for breaking the government seems to hold true in both of these cases (Van Holsteyn 2011, 416).

Moving from a period of vote maximization to one of government, the FPÖ lost nearly equally from all categories (gender, age, occupation), though particularly among blue-collar workers (a drop of 33% from 1999 to 2002 among skilled blue-collar workers, and 27% among unskilled workers). They began to make up some of these losses in 2006 by moving back to a strategy of vote maximization, gains it continued to make in 2008 (Plasser and Ulram 2008, 10). The LPF's losses in 2003 were largely attributed to the party's disarray after Fortuyn's murder (Art 2011, 184-5). Although the PVV lost one-third of its 2010 votes in 2012 (from 15.5 to 10.1%), opinion polls throughout 2014 suggested that the party would be the largest or second-largest in parliament if a national election were called.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored how major mainstream parties in the Netherlands and in Austria have suffered electorally since the 1980s, carrying through themes introduced in Chapter 2. I then showed how far right parties emerged in the 1980s, adopting immigration as their central theme, rather than neo-fascist nostalgia for the past as was common in some post-war far right parties. Although Dutch and Austrian far-right parties have operated in different contexts, largely due to the way major parties dealt with the legacy of World War II, the far right has been electorally successful in both countries in incarnations separate from former National Socialist parties. Even the relatively unsuccessful far-right parties in the Netherlands caused major mainstream politicians to ask whether ostracizing these parties was effective, following upticks in support for the CD in the early 1990s (Lucardie 1998, 121). The next chapter focuses on one type of mainstream responses to the far right – positions on immigration – and the remaining chapters will address another mainstream response to the far right, coalition inclusion and exclusion.

Chapter 4

Borrowing from the Far Right: The Mainstream Right and Immigration

The previous two chapters have suggested that voters have long held anti-immigration attitudes, but that the mainstream parties have not always tried to gain voters on the basis of these attitudes. The rise of the far right and the growing opportunities for electoral gains vis-à-vis immigration prompted major parties of the left and the right to respond, beginning in the 1980s. The far right was nearly always the first party to raise the immigration issue for political gain; mainstream use of anti-immigration rhetoric would likely have evoked comparisons to fascist appeals of earlier decades.

Once the far right started to win mainstream voters attracted to its anti-immigration stances, major mainstream parties felt their best electoral option was an "accommodative" response (see Meguid 2008), in the form of positions that resemble the far right's positions. At that point, major mainstream parties were unwilling to pay an electoral cost to adhere to the pre-1980s consensus against stigmatizing immigrants, or worry about negative associations with the past. The two previous chapters have outlined the changing circumstances surrounding immigration and the significant levels of anti-immigration sentiment in many European countries, as well as the declining vote shares of governing parties, realities crucial to shaping major parties' immigration responses since the 1980s. Scholars feel that co-optation or borrowing of far-right issues, even if doing so successfully fends off the far-right challenger, can impact both the political agenda and public policy (e.g. Schain 2002, 224; Gruber and Bale 2014, 248); we certainly see changes to both agenda and policy throughout this chapter.

The Austrian and Dutch major mainstream parties took up immigration after it was placed on the agenda by the far right. In Austria, the major parties tried to 'catch up' to the growing far right, while in the Netherlands, the mainstream right saw an opportunity to capitalize on an issue introduced by less electorally-successful far-right parties in the 1980s. After the first successful far-right party (the LPF) in the Netherlands, the other major mainstream parties followed suit. The circumstances surrounding the immigration issue were quite different in these two countries, yet, the behavior of the mainstream parties

(on the left and right) were largely identical, as this chapter shows: The major parties left immigration off the political agenda until the far right added it, and then they quickly followed suit. A major difference between mainstream-left and mainstream-right parties, however, was in the way the issue was initially addressed. On the left, both the SPÖ and PvdA began discussing immigration in largely economic terms, with only the right parties using cultural rhetoric. This gap in approaches has narrowed over time, though not without some dissent from within the major parties – ultimately, as with coalition formation, the key decision makers are those at the top of the party, who pursue the course they feel is most electorally viable for their party.

The electoral success of the far right is a crucial factor to understanding the evolution of the Dutch and Austrian mainstream parties' positions on immigration, as detailed in this chapter. In the Netherlands, the far right posed almost no electoral threat to the major parties; as a result, immigration policy changes throughout the 1980s and 1990s were less dramatic and less restrictive than in Austria, where the far right posed a significant electoral threat to the two major mainstream parties. This chapter focuses on the actions of the mainstream right, but in many cases, the mainstream right pursued policies while in government with the mainstream left and the policies were a result of both parties' input.[1]

4.1 The (end of the) Dutch consensus about multiculturalism

Post-war immigration to the Netherlands, and the politics thereof, can be divided into four periods, characterized by the approaches of the major mainstream parties vis-à-vis immigrants: the recruitment period, in which repatriates from Indonesia were expected to assimilate and guest workers were expected to return (1945-77); the pillarization period, in which immigrants were viewed as in need of help from the government but integration was discouraged (1977-94); the shifting responsibility period, in which the dominant discourse moved to self-sufficiency and labor market integration (1994-2002); and the stigmatization period, in which the potential cultural concerns surrounding immigration became part of mainstream discourse (2002-present).

The recruitment period

Immigration to the Netherlands came from two sources immediately after World War II: residents of former Dutch East Indies (mostly people of Dutch or Dutch-Indonesian mixed heritage, but also some native Indonesians) and guest workers. The "repatriates" from Indonesia were seen as Dutchmen, familiar with Dutch customs from living under Dutch rule,

[1]The major mainstream-left parties were also losing voters to the far right, and though they might prefer a softer stance than would the mainstream right, they also saw the advantage of advocating for immigration restrictions.

thus, they were not expected to have issues adjusting to life in the Netherlands, though the government did give this group access to inexpensive housing to help with the process. These policies appear to have been largely successful, as most "silently merged" into society within ten years – however, this contributed to the idea that the Netherlands was not and would not be a country of immigration (Scholten and Holzhacker 2009, 83, 87). The newcomers from Indonesia were not "immigrants," but "Dutchmen" returning to their homeland.

Dutch guest workers came largely from the Mediterranean countries, beginning in the 1960s. Not unlike elsewhere in Western Europe, the Dutch guest workers were expected to return home after their temporary employment, and were deliberately not referred to as "immigrants." Although guest worker recruitment ceased after the 1973 oil crisis, family reunification brought an influx of migration from Turkey and Morocco. This also coincided with significant levels of new migration in the 1970s from the newly-independent Surinam (about 180,000 migrants) and from elsewhere in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Aruba and the Dutch Antilles (Vink 2007, 339). By the 1970s, immigrants as a percentage of the population had grown six-fold, though the Dutch population had grown very little.

Although the societal pillars (see Chapter 3, Section 1) had lost much of their dominance by the 1970s, the Dutch approach to migration has been described as one of pillarization: The immigrants were meant to exist within their own pillar, separate from the rest of society, with their own schools and community organizations. The Christian Democrats, due to their strong support for publicly-funded Christian schools and other organizations, supported other groups' rights to have their own structures through pillarization; the CDA and its predecessor parties were, crucially, involved in every governing coalition during this period.

Guest workers were regularly housed alongside immigrants from the rest of the Kingdom and the former colonies. The government subsidized private institutions to provide basic social services to migrants, and social workers were tasked with guiding new arrivals to the Netherlands, including facilitating the establishment of migrant associations (Entzinger 2003*a*, 123). Children of migrants were able to be educated in their native language and taught about their parents' culture. Even though pillars no longer worked for the native Dutch population, elites believed they would work for immigrants, as they were "people in need of emancipation" (Entzinger 2003*a*, 125).

Immigration policy literature often refers to the differences between "bridging" and "bonding" policies, meaning policies meant to narrow the gap between immigrants and the native population, versus policies meant to enhance immigrant group identities. While the colonial population was the focus of bridging policies aimed at integration, the guest workers were clearly subject to bonding policies (distinguishing them as outside the nation), to the extent that the government dealt with either group at all (Vink 2007, 340). Between the former colonial migrants, many of whom were Dutch citizens, and therefore expected to integrate quickly, and the guest workers, who were expected to return to their home country, the Dutch government saw no need for official migration policies until the late 1970s.

The pillarization period

The government's beliefs that migrants would either integrate or leave were rocked in 1977. A group of Moluccan youths (from the Maluku Islands in Indonesia) hijacked a train and a primary school on May 23; there were about 50 hostages on the train and more than 100 children held hostage at the school. Both crises lasted for twenty days until ended by the Dutch military. Although those responsible for the hijacking claimed they were motivated by a desire for more autonomy for Molucca within Indonesia, many elites felt the true motive was their isolation from society and concerns about temporary residence in the Netherlands (Entzinger 2003*b*, 62). Because pillarization was never intended to serve an integration function, it turned out to be "very inadequate for that purpose," instead reinforcing segregation and inequality on the basis of ethnicity (Koopmans 2003, 5).

The new direction of immigration policy for the 1980s would be heavily influenced by a 1979 report from the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) entitled "Ethnic Minorities," commissioned after the 1977 hijackings. The WRR is a think tank-like organization designed to have close ties to the Prime Minister and his cabinet, and the government commissioned several such reports from the WRR over the next twenty years. The WRR report from 1979 characterized the government's approach as one of "integration with preservation of a separate identity" (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1979, 35). It cautioned that the then-current system of segregation of immigrants would only continue to reinforce their "backward" position in society, and said it would be "desirable" for the government to assume that migration could also be permanent (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1979, IX, XVII). Notably, the WRR report focused only on three groups of immigrants: Moluccans, Surinamese and Antilleans, and workers from Mediterranean countries (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1979, VII).

Following suggestions from the WRR report, the Dutch parliament passed the *Minderhedenbeleid* (Ethnic Minorities Policy) in 1983, under the CDA (Christian Democrats) and VVD (Liberal) coalition. Even the title demonstrates the desire to refer to immigrants as minorities, rather than migrants. As with the WRR report, this document was directed at select groups of immigrants, those "for whose presence the government felt a special responsibility," in contrast to groups (e.g. immigrants from China) for whom the government did not feel responsible. The government stated that the goal of the minorities policy was "a society, in which [the minorities] that live in the Netherlands will have an equal place and have full opportunities for development" (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal 1983, 10).

Legislation comprising the "minorities policy" encompassed legal, political, and socioeconomic rights. The government strengthened anti-discrimination measures, including a clause in the new (1983) Dutch constitution which specified in Article 1 that "all persons in the Netherlands shall be treated equally in equal circumstances. Discrimination on the grounds of religion, belief, political opinion, race or sex or on any other grounds whatsoever shall not be permitted" (*The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands* 2008). Immigrants were given the right to vote at the local level. New training and education programs aimed at immigrants were started, with the goal of better educational and employment out-

comes for these groups. Immigrant groups were formally given the same rights as other "identity groups" (i.e. pillars) with respect to public funding for welfare, media, and education (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal 1983, 107-8). These complemented a change from two years earlier that allowed legal immigrants to have full access to social housing benefits, rather than being restricted in number and in location.

Naturalization was viewed as the final step in a successful integration process – one that would emerge from immigrants' maintaining of their own identities – and so the Dutch naturalization laws were changed in the mid-1980s to both increase the number of Dutch citizens by birth and to make naturalization easier. The first Nationality Act (1892) specified that Dutch citizenship would be granted to children of Dutch fathers. Anyone wishing to become a citizen needed to a) renounce his previous citizenship, b) be of the age of majority, and c) reside in the Netherlands (or one of the Kingdom countries) for at least five consecutive years. Under the new 1985 act, children born of Dutch mothers (but not Dutch fathers) were eligible for citizenship at birth for the first time. Anyone wishing to naturalize now needed to do "all that is possible" to renounce his original citizenship (see also Vink 2001).

The governing partners (CDA and PvdA, the Labour Party) disagreed on the appropriateness of voting rights for non-citizens. The PvdA saw voting as an important aspect of being part of society and wanted to give immigrants the right to vote in national elections, as well. The CDA did not want immigrants to have national voting rights – perhaps because it anticipated this group voting for other parties – and the two eventually settled on a compromise of local elections and a slackening of naturalization laws. The CDA wanted immigrants to integrate fully and participate in society; after integration and naturalization, they would gain the national voting rights (Vink 2001, 887). The two parties agreed, however, that immigrant integration was desirable and important.

The Dutch multiculturalism policy – called such even though the term did not regularly appear in political discourse until the 1990s – was the "most prominent and proudly exhibited" in all of Western Europe; only Sweden had enacted similar policies before the Netherlands (Joppke 2007, 5; Entzinger 2003*a*). The establishment of an official government policy on immigration coincided with the far right parties' (first, the *Centrumpartij*, and later, the *Centrumdemokraten*) addressing of the issue. The *Centrumpartij* (CP), as well as the offshoot CP'86, believed only those "whose preceding generations originated from Dutch parents, and among whom the language, culture and way of life is acknowledged and practiced as the only way" could ever be Dutch (Mudde 2000, 150). These parties supported a Dutch ethnic state (with the implication that only whites would be included), comprised of the "Northern Netherlands" (the Netherlands) alongside the "Southern Netherlands," both the Belgian and French areas of Flanders. The *Centrumdemokraten* (CD), on the other hand, were not opposed to a multi-ethnic Netherlands, but to a multi-cultural one: If immigrants were willing to fully assimilate, they would not need to return to their home countries. Muslim immigrants, however, were seen as a threat by the CD because their cultural values were incompatible with Dutch values; Muslims would therefore need to give up their religion in order to assimilate (Mudde 2000, 132, 135).

It was difficult for far-right parties to challenge the dominant rhetoric when it was so

carefully maintained by the rest of the elites, and when many in the public viewed these parties as unacceptably extreme. Despite the majority-held anti-immigration opinion, in 1986, 95.4% of respondents said they would "certainly never" vote for the *Centrumpartij* (ranking the probability at a 1 on a 1-10 scale). This level dropped somewhat to 90.1% "certainly never" voting for the CP or the CD in 1989, but rose again to 95.7% in 1994 when asked about the CD (DPES 1986, 1989, 1994). In 1984, 14% of the Dutch public said they would "possibly" vote for the extreme right in the future – a stark contrast to the parties' electoral results (eb19).

Of the three major parties, only the VVD included any anti-immigrant proposals in its 1989 manifesto; discussing immigration for a total of three sentences, the party called for repatriation of foreign workers (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie 1989). In longer sections, with more flowery language, the PvdA and CDA both wanted to make things better for immigrants: The PvdA supported local voting rights, and the CDA wanted to improve unemployment rates and language training (Partij van de Arbeid 1989; Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1989). Until criticism of the minorities policy came from a more respectable source, however, the elite consensus would continue. Such a source arrived in 1989-90 with a new report from the WRR, and most notably, in 1991 with new rhetoric from a prominent member of the VVD.

The shifting responsibility period

The 1980s were a period of promoting a multicultural Dutch society, with encouragement for immigrants to maintain their own cultures; the 1990s would become a decade focused on integration, and a decade wherein the elite consensus about immigrants would come to an end. The concept of "ethnic minorities" would be replaced by "*allochtonen*," or first- through third-generation immigrants (as compared to the native population, or *autochtonen*) – from immigrants as groups (based on place of origin) to immigrants as all belonging to the same general category. This change was driven by a shift in what was considered "acceptable" for public debate. While one prominent mainstream politician began speaking about immigration in cultural terms, this approach did not gain steam for another ten years. Instead, the major mainstream parties began to talk about the economic problems befalling "backward" immigrant groups and ways they could fix them.

The dominant Dutch discourse in the late 1980s dictated that, despite the high unemployment levels and lagging demand for foreign workers, it would be "inappropriate" to encourage former guest workers to return to their native countries after their service to the Netherlands – though other European countries were attempting to do just that. Immigration became an increasingly important concern, as well as a burden on the welfare state, but to talk about this was "widely considered to be politically incorrect, if not racist" (Entzinger 2003*a*, 125). The WRR issued a second report about ethnic minorities in 1989, beginning with two facts: that, despite expectations, levels of immigration had remained constant in the 1980s, and that immigrant unemployment rates were as high as 40%. As such, the overarching recommendation was to help immigrants "stand on their own feet," rather than

providing them with welfare benefits, and to focus on individuals rather than entire groups (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 1989, 9). This report is considered to have been the start of a new approach toward immigration, in that the topic could suddenly be the subject of "acceptable" conversation. Mainstream parties picked up the WRR's lead, expressing concern about the lagging socio-economic status of immigrants (van der Valk 2002, 53-5). However, the decisive turning point came in 1991, through a speech made by VVD leader Frits Bolkestein.

Speaking to the Liberal International congress, Bolkestein asked what government policy toward the "400,000 Muslims [in the Netherlands]" should be. He invoked his party's liberal principles, as well as the Rushdie affair, in his speech, excerpted here:

> "Our official policy used to be: 'Integration without prejudice to everyone's own identity.' It is now recognized that this slogan was a bit too easy. If everyone's cultural identity is allowed to persist unimpaired, integration will suffer. And integration there must be, because the Turkish and Moroccan immigrants are here to stay. That is now recognized by all. If integration is officially declared government policy, which cultural values must prevail: those of the non-Muslim majority or those of the Muslim minority?
>
> In many parts of the Muslim world the principles I have mentioned are not honored. Islam is not only a religion; it is a way of life. In this, its vision goes counter to the liberal separation of church and state." (Bolkestein 9/8/91)

Bolkestein thus pitted immigration – and specifically, Muslim immigrants – against the liberal values deeply rooted in Dutch society, and was the first prominent mainstream politician to make these cultural claims about the future of immigration. His speech was followed by a series of newspaper articles over the next several days. In *De Volkskrant* on September 12, Bolkestein said that he wanted to remove the taboo that had long surrounded discussions of minorities and immigrants (quoted Lucardie, Nieboer and Noomen 1991, 59; author's translation). In the title, he said that integration must be handled with "courage." Over the next year, he would assert that voters felt their issues of concern (i.e. immigration) were neglected by politicians and that politicians should not ignore public anxiety (Prins 2002, 368).

Although all three major mainstream Dutch parties lost votes to the CP/CD in the 1980s, only the VVD attempted to capitalize on the cultural aspect of immigration issue. Bolkestein was the first mainstream politician to move the conversation about immigration from an economic to a cultural framing (Bale et al. 2010, 488). He was aware of the widespread public discontent in the Netherlands about European integration, labor markets, and immigration, and intentionally politicized the issue. The PvdA and CDA's core values left them unwilling to follow Bolkestein's lead. Some within the VVD realized that there were electoral gains to be made by picking up immigration – and were comfortable pursuing them in this way – even though the far right had not yet been able to generate a strong following on the issue, as well as the potential for future electoral threat from far-right parties. By addressing the

issue before this threat was realized, the party hoped to stave it off. As the largest opposition party at the time, the VVD also wanted to use immigration to regain lost voters and, ideally, a governing position.

The strategy seemed to pay off – the VVD gained 5.4% of the vote from 1989 to 1994, winning 20% of the national vote, a gain attributed at least in part to the immigration issue (Geddes 2003, 115). The governing parties (CDA and PvdA) lost 13.1 and 7.9%, respectively, in the 1994 election. The Christian Democrats found themselves in opposition for the first time in nearly 70 years, and the VVD and PvdA formed a "purple" coalition ('red' Social Democrats, 'blue' Liberals), along with the social-liberal party, D66. Practically, this meant government attachment to promoting pillarization for immigrants disappeared with the exit of the Christian Democrats – long champions of pillarization – from the coalition for the first time since 1918; the CDA continued to call for a plural society with pillars up through its 1998 manifesto (Christen-Democratisch Appèl 1998). With the PvdA and VVD at the helm, pillarization was out and integration was in. The idea of "integration" had been "almost taboo" for mainstream politicians prior to the government's use of the concept, defined as "a process leading to the full and equal participation of individuals and groups in society, for which mutual respect for identity is seen as a necessary condition" (Entzinger 2003*b*, 75; Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken 1994, 24).

It is important, however, to note that Bolkestein's focus on cultural concerns stemming from immigration was not echoed by most elites, even within his own Liberal party; the party's 1994 manifesto declared that "the Netherlands is not a country of immigration," but did not detail specific proposals to address immigration (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie 1994). Most politicians were still uncomfortable talking about immigration in this way, and felt they could address public concerns by tackling immigrant labor market participation and unemployment. The PvdA was unwilling to venture into the realm of cultural arguments, but moved "quietly" toward the right on immigration (by focusing on the economic side of the issue) during the two purple coalitions, "aware of the electoral potential" that could come from capitalizing on the multicultural backlash (Bale et al. 2010, 416). Labour called for better job-market preparation for immigrations, but noted that the Netherlands dealt with fewer immigrants than did France and Germany (Partij van de Arbeid 1994). On the right, the other VVD elites recognized the need to appease their liberal wing, thus making policies softer than Bolkestein would have liked (Van Kersbergen and Krouwel 2008, 402).

The purple coalition thus enacted a series of policies known broadly as the "Integration Policy" in 1994. The government felt that the backward status of immigrants could be ameliorated through integration policies, and the lack of integration among immigrants was a result of their unfamiliarity with Dutch culture and the Dutch language (Entzinger 2003*a*, 126). The focus shifted from government support to self-sufficiency and active participation in society. Immigrants had an "individual obligation to participate in education and the labor market and also the obligation to make efforts to learn the Dutch language and to acquire basic knowledge of Dutch society" (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken 1994, 25). The "purple" PvdA and VVD governments focused on socio-economic improvement rather

than cultural preservation. Immigrants' children should no longer able to be educated in their parents' native languages, one of the measures designed to promote integration into Dutch society. However, a point-based system was enacted for school funding, which provided more funding for schools with Dutch children from low socio-economic backgrounds and for immigrant or minority children, relative to the standard funding for middle-class Dutch children. Employers were asked to report the ethnic composition of their workforce and take measures to increase the diversity among their employees; this was a soft law, however, and saw neither widespread cooperation nor enforcement. In 1997, the parliament passed the Newcomers' Integration Law (*Wet Inburgering Nieuwkomers*, WIN), which mandated civic integration (*inburgering*) courses for new immigrants from outside the EU. The yearlong courses included modules on the Dutch language (500 hours) and civics (100 hours), as well as labor market preparation, and were fully state-funded. The WIN took effect in 1998, alongside the "Linkage Act" (*Koppelingswet*) which tied public services more closely to legal status by connecting all socio-economic databases (health, schools, welfare, etc.), thereby allowing authorities to identify and locate illegal immigrants.

Where left and right were fundamentally divided in the 1990s was on the issue of naturalization. The left and center-left parties (PvdA, D66, GL) felt naturalization was a means to achieve integration, while the right-wing parties saw naturalization as the final reward for successful integration. The PvdA supported the easing of restrictions on dual nationality, arguing that people can be connected to more than one country, and that many migrants are unwilling to integrate because they do not wish to give up their original nationality (Driouichi 2007, 122-3; Vink 2001, 886). A 1992 government paper from the Ministry of Justice allowed dual nationalities (an update to the 1985 law) until the bill was decided in parliament, a debate that did not begin until 1995. Both the VVD and CDA argued that immigrants wanted Dutch passports not as a sign of commitment to the Netherlands, but to make travel throughout the EU simpler (Entzinger 2003*b*, 75). The debate went off and on for years until the Dutch Senate – led by senators from the CDA and VVD – finally vetoed the bill in 1997 (Geddes 2003, 117; Vink 2001, 886-7). Another government paper then put a formal end to the informal tolerance of dual nationalities in the Netherlands.

Scholars believe that the three major mainstream parties underestimated the degree to which the Dutch public was concerned about the cultural side of immigration, rather than simply having economic or employment-based concerns (e.g. Pellikaan, de Lange and Van der Meer 2007, 294). This disconnect would soon generate a significant electoral threat in the form of a successful far right party, led by Pim Fortuyn.

The stigmatization period

At the end of the 1990s, the purple coalition – now in the middle of its second term in office – was proud of its accomplishments in the area of integration. The government pointed, first, to improvements in immigrant participation in the labor market, attainment of education, housing status, and the like; in particular, second generation immigrants were better off than their parents. Second, the purple coalition viewed the jump in naturalizations in the

1990s – from about 10,000 in 1990 to 60,000 in 1997-99, with a peak of more than 80,000 in 1996 – as a sign that integration was working (Maas 2010, 230). Lastly, the government noted that many Turks and Moroccans were multicultural success stories: They identified with their home countries and with Islam while taking part in Dutch society (Entzinger 2003*a*, 128). This was not the only view, however, and the criticisms would soon reach a fever pitch. Some pointed to the 1992-97 tolerance of dual nationality as responsible for the naturalization spike, rather than an increase in integration. Additionally, unemployment among non-EU immigrants is usually about twice the rate of EU natives across the region, but in the Netherlands, the rate was three times as high as the native rate in the 1990s, reaching a peak of 5.4 times the native rate in 1999 (Joppke 2007, 6).

Among the first – and most prominent critics – was Paul Scheffer, one of the PvdA elites and a history professor at the University of Amsterdam. He published an article in *NRC Handelsblad* (one of the top-circulating Dutch papers) titled "*Het multiculturele drama*" (The multicultural drama) in January 2000. In this article, he wrote about an "ethnic underclass" – specifically mentioning immigrants from Turkey and Morocco – that was both unable and unwilling to integrate, a situation that would lead to the decline of both the Dutch state and Dutch society. Scheffer blamed the current "multicultural tragedy" for the poor economic status of immigrants, and likened politicians' reactions to the eve of World War II, when "a whole nation [lost] sight of reality" (Scheffer 2000). By making an explicit link between government policies and the realities of immigrants' economic status, Scheffer's article was "an important trigger" that "caused a heated public and political debate on integration strategies" (Klaver and Odé 2009, 48).

The language used by Scheffer was not unlike that of Bolkestein a decade earlier, and it again spurred mainstream political elites into action. They were still unwilling to pick up many of the cultural anti-immigration themes, but believed they could calm public concern by focusing on asylum seekers – they could do something without going as far as Bolkestein or Scheffer would have liked. Without discussing multiculturalism specifically, but as a response to growing concern about immigration, the PvdA-VVD-D66 government passed the 2000 *VreemdelingenWet* (Aliens Law), with a primary focus of cutting the number of asylum seekers. Under this law, the Netherlands planned to reject many "undeserving" applicants within 48 hours and to introduce temporary asylum permits. However, the Aliens Law also outlined new rules for family reunification: Any spouse wishing to come to the Netherlands must be at least 21 years old, and their spouse in the Netherlands must a) have an income equal to 100% of the minimum family income (or 120%, if the person is not a permanent resident), b) have been employed consistently for the past year, and c) also be at least 21 years old.

Further compounding dissatisfaction with and criticisms of the "purple" coalition was Pim Fortuyn. As discussed in Chapter 3, the former professor entered the political scene in 2002 as the new face of lifestyle party *Leefbaar Rotterdam* (Livable Rotterdam), part of a national "Leefbaar" movement. Fortuyn had previously been a long-standing member of the PvdA who grew frustrated with, in his view, Labour's consistent support for pro-multicultural policies in the face of evidence about immigrant economic (and cultural)

backwardness. He blamed "the rubbish of eight years of purple [coalitions]" for the state of immigration politics in the country (Fortuyn 2002). Fortuyn roundly criticized the PvdA's pro-multicultural stances and support of the welfare state, which appealed to some Labour voters who felt benefits disproportionately went to immigrants (Van Holsteyn, Irwin and Den Ridder 2003). Although his anti-immigration comments led to his dismissal from Leefbaar Nederland in February 2002, Fortuyn continued to be the leader of the Rotterdam party. Leefbaar Rotterdam won 35% of the vote in March 2002 local elections in Rotterdam, forming the city's first non-Labour government in six decades. Between this result and opinion polls for the upcoming national elections, the major mainstream parties suddenly realized that many voters were truly unhappy with the government's handling of the immigration issue.

By this time, the PvdA had lost some of its core voters to *GroenLinks*, which had consistently maintained a pro-immigration stance since the 1980s (when it was the only party raising concerns about racism toward immigrants; see van der Valk 2002, 55), which it combined with traditional left-wing stances on other issues (e.g. pro-welfare state attitudes). The view that the PvdA had become too centrist during its eight years in government with the Liberals inspired some of these voters to shift allegiances to the Greens. Labour was now also competing with the Socialist Party, which combined left-wing economic policies with more right-wing social policies, appealing to many left-wing voters who were reluctant to vote for the far right but were concerned about immigration (Bale et al. 2010, 417). The PvdA opted to aim for the anti-immigration voters, lost both to the Socialists and to Fortuyn's fledgling party, by abandoning it support of multiculturalism; it would make a similar rightward-lean to stave off losses to the far-right PVV as part of the 2012 coalition with the VVD.

At the same time, the party that was previously viewed as most concerned about the negative impact of immigration – the VVD – was no longer actively pushing this theme (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003, 62). By this point, the VVD had benefitted from two successful terms in office, and the "Dutch miracle" of economic growth, and therefore no longer needed immigration as an electoral issue. This opened the door, however, for Pim Fortuyn to criticize all three major mainstream parties as being pro-multiculturalism, painting his party as the true opponent (Van Kessel 2011, 78). This strategy paid off handsomely for the LPF in the 2002 elections, where it won 17% of the national vote and entered government with the CDA and VVD (see Chapter 6, Section 2). The shift in attitudes from 2000-2002 have continued through the present day, with governments (including some combination of the CDA, VVD, and PvdA) passing restrictive immigration laws in order to keep up with public sentiment and the threat from the far right.

4.2 The politicization of immigration in Austria

The politics of immigration to Austria can be divided fairly neatly into just two periods: 1) immigration policy as determined by the social partners (labor and business) according to

changing economic needs, and 2) immigration policy as determined by politics (and driven by the FPÖ in particular). The shift coincided with the start of Eastern European migration in 1990. Prior to this time, immigration remained outside of politics and was not an important concern for the public; since 1990, immigration has seldom been off the political agenda, and has been a key issue for far-right voters.

While immigration was an issue the Dutch mainstream parties would have rather seen disappear before the 1980s, immigration was a non-issue for the Austrian parties: Not only was immigration not a concern, but the few decisions that were made were taken entirely outside of politics. As previously noted, another important difference between immigration politics in the two countries was due to the differing electoral successes of the far right. The Dutch far right was not successful until the 2000s, so the major parties' shifts toward restrictive immigration policies were fairly gradual before that point. In Austria, by contrast, the far right's electoral growth in the 1990s led to a decade of the major parties' attempts to compete with the FPÖ on immigration by passing restrictive policies.

Immigration Outside Politics

After World War II, the Austrian government attempted to replace the German Decree on Foreign Workers (that is, forced labor) in place since 1941 with a new law. Business groups (the ÖVP's social partner), who wanted a free market for foreign employment, were opposed to any regulation and the government dropped the issue. Austria was a sending country, not unlike Italy, throughout the 1950s, with many Austrian workers moving to West Germany and Switzerland. By the end of the decade, however, the Federal Chamber of Commerce wanted to allow for foreign workers in Austria in anticipation of a labor shortage. The SPÖ's social partner, the trade unions, refused, saying Austria's businesses needed modernization, not low-cost foreign labor. Neither the coalition nor the parliament was involved in the discussions (Bauböck and Wimmer 1988, 659-60). Business and labor were finally able to reach a compromise in 1961 that allowed for up to 48,000 foreign workers to enter Austria as temporary employees in 1962; the unions allowed the Chamber of Commerce to set up recruitment offices in Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Spain (Kraler and Sohler 2005, 7; Bauböck and Wimmer 1988, 660). This was not enshrined in law, however.

Massive economic expansion meant that, in the years before the 1973 oil crisis, nearly everyone who wanted a job had one, including foreign employees, a group that nearly tripled between 1969 and 1973 (numbering about 250,000 workers in 1973). To keep this group happy and productive, employers encouraged their foreign employees to bring their families to Austria. The desire for foreign workers was abruptly halted in 1974, and both business and labor agreed on the need for a formal employment law. The two groups prepared a draft law, the *Ausländerbeschäftigungsgesetz* (Foreigner Employment Act, AuslBG), which passed largely untouched through parliament in 1975. The SPÖ (Social Democrats) had won an outright majority of the seats in parliament in 1971 and was poised to do so again in 1975, so their social partners – the unions – were in a position of power to negotiate for more restrictive laws than business would have preferred. The AuslBG legalized the quota system

for foreign workers, put a one-year maximum on employment permits, and gave priority to keeping Austrian workers when layoffs were necessary (Bauböck and Wimmer 1988, 662).

The inflow of foreign workers stabilized after 1977, and until 1990, business and labor would jointly decide on the levels of immigration, which fluctuated with the economic situation. Although the government was finally (officially) involved, the details remained very much up to the social partners. The positions of the SPÖ and ÖVP – to the extent that they took any – reflected the preferences of business and labor on immigration.

Parties' Involvement in Immigration

After the borders between Eastern and Western Europe were opened in 1989, public sympathy for Eastern Europeans was high, but underneath this was a layer of uncertainty about that this might mean for Austria with respect to immigrants. The FPÖ helped to fuel this concern, linking immigration to all of society's apparent ills: crime, unemployment, and concerns about European integration. Public protests broke out in the areas where asylum seekers were meant to be temporarily housed in the spring of 1990.

The governing parties (SPÖ, ÖVP) realized they needed to take action quickly – breaking with several decades of leaving immigration decisions to be made by the social partners, in accordance with economic fluctuations – and introduced visa quotas for immigrants from Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey on March 15. Both the SPÖ and ÖVP believed the public concern was economically based: If they prevented large inflows of foreign workers, they would calm the public mood. The government claimed this prevented a "storm" of 40,000 Romanians – the largest sending country for asylum seekers coming to Austria in 1990 – by adding a requirement that Romanian visitors to Austria have at least 5,000 Austrian Schillings (about US $500 at the time) on their person. The motivation was for the Romanian "visitors" to show they were in Austria for tourism (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 149). SPÖ leader Josef Cap also "wanted to require visas for Poles because of their [assumed] high crime rate" (Gärtner 2002, 20). This measure did pass, with the SPÖ and ÖVP saying the measure was intended to combat "working vacations" (i.e. illegal employment) from Poland (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 150). Later that year, the grand coalition passed the Refugee Assistance Act to increase the criteria needed for asylum seekers to qualify for government aid, and in response to the protests about concentrations of asylum-seeker housing, to more evenly distribute the asylum seeker population around the country.

The foreign-born population as a share of the total population in Austria doubled from 1961 to 1981 (1.4 to 3.8%), and nearly doubled again from 1981 to 1991, which it reached 6.6% (Statistik Austria, quoted Kraler and Sohler 2005, 8). The FPÖ painted itself as an option to the mainstream parties – us vs. them – rather than an option other than left and right (i.e. a third option), meaning that the SPÖ and ÖVP were further lumped together in the minds of some voters. The Austrian Greens defended immigration in the 1990s, and have remained the only parliamentary party that has continuously done so.

Feeling the pressure to say something, in their 1990 coalition agreement, the SPÖ and ÖVP specifically addressed the foreigner question, or the *Ausländerfrage*. They defended the

use of the existing quota system for immigrant admissions, as it allowed for fluctuations based on the economy and labor market (as well as the housing sector), but noted the need for more effective asylum procedures and more decentralization of asylum seekers' housing. On the more restrictive side, they proposed the increased use of street inspections by immigration authorities to identify illegal immigrants, and linked illegal employment and illegal workers to crime in Austria (Wolfgruber 1994, 301). The SPÖ pointed out that immigration could help Austria's declining birth rate and population problems, a sentiment not echoed by the ÖVP, which instead stressed a desire to prevent the "over-foreignization of Austria" (Heinisch 2002, 200). For his part, Haider suggested that the SPÖ wanted to increase immigration rather than encourage population growth among native Austrians in the hopes that the immigrants would be more likely to vote Social Democratic.

The governing parties proposed a series of restrictions in 1992. First, they passed an asylum act (*Asylgesetz*, AsylG) in June to crack down on false claims of persecution. The AsylG more narrowly defined the criteria under which asylum could be granted, sped up the timeline for application evaluation, and established a number of satellite processing offices to make the system more efficient (Mitten 1994, 37). Haider continuously referred to asylum policy in Austria as the "importation of criminals," though the governing parties said the quota system had worked in the past and tried to dismiss Haider's claims as scare tactics (Heinisch 2002, 93, 200). Also passed in June was the *Aufenthaltsgesetz* (Residence Act, AufG), which went into effect in July 1993 and specified the conditions under which visas would be granted, and the formula for the number of residence permits available each year. All first-time applicants needed to apply from outside of Austria, which was the "principal innovation" of the AufG (Mitten 1994, 39). One of the most restrictive aspects of the AufG was the rule that anyone wanting to extend a temporary residence permit had only six weeks from the expiration date to receive an approval or lose their authorization to remain in the country, even if the delay was due to the government. Legal aliens could also be deported if their housing did not meet standards set by the Minister of the Interior, who determined this should be a least 10 square meters per person in the housing unit. It was estimated that more than 100,000 foreigners could be deported under this provision alone – along with 73,000 Austrians whose residences also did not meet the space requirement (Mitten 1994, 40). The AufG was opposed by the other parliamentary parties: the Greens, on humanitarian grounds – saying the parties were operating in the "spirit of Haider" – and the FPÖ, on the grounds that the SPÖ Minister of the Interior, Caspar Einem, was criticizing their agenda while simultaneously trying to adopt it ("Ausländergesetz strittig: Cap attackiert Busek" 1993; Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2011, 41). SPÖ ministers were quick to defend their "humane" enforcement of these laws and to quiet internal dissenters ("Ausländergesetz strittig: Cap attackiert Busek" 1993).

Haider was dissatisfied with the grand coalition's measures, wanting them to go much further. He put forth a set of immigration proposals and discussed turning them into a people's initiative, a referendum open for public vote. People's initiatives must be written in the style of a parliamentary bill and signed by at least 100,000 voters in the span of a week. Any people's initiative that receives at least 100,000 votes must be prioritized and voted on

by the parliament, and the governing parties worried that any anti-immigration campaign on these proposals might lead to public "emotions that would be difficult to control" (Müller 1993, 380). The SPÖ and ÖVP encouraged Haider to introduce the proposals as a member's bill, which would give it the same status as a successful people's initiative, but he wanted the government to introduce the proposals instead. In October 1992, the government rejected Haider's ultimatum, and the FPÖ launched the "Austria First" campaign. By October, a Gallup poll showed that three-quarters of Austrians were strongly opposed to any new immigration, and two-thirds also wanted to prevent refugees from entering the country (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 150); the situation seemed favorable for the success of "Austria First." The twelve provisions of "Austria first" were as follows (Sully 1997, 87-8):

1. A constitutional provision: "Austria is not a country of immigration."
2. An end to immigration until a satisfactory solution to the problem of illegal foreigners has been found, and until the accommodation shortage has been resolved and unemployment is down to 5%.
3. An ID requirement for foreign employees at the work place, which should be presented for the work permit and for registration for health insurance.
4. An expansion of the police force (aliens and criminal branches) as well as better pay and resources to trace illegal foreigners and to effectively combat crime, especially organized crime.
5. Immediate creation of permanent border controls (customs police) in place of the army.
6. A reduction of tension in schools by limiting the presence of pupils with a foreign mother tongue in elementary and vocational schools to a maximum of 30%; in case of more than 30% of foreign speaking children, special classes for foreigners should be set up.
7. Reduction of tension in schools through participation in regular education by those with an adequate knowledge of German.
8. No right to vote for foreigners in general elections.
9. No premature granting of Austrian citizenship (10 years in the law should be enforced).
10. Rigorous measures against illegal business activities of foreigners and the abuse of social benefits.
11. Immediate deportation and residence ban for foreign offenders of the law.
12. The establishment of an Eastern Europe Foundation to prevent migration.

Scholars have pointed out that five of the twelve measures (points 2, 3, 4, 8, and 12) are consistent with government policies at the time (actual or proposed), but presented with more extreme language (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, 155-6; Mitten 1994, 29-30). Others, such as proposal 6 on limiting the number of foreign students in classrooms, would have discriminated against children who were citizens but spoke a native language other than German, and would also have violated international treaties to which Austria was a signatory (Mitten 1994, 30).

The SPÖ-ÖVP coalition proposed, passed, and enacted the 1992 *Fremdengesetz* (Aliens Act, FrG) in two months, from December 1992 to January 1993. This "unusual legislative alacrity" was widely seen as a response to Haider's claims of government inaction on immigration, and an effort to derail the Austria First campaign (Mitten 1994, 38). Under the FrG, all non-citizens were now considered "aliens," regardless of how long they had been legally living and working in Austria. It also allowed immigration officials to enter private residences if they suspected an illegal alien was inside, and to require proof of identification if someone was suspected of being in the country illegally.

Just weeks after the FrG went into effect, Austrians had seven days to vote on the "Austria First" initiative. The FPÖ undertook a massive campaign for "Austria First." Most notably, the party created posters featuring one of the twelve measures alongside a comparable quote from an SPÖ or ÖVP MP, or another political elite. For example, posters featuring point 1, "Constitutional requirement: Austria is not a country of immigration" showed quotes from an ÖVP MP and the president of the trade unions, both of whom had recently said "Austria is not an immigration country." There was also a quote from an SPÖ MP saying "the boat is full." At the bottom of the posters, there was a tagline ("I have to sign this!") and the dates of the initiative voting, January 25-February 1. The FPÖ bill received just over 400,000 signatures, far less than the party's stated goal of one million. Haider was hoping for at least as many signatures as his party received votes in the 1990 election (780,000), and said "if we get less than 500,000 signatures, then we have to think again and I do not exclude debate over [my position in the party]" (Pagani 1993). Media attention surrounding the initiative focused mainly on protests around the country from pro-immigration groups, and after the voting ended, the failure to attract as many signatories as possible. One editorial proclaimed the defeat as "Wagram – not yet Waterloo," and an ÖVP spokesperson proclaimed that "in one fell swoop the rise and rise of Jörg Haider has come to an abrupt end. And he brought it on himself" ("Haider's Wagramm - Noch Nicht Waterloo (Kommentar)" 1993; Frey 1993).

Parliament did debate "Austria First" on September 23, and the measure was defeated with nearly 90% of MPs voting no. The defeat was so expected that it received no mention in any of Austria's major newspapers. Although the initiative was seen as a failure for falling short of predictions (or fears, depending on the perspective), it remains the most successful people's initiative, with signatures from nearly 10% of the population. Thirty-seven people's initiatives have been brought before parliament from their inception in 1963 through May 2014; most of these have come from groups within society, rather than political parties, and "Austria First" remains the most prominent initiative to come from any party

(Bundesministerium für Inneres 2014).

In the aftermath of "Austria First," the SPÖ and ÖVP emphasized how much the government had done to restrict immigration, pointing to the various laws from the previous two years. Heinisch (2002, 201) says this "severely undermined" the government's long-term credibility on immigration by suggesting it only "snapped to action after Haider rang the alarm bells." Indeed, Haider claimed that SPÖ Chancellor Vranitzky had "completely swung around to the line of the 'Austria First' petition" through the AufG (Mitten 1994, 27-8). Vranitzky himself had appeared in the FPÖ's campaign materials for the initiative, quoted as saying "we don't need any eastern salami, liquor, and cigarette merchants on our streets" (Mitten 1994, 31). As the public increasingly supported the FPÖ (winning 22.5% in 1994, up from 16.6% of the national vote in 1990), the grand coalitions made several notable attempts to adopt pieces of the FPÖ agenda, with ÖVP leader Wolfgang Schüssel going as far as labeling himself as the "good Haider" (Bale 2003, 76). The goal was to attract voters lost to the FPÖ back to the fold, but this was – and is still – viewed by scholars as a largely unsuccessful strategy, in Austria as well as in other countries (e.g. Bale 2003, 86).

The 1997 *Fremdengesetz* (Aliens Act, FrG) was one such attempt. It combined the 1992 Aliens Act and the 1993 Residence Act into one law, with a stated goal of promoting "integration before immigration." This law, alongside reforms to the AuslBG (1975) and the AsylG (1992), became known as the "integration package." The goal of the 1997 act was "motivating aliens to acquire a basic knowledge of German and the skills that will enable them to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of Austria" (*Fremdengesetz 1997 - FrG* 1997). Immigrants to Austria who arrived after January 1, 1998 were required to take classes that include modules on the German language, Austrian history and civics, and "topics relating to fundamental European democratic values" (*Fremdengesetz 1997 - FrG* 1997). The 1997 FrG gave immigrants with "consolidated residence" – that is, ten continuous years of legal residence in Austria – a legal status similar to that of citizens, but without the political rights. Major criminal convictions would cause these rights to be revoked, but otherwise long-term legal residents were made somewhat more secure under the new law. Yet, immigrants arriving under family reunification laws were now unable to legally work in Austria until they had lived in the country continuously for eight years. The FPÖ stepped up its calls for repatriation of immigrants after the passage of the FrG (Bale 2003, 76). Haider would sarcastically thank the governing parties for enacting his policies, as most of his efforts to intensify demands were met with some amount of concessions on the part of the government.

An earlier draft of the 1997 Aliens Act was intended to enhance immigrants' residence rights and access to the labor market, in an effort to both appease humanitarian groups and the demands of the FPÖ. These measures did not make the final draft, as the ÖVP denounced them as a breach of the parties' coalition agreement (Perchinig 2010, 10). After the snap 1995 election and the formation of another SPÖ-ÖVP coalition, the SPÖ agreed to cut the improvements for immigrants' rights and the legislation was passed in 1997. This was likely a reflection of the FPÖ's growing popularity around this time. The 1997 FrG was another effort by the SPÖ to win back FPÖ voters, and like the 1992 version, went from proposal

to enactment in about two months (Krzyżanowski and Wodak 2011, 76). The final effort from the SPÖ-ÖVP grand coalitions before Haider would enter office in 2000 (see Chapter 5, Section 3) was the 1998 Naturalization Act (*Staatsbürgerschaftsgesetz*), which limited the levels of new immigration and raised the minimum income and language proficiency levels that immigrants would need to meet, as well as allowing minor criminal offenses to serve as reasons for denial of citizenship (Kraler and Sohler 2005, 10; Bale et al. 2010, 419).

As in the Netherlands, the Austrian far right entered government in the early 2000s, during which time restrictions on immigration continued. In both countries, the major mainstream parties still pass restrictive legislation in response to the far right's popularity, even when the far right is in opposition.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that major mainstream-right parties have consistently taken some degree of accommodative, anti-immigration stances in the Netherlands and Austria. These moves were prompted by the goal of winning voters and the looming threat of the far right's electoral success. The Austrian FPÖ had electoral success as early as the 1980s, compared to the Dutch far-right parties (which were not successful until the LPF in 2002), which drove the correspondingly-early response from the Austrian mainstream right. The Dutch VVD and CDA were caught off-guard by the LPF's breakthrough and scrambled to recapture voters lost to the far right.

In the next two chapters, I explore another mainstream response to the far right, that of coalitional inclusion. Once again, we will see that the major mainstream right parties are unwilling to isolate or work against the far right if doing so means compromising their office- and policy-seeking goals.

Chapter 5

Coalition Formation in Austria

The post-war Austrian political system featured two dominant parties, the right-wing ÖVP (*Österreichische Volkspartei*, Austrian People's Party) and the left-wing SPÖ (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs*, Social Democratic Party of Austria). These parties were the modern incarnations of the traditional Socialist and Christian-conservative *Lager*.[1] From 1945-83, only three parties won seats in the Austrian parliament: The ÖVP, SPÖ, and the small FPÖ (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*, Freedom Party of Austria), which fluctuated between a liberal and a German-nationalist orientation over this period.

By the late 1980s, the decline of the two major Austrian parties and the rise of smaller parties (the FPÖ, but also the new Green party) meant that there were at least three numerically viable coalition options after every election. The nationalist trajectory of the FPÖ prompted questions about democratic acceptability – the so-called *Verfassungsbogen*, or "bow of constitutionality" – at a time when similar questions emerged in other Western European countries. Did these far-right parties fall under the bow as acceptable coalition partners, or should they be subject to exclusion (known in Austria as *Ausgrenzung*)?

As will be shown in this chapter, the FPÖ was outside the bow until bringing it inside was to the advantage of the ÖVP. From the time of Haider's election as FPÖ leader in 1986, the ÖVP has never needed to decide between a coalition with the FPÖ or opposition; the SPÖ has always been a viable partner. As such, the decision came down to whether the ÖVP would benefit more from the policies of an SPÖ coalition or an FPÖ coalition. By examining the Austrian coalitions since 1986, we can see that the FPÖ's inclusion – after the 1999 and 2002 elections – was beneficial to the ÖVP, but would have been less beneficial at other times. The FPÖ was included when the coalition represented an opportunity to achieve more attractive policy outcomes than other coalitions, and excluded when the ÖVP preferred the policy outcomes from a coalition with the SPÖ, when the ÖVP and far right lacked a parliamentary majority, and when the ÖVP was concerned about the stability of a coalition with the FPÖ.

[1] The *Lager* were comparable to the Dutch system of pillarization; see Chapter 3, Section 1 for the history of the parties and the political system.

Parliamentary history of the Second Republic shows that Austrian parties do not, in fact, form surplus coalitions (coalitions including mathematically superfluous parties). All coalitions have been two-party coalitions, with both required for a parliamentary majority. After every election in this period, one or both of the two major parties has been required for a parliamentary majority; this has severely limited the number of viable coalitions for the SPÖ and ÖVP. The grand coalition between the SPÖ and ÖVP has formed 13 times since 1945 (62% of all coalitions, excluding interim coalitions).

The FPÖ's electoral success under Haider, which began in the late 1980s, combined with the rise of the Greens in the 1990s, meant that, though the two major parties were not as dominant as in the early post-war period, they now had more coalition options. Table 5.1 shows the coalitions that formed after the FPÖ's turn to the far right (1986-2013). The far-right FPÖ entered government for the first time after the 1999 election as the junior partner of the ÖVP, a coalition that was renewed after the 2002 elections.[2] The ÖVP opted not to work with the FPÖ after many other elections during this period, however, and this chapter explains these decisions.

Cabinet	**Election**	**PM party**	**Junior party**
Vranitzky II	1986	SPÖ	ÖVP
Vranitzky III	1990	SPÖ	ÖVP
Vranitzky IV	1994	SPÖ	ÖVP
Vranitzky V	1995	SPÖ	ÖVP
Schüssel I	1999	ÖVP	FPÖ
Schüssel II	2002	ÖVP	FPÖ[a]
Gusenbauer	2006	SPÖ	ÖVP
Faymann I	2008	SPÖ	ÖVP
Faymann II	2013	SPÖ	ÖVP

Table 5.1: Austrian governing coalitions, 1986-2013

This table excludes interim and caretaker cabinets.
[a] The BZÖ governed with the ÖVP after 4/17/05.

My theory expects that the mainstream right – in this case, the ÖVP – will break tradition and work with the far right – the FPÖ – only when three conditions are met:

1. The mainstream right and far right hold a majority of seats in parliament.

2. A coalition with the far right provides the mainstream right with better policy benefits than do other available coalitions.[3]

[2]Before Haider and the party's turn to the far right, the FPÖ did form a coalition with the SPÖ in 1983; Chapter 8 discusses this in more detail.

[3]Office benefits include being the senior partner in government and/or holding particular ministries, which also influence a party's ability to achieve policy benefits.

3. The mainstream right is not concerned about the stability of a coalition with the far right.

I expect that the major mainstream parties may exclude the far right from government for both principled and strategic reasons: In the Austrian case, the actions of both the SPÖ and ÖVP followed this pattern. Strategically, not only was the far right not an attractive coalition partner until it grew electorally, but the major parties' leaders initially thought that far-right exclusion was a viable course to ensure the far right does not continue to succeed. Mainstream-right leaders tended to drop these objections more quickly than the rank-and-file, but most within the party did so when alliance with the far right appealed more to them than other options (due to expected office and policy benefits).

The leaders of major mainstream-right parties have, at times, faced opposition to far-right inclusion (again, both strategic and principled) from members of their parliamentary group. The combination of internal opposition and a small majority of seats jointly held by the right and far right forced leaders to evaluate their priorities: Should they move forward with the coalition that may bring the best policy benefits for their party? Or, should they be cautious that strong opposition may cost them the stability of their coalition (due to MP revolts), their position as leader, or possibly, both?[4] Austria offers several examples of leaders faced with internal opposition, and as one of the few countries where the same far-right party has entered more than one governing coalition, the evidence suggests that principled opposition on the part of mainstream-right MPs and elites decreases after the first instance of far-right inclusion.

In this chapter, I explore each of the coalition scenarios shown in Table 5.2, explaining why the FPÖ was sometimes excluded by the ÖVP when a coalition could have been formed, and sometimes included when the ÖVP had other options. I take these scenarios chronologically, beginning with the elections when the ÖVP preferred the policy outcomes from coalitions with the SPÖ to those with the FPÖ, although both were mathematically possible (1990 and 1994). Next, I explore six elections when the ÖVP preferred to work with the far right (either the FPÖ, or the FPÖ alongside the BZÖ). In 1986 and 1995, the ÖVP was concerned about the stability of an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition and instead worked with the SPÖ. In 1999 and 2002, the ÖVP formed coalitions with the FPÖ, and, although they preferred the far right in 2006 and 2008, instead formed coalitions with the SPÖ due to the rifts between Haider's new party (the BZÖ) and his old party (the FPÖ), which refused to cooperate with each other.[5] I conclude with discussion of the 2013 election, when the right and far right lacked

[4] As explained in Chapter 1 (Section 4), concerns about "stability" on the part of the mainstream-right leader is focused on his own party. It is, of course, possible that the leader would also worry about an unreliable far-right party and the potential for far-right back-benchers to rebel, but the evidence from Austria is suggestive that this was, at most, a secondary concern for the ÖVP. ÖVP leader Schüssel entered another coalition with the FPÖ in 2002, despite the far right's major internal crisis that precipitated the new elections, because he felt it was best for his party and himself. This suggests that, in the Austrian case, stability has been more about the size of the majority and less about the internal workings of the far right.

[5] The 2006 and 2008 Austrian elections represent two of the very small set of Western European elections in which two far-right parties have competed. The ÖVP-FPÖ-BZÖ pairing held a majority after both the

Scenario	Election	Expectation
1. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right	**1999, 2000**, *2006, 2008*	Inclusion
2. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right, *but* concerned about stability	1986, 1995	Exclusion
3. Have majority with far right, *but* prefer policy benefits from coalition without far right	1990, 1994	Exclusion
4. Far right not mathematically part of coalition options	2013	Exclusion

Table 5.2: Coalition cases, by scenario

Cases in bold are instances of far-right inclusion; cases in italics do not fit the predicted theory

a parliamentary majority.

5.1 Mainstream right prefers the policy benefits from a coalition without the far right (Scenario 3)

My argument expects that, given the ability to form multiple coalitions, major mainstream parties will prefer the coalition that allows for the most-ideal policy outcomes. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, a top priority for the mainstream-right ÖVP was to have Austria join the European Community, a goal shared by the mainstream-left SPÖ but strenuously opposed by the far-right FPÖ (as well as the other parliamentary party, the Greens / *die Grünen*). Although an ÖVP-FPÖ alliance would have held a parliamentary majority, the ÖVP preferred working with the SPÖ in 1990 and 1994 in order to achieve the goal of EC/EU membership. This was true despite the ability to hold the senior position in the coalition by working with the FPÖ, supporting the premise from Chapter 1 that holding the chancellor's seat (or prime minister's seat) does not make up for significant policy distance between parties.

2006 and 2008 elections, but the ÖVP would not have held a majority with just one of the two far-right parties. In calculating whether the mainstream-right and far-right parties jointly held a majority of seats, I considered the combined totals of the FPÖ and BZÖ. This results in my classification of the 2006 and 2008 elections as belonging to Scenario 1 (where they do not fit my predicted outcome), rather than classifying the ÖVP-FPÖ and ÖVP-BZÖ pairings separately and as belonging to Scenario 4, where the right and far-right lack a parliamentary majority. Although the alternative option would allow every Austrian coalition outcome to fit my predictions, I have opted for the more conservative coding.

Within the ranks of the ÖVP, any amount of support for a coalition with the FPÖ in 1990 or 1994 was dwarfed by the desire to join the European Union (or, before 1992, the European Community). EU membership was shared goal of both major parties in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and evoked the "spirit of working together... [that had begun] after the second world war" but somewhat lost after twenty years without a grand coalition (Interview with SPÖ MP, 2011). Although both would have preferred working in a single-party government without the other, European accession ushered in a new era of grand coalitions, allowing "all Austrians to work together" (Interview with member of ÖVP Politische Akademie, 2011).

EU membership had not been on the table before the last years of the Cold War, stemming from Austria's official neutrality as outlined in the 1955 State Treaty. The accession process that did not begin in earnest until 1993, despite Austria's repeatedly-stated desire to join, first announced in 1987 (Luther 2009*a*, 3-4). The fall of the Soviet Union made accession more likely, but the existing member states were reluctant to expand, thus delaying negotiations until after the Maastricht Treaty took effect in 1992. By this point, Haider flipped on his earlier pro-European stance and campaigned against EU membership, citing the Maastricht Treaty as the reason for his reversal, meaning neither major party could have relied on his party for support. Additionally, a two-thirds majority was needed to pass the accession treaty (in addition to a public referendum). Together, the ÖVP and SPÖ were just five seats short of a two-thirds majority in the parliament (117, with 122 needed), but benefitted from the Liberal Forum's pro-EU stance (and contribution of 11 seats in favor); both *Grüne* and the FPÖ urged a "no" vote (Müller 1995, 283). It is therefore not surprising that the grand coalitions were the option used during this time.

EU negotiations concluded in March 1994, with Austria scheduled to hold a referendum on the accession in June. FPÖ leader Jörg Haider led a fervent anti-Europe campaign (as did the Greens), and there had been genuine concern on the part of ÖVP leader Erhard Busek and SPÖ leader Franz Vranitzy that the referendum would fail. Although the FPÖ had traditionally supported European integration, Haider defended his party's about-face by saying the Maastricht Treaty had pushed things too far. On the left, the Greens opposed a number of policy changes that would take place were Austria to join the EU (in the arenas of environmental and social welfare) as well as the loss of neutrality. Ultimately, the opposition parties were unable to coordinate their attacks on the coalition, and the referendum was approved with 66.6% of the vote (Sully 1995*b*, 68).

Both major parties' leaders at this time were fervently anti-FPÖ. Franz Vranitzky (since 1986, chancellor and SPÖ leader) called for new elections after Haider took over the FPÖ (see Chapter 3, Section 5 for details of Haider's rise), and his sentiments were shared by new ÖVP leader Busek, one of the most prominent anti-Haider voices within the party. The desire to exclude the FPÖ from government certainly seems to have been a principled stance by these leaders, who (at least publicly) were concerned about the FPÖ's appropriateness for Austrian politics with Haider at the helm, but it also served a strategic purpose. By refusing to include the FPÖ in coalitions while simultaneously picking up its popular anti-immigration themes (see Chapter 4, Section 2), the ÖVP and SPÖ both hoped to attract voters they had lost to the FPÖ. Importantly, exclusion was not costly to either party, as

both preferred to work with the other to secure Austrian EC/EU membership.

Despite the Greens gaining two additional seats in 1990, the SPÖ-*Grüne* partnership was still two seats short of a majority, leaving only three coalition options (Table 5.3). The massive losses of the ÖVP (17 seats, from 77 to 60) were largely offset by the gains of the FPÖ (15 seats, from 18 to 33), meaning the right-wing coalition had a potential majority, albeit a very slight one. Even if Busek had wanted to form a coalition with the FPÖ, it would take only two defectors to rob the government of its majority, making the coalition unstable. As a result, the grand coalition remained in power after these elections, a result of the ongoing Austrian accession process to the European Union.

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
SPÖ	42.7	SPÖ-ÖVP	76.5
ÖVP	32.1	SPÖ-FPÖ	61.7
FPÖ	16.6	ÖVP-FPÖ	50.8
Grüne	4.8		

Table 5.3: 1990 election: Results and coalition options

Prior to the 1994 election, but after the June referendum, ÖVP leader Busek said the grand coalition would continue "*ohne wenn und aber*" (without ifs or buts), which would serve to tie the ÖVP's hands at the bargaining table after the election (Morrow 1997, 41). However, a week before the election, honorary party chairman Alois Mock – the leader before Busek, and one of the few within the ÖVP who had realized the threat (and benefits) of the FPÖ years earlier – said a coalition with the FPÖ remained a possibility. This option had not yet become a politically popular one for a majority of the Austrian public, and the ÖVP's perceived lack of credibility on the FPÖ issue is thought to have cost the party about 2% of the vote, as undecided voters either did not turn out or supported the SPÖ or *Grüne* (Müller 1995, 281).

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
SPÖ	34.9	SPÖ-ÖVP	63.9
ÖVP	27.7	SPÖ-FPÖ	58.5
FPÖ	22.5	ÖVP-FPÖ	51.4
Grüne	7.3		
LiF	6.0		

Table 5.4: 1994 election: Results and coalition options

The ÖVP lost more than 4% of its 1990 share in the 1994 election, while the SPÖ dropped nearly 8%. The left had lost working-class voters to the FPÖ, while also losing middle-class voters to *Grüne* and the LiF (Morrow 1997, 40). Haider appealed to voters who felt the isolation of the FPÖ was unfair, with slogans such as "they are against him because he is

for you." The two major parties found themselves below two-thirds of the parliamentary seats for the first time ever, and were again left with the options of working together or with the FPÖ (Table 5.4). Both Busek and Vranitzky felt confident after their "unexpectedly easy success" with the EU referendum, but now felt less secure in their positions (Morrow 1997, 41). Having committed to *Ausgrenzung* as a strategy to combat Haider's popularity, they felt they could not go back on their positions (though the FPÖ had now climbed to more than 20% of the national vote), and opted to re-form the pro-EU grand coalition.[6] Relations between the two governing parties were tense, with the coalition negotiations quickly devolving into "political horse-trading" (Sully 1995*a*, 221). For some within the ÖVP, the appeal of a coalition with the FPÖ was steadily growing.

Exclusion had not been a costly strategy for the ÖVP in terms of office or policy goals in the early 1990s, as the desire for EC membership was best realized with the SPÖ rather than the FPÖ. Yet, during this period, the FPÖ had certainly taken voters (and thus seats) away from both major parties. The major parties' efforts to win back voters with a combination of far-right exclusion from the government and restrictive immigration promises and policies were largely unsuccessful, and ÖVP leader Busek would soon pay for this failure with his job. The once-dominant grand coalition was now on less-steady ground, and Haider predicted he would become chancellor after the next election (Morrow 1997, 40).

5.2 Mainstream right prefers the policy benefits from a coalition with the far right, but is concerned about coalition stability (Scenario 2)

ÖVP leaders have had to think about not only policy preferences when deciding between potential coalition partners, but also the likely stability of any coalition they would form. Working with the far-right FPÖ would be costly to the ÖVP if the coalition fell apart quickly after formation, even if such a coalition would give the ÖVP the policy benefits it preferred. A short-lived coalition would trigger a new election (as is customary in Austria, versus an installation of a new coalition without returning to the voters), in which some voters might blame the ÖVP for not choosing a more stable option. When the ÖVP-FPÖ combination has had only a slight majority in parliament, and when the ÖVP leader has faced significant opposition from within his ranks, the leader has opted to form the safer, stable coalition with the SPÖ.[7] This situation occurred in 1986 and again in 1995, as explained in this section.[8]

[6] As in 1990, Busek may also have realized that a three-seat majority for the ÖVP and FPÖ would make the coalition potentially unstable.

[7] Stability was not a concern in 2002. Schüssel had a comfortable majority and the smaller FPÖ could be more easily dominated in a coalition.

[8] While coalitions between the ÖVP and FPÖ in 1990 and 1994 would similarly have only slight majorities, they are categorized separately due to the ÖVP leader's preference for the SPÖ after both elections. In contrast, the ÖVP leaders in 1986 and 1995 would have preferred the FPÖ as coalition partner.

By the time of the 1986 election, the ÖVP had been out of office for sixteen years, and though the party re-entered government after this election, they remained the junior partner of the electorally-stronger SPÖ. The two ÖVP leaders at these elections - Alois Mock and Wolfgang Schüssel – both wanted to break free from the SPÖ's shadow by collaborating with the FPÖ, but there was too much resistance from within their ranks for either leader to form these "mold-breaking" coalitions (see Luther 2009*a*, 6-8). During this time, large numbers of MPs from both major parties thought the best way to deal with the FPÖ was to leave it in opposition, and neither leader wanted to risk a rebellion or the loss of his position to form such a coalition.

As explained in Chapter 3 (Section 5), the FPÖ had vacillated between a liberal and a nationalist course throughout the postwar period, depending on whether its leader came from the left wing or right wing of the party. These shifts came to a halt in 1986, when Jörg Haider (from the nationalist wing of the party) took control of the FPÖ. Under a liberal leader (Norbert Steger), the FPÖ had entered government as the junior partner of the SPÖ, led by Chancellor Franz Vranitzky (see Chapter 8 on this coalition, which governed from 1983-86). Although Styrian and Carinthian SPÖ governors (and their supporters) wanted to continue the small coalition, and the FPÖ expressed the same, Vranitzky denounced the FPÖ's "unacceptable shift to the right" and dissolved the coalition (Sully 1990, 64). New elections were to be held just nine weeks later. Vranitzky never detailed his refusal to work with Haider, saying only that the FPÖ had pushed its liberal tendencies to the background. Some believe that Vranitzky recognized the threat Haider's FPÖ posed to his party, and wanted to scare voters away from the FPÖ by hinting that Haider was a neo-Nazi (Mitten 2002, 199; Williams 2006, 180-81).[9] Dropping the FPÖ from the coalition would thus have been a necessary step in Vranitzky's plan.

During the 1986 election campaign, the ÖVP and SPÖ both pledged to right the struggling Austrian economy through increased privatization and a restructuring of nationalized industry. The parties' platforms looked so similar on the major issues that a grand coalition was a foregone conclusion, and voters had only to decide whether Vranizky or ÖVP leader Alois Mock should lead this government (Scott 1986, 156). The ÖVP harbored no illusions of winning back a majority of the seats it had lost over the past two decades, but hoped to return to government after sixteen years of opposition (13 years of single-party SPÖ government, plus the SPÖ-FPÖ coalition). Preferably, of course, it would have its leader, Mock, as chancellor. Vranitzky suggested he would be amenable to such an arrangement if the SPÖ fell behind the ÖVP (Höbelt 2003, 47). Both parties lost seats at the hands of Haider's FPÖ and the new Green party (the FPÖ gaining six seats and *Grüne* winning eight, entering parliament for the first time), but the SPÖ maintained a three-seat (1.8% of votes) advantage over the ÖVP. The Greens did not have enough seats to provide a majority to any two-party coalition, leaving just three possible options (Table 5.5).

Mock was aware after the election that a new grand coalition would not be like those of

[9]Art (2006, 186-7) says party elites in many other countries could have, in this situation, appealed to public distaste for anything resembling fascist rhetoric or nostalgia for the past as a way to rally opposition to the far right. However, in Austria, he notes that attacking Haider on these grounds may have backfired

Party	Votes (%)	Parties	Seats (%)
SPÖ	43.1	SPÖ-ÖVP	85.8
ÖVP	41.3	SPÖ-FPÖ	53.6
FPÖ	9.7	ÖVP-FPÖ	52.0
Grüne	4.8		

Table 5.5: 1986 election: Results and coalition options

the 1950s, with a stronger ÖVP leading the way. As long as the SPÖ was more powerful than the ÖVP, the latter would be locked into a left-dominated government. Historians say that Mock actually preferred a right-leaning FPÖ coalition of his own, which was supported by the ÖVP governors of Salzburg and Voralberg, among others (Höbelt 2003, 54). Such a coalition would have returned the ÖVP as the chancellor's party and may have quickly dampened public enthusiasm surrounding Haider and the FPÖ – also benefitting the ÖVP.

Many others within the ÖVP, however, strongly opposed the idea of a coalition with the FPÖ. Some felt a coalition with Haider was unthinkable, given the economic problems facing Austria and the fact that similar problems had long been resolved with a grand coalition. Others saw Haider as a threat to democracy. Erhard Busek, one of the most prominent anti-Haider members of the ÖVP (and soon, the next party leader), asked Mock to go into opposition rather than work with Haider. Mock also faced critical resistance from his own home province of Lower Austria, an ÖVP stronghold. Without asking the party congress which option it would prefer, he began negotiations with the SPÖ.

At the time, the FPÖ had averaged just 6% of the national vote in the post-war period, with the ÖVP routinely winning six or seven times as many votes. Despite the FPÖ's jump to 9.7% in 1986 – its best-ever total – it is understandable that many in the ÖVP did not recognize the potential for the FPÖ's rapid electoral growth, and thus felt leaving the party in opposition was the best strategy. Accounts of this period say that many who supported leaving the FPÖ in opposition later regretted their decision (Höbelt 2003, 54). Although Mock may have felt a coalition with the FPÖ in 1986 would have provided his party with better policy benefits (and himself with the chancellor's seat) and allow the ÖVP to regain votes, the opposition from within his party was too strong to pursue a far-right coalition. The amount of opposition, and the prominence of some in the anti-FPÖ camp (including the powerful business group ÖBB, representing the railways), meant that Mock faced the risk of both an MP rebellion (with ÖVP MPs voting against the government) and being ousted as party leader; neither was a risk he wanted to take (Luther 2009*a*, 6).

Over the next decade, the ÖVP and SPÖ both continued to lose votes to the FPÖ, which had begun to mobilize voters on the basis of anti-immigration rhetoric. After the 1995 election, a new ÖVP leader would again be confronted with a situation similar to that of Mock in 1986: Deciding whether to pursue a coalition with Haider's FPÖ in the face of

due to a greater level of sympathy for the past than would have been present in other European countries.

strong internal opposition.

Having decided in 1994 that, conditional on receiving enough votes at the next election (then scheduled for 1998), the party would try to enter government, Haider took steps to make the FPÖ more *salonfähig*, or socially acceptable, in the eyes of the mainstream parties. He moved away from the party's long-standing pan-German nationalism and calls to overhaul the Austrian political system. Haider wanted to maximize votes before entering government to ensure the FPÖ would be in a position of strength, acknowledging that his party was not strong enough to effect real change (Luther 2011, 456). He expected that, with a cushion of votes, the FPÖ could withstand governing and the anticipated incumbency-related losses it would face.[10] The FPÖ devoted a significant amount of time and money to developing policy proposals on issues beyond its core themes (e.g. pensions and family benefits) in an effort to show voters (and the other parties) it could be a responsible cabinet partner (Luther 2011, 458).

As part of Haider's plan for respectability, he distanced himself from his history of sympathetic quotes about the Nazi Party. He knew that he could use these statements to maintain support in Carinthia, where German nationalism was particularly strong, but toned down the rhetoric elsewhere in Austria. He linked immigration and crime and frequently called Austria's asylum policy the "importation of criminals" (Heinisch 2002, 88, 93). Haider's "Contract with Austria," modeled after Newt Gingrich's "Contract with America," was announced prior to the 1995 election. It had twenty pledges, most of which were more valence-oriented than in the "Austria First" proposals two years earlier (see Chapter 4, Section 2). Limiting immigration was the seventeenth pledge, following vague promises such as a pledge "for more democracy," plus seemingly incompatible goals, such as "to cut taxes" and "to safeguard the health service" (Sully 1997, 122-7).

Although Busek remained opposed to the idea of collaboration with the FPÖ, his party was divided. About half of the ÖVP's parliamentary group wanted to break free from the SPÖ's shadow and its more than twenty years of first-place election victories (Morrow 1997, 41). Adding to this group's discontent, Busek had established a reputation for willingness to compromise with the Social Democrats at the expense of his own party's goals. He resigned in early 1995 after the FPÖ made gains in traditional ÖVP heartlands, in elections for commerce and farmers' organizations (Höbelt 2003, 106-7). There was support for Andreas Khol, an ally of Alois Mock, and perhaps the most likely candidate to resume Mock's right-leaning agenda, to take over as leader. Busek said he would only peacefully step down if Wolfgang Schüssel, the commerce minister, took over. Schüssel was seen as as a centrist member of the ÖVP and as someone unlikely to take hardline stances on policy. Party leaders convinced other candidates to stand down, hoping to avoid having their internal tensions go public, thus paving the way for Schüssel's election in April 1995.

The new leader's willingness to take on the SPÖ – a move supported by many in the

[10]Haider believed his predecessor, Norbert Steger, had cost the FPÖ dearly when it entered office with the SPO in 1983. Steger's party had its lowest-ever vote share at the 1983 election (5%) and was easily dominated by the much-stronger SPÖ. Haider was determined not to repeat this mistake.

party – was tested in October 1995, when the two parties sparred over the national budget. The ÖVP wanted to dramatically cut welfare benefits and social spending, fearful that the current deficit levels would leave Austria outside the European Monetary Union. The SPÖ was unwilling to support these proposals and Schüssel left the bargaining table, forcing Vranitzky to call for new elections just one year after the last elections. Bolstered by his party's standing in the polls, Schüssel was satisfied with the prospect of a new election. Schüssel wanted to take over the senior position in government, and hoped for a grand coalition with himself as chancellor, saying that he would try to first negotiate with the SPÖ. He was not opposed to a coalition with the FPÖ, however, should the grand coalition not meet his needs, and left all options on the table in statements made before the election. By this time, dissatisfaction with the grand coalition resulted in relations between the SPÖ and ÖVP that were "so strained that the potential for breakdown was obvious" (Morrow 1997, 42).

The ÖVP dropped to 27.7% in 1994. These losses for the ÖVP meant that the FPÖ had become an increasingly attractive coalition partner. According to Müller (1996, 278), most observers felt the ÖVP would be in government after the 1995 election, either jointly with the FPÖ or as a minority government with the FPÖ as a support party. Although the FPÖ had steadily increased its support among the public, a majority of voters (63%) in 1995 wanted the SPÖ and ÖVP to continue in a grand coalition; the idea of an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition attracted only 19% of those surveyed (Plasser and Ulram 1995, 513). Schüssel did not have a majority of his MPs in favor of a coalition with the FPÖ in 1995, but neither did he face a unified opposition (Luther 2009*a*, 7-8; interviews with ÖVP MPs, 2011). The FPÖ's rise in popularity since 1986 had led some in the ÖVP to more seriously consider the FPÖ as a governing partner (Fallend 2004, 123).

However, the FPÖ was unprepared for the sudden election, and did not have coherent policy proposals ready. Instead, Haider sat by while Schüssel presented himself as the reformer Austrians wanted, and as Vranitzky mobilized more than 150,000 former voters to support the SPÖ by warning of the consequences of an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition for pensioners (Höbelt 2003, 107-9). Schüssel drew strong contrasts between the ÖVP and SPÖ, painting his party as the true party of the right, which helped the ÖVP regain some votes previously lost to the FPÖ. With both mainstream parties pandering toward their bases rather than toward the center, the FPÖ was the 1995 casualty. Further damaging his party's chances, just days before the election, a video of Haider at a Carinthia meeting of former *Waffen-SS* members was aired on a German television network. Having greeted the men as "friends," Haider's efforts to portray himself and his party as democratically acceptable stalled.

Schüssel was concerned that this coalition might prompt a miniature rebellion from within the ÖVP ranks, particularly given the Haider video, thus leaving the government without enough votes. The ÖVP and FPÖ would have held just a two-seat majority in 1994 (94 combined seats, with 92 needed for a majority), and Schüssel wanted to pad this total with at least five more seats before seriously considering negotiations with the FPÖ after the 1995 election (Luther 2009*a*, 7-8). Instead, the FPÖ lost one seat in 1995, dropping the majority to just one seat above the minimum (Table 5.6). Schüssel opted to bide his time,

negotiating with the SPÖ "through clenched teeth" (Morrow 1997, 43). He hoped for better returns after the next election and a return of additional voters lost to the FPÖ since 1986, particularly because the FPÖ lost a seat in the 1995 election. As one of the most popular political figures in Austria, Schüssel believed he could carry his party to a first-place victory in the next election (Morrow 1997, 41).

Party	Votes (%)	Parties	Seats (%)
SPÖ	38.1	SPÖ-ÖVP	67.2
ÖVP	28.3	SPÖ-FPÖ	61.2
FPÖ	21.2	ÖVP-FPÖ	50.8
LIF	5.5		
Grüne	4.8		

Table 5.6: 1995 election: Results and coalition options

Instead, the next four years found the FPÖ still increasing its vote share at the expense of the ÖVP. The FPÖ climbed ahead of the ÖVP in the polls for the first time. At the same time, driving a wedge between the ÖVP and SPÖ was the process of privatizing the *Creditanstalt* (CA), the oldest and largest bank in Austria, and one of the "black" ÖVP banks. Its closest competitor, the *Länderbank*, was a "red" SPÖ bank that merged with another to form Bank Austria (BA) in 1991, soon becoming the largest bank in the country. A few days before the bidding was to end, BA submitted a bid. Were this bid to succeed, the Second Republic power sharing structure would be flipped on its head, as the SPÖ would have control of the banking industry.

Finance minister Viktor Klima (SPÖ) pushed for the deal to go through, and though Vranitzky is said to have anticipated problems, the SPÖ executive ultimately outvoted him. An "incandescent" Schüssel nearly terminated the coalition, with some ÖVP MPs suggesting cooperation with the FPÖ would solve the problems from being the SPÖ's partner, while also "demystifying" the FPÖ and cutting into its support (Luther 2009*a*, 8). Haider said he did not want to join the government without the ratification of a new election, but Schüssel knew he could not call a third election in as many years over this issue. While it was politically important, the voters would not find it necessary and would blame Schüssel. BA ultimately purchased the majority of the government's share of CA, with the rest purchased by small ÖVP-affiliated banks, and the ÖVP insisted that BA also be privatized as part of the deal (Fallend 1998, 351). Two days later, Vranitzky abruptly resigned, and Klima took over the party and the chancellorship. By this time, nearly four times as many voters felt Klima could better handle the country's problems than Vranitzky (58 vs. 15%; Fallend 1998, 349).

Tensions between the SPÖ and ÖVP continued to grow, as both major parties stepped up their pursuit of FPÖ voters, while making strategic overtures toward the far right. Klima, as SPÖ leader, wanted the relationship between the SPÖ and the FPÖ to thaw; he was less opposed to cooperation with the FPÖ than was his predecessor. To attract FPÖ voters, Klima appointed Karl Schlögl as his minister of the interior. Schlögl represented the right

(centrist) wing of the SPÖ (the other likely candidate, Caspar von Einem, was the standard-bearer of the party's left wing) and his crackdowns on illegal immigration made him popular outside the SPÖ.

Publicly, Schüssel criticized the FPÖ's policies after the 1995 election in an effort to shore up voters who might be persuaded to support the FPÖ rather than the ÖVP. Yet, in private, he encouraged the FPÖ to adopt policies that would make ÖVP members less resistant to a coalition, such as market-oriented economic reform, in anticipation of working with the FPÖ rather than the SPÖ in the near future. The Klima government passed two immigration reform bills to win back voters on the issue, yet the ÖVP was not gaining in the polls. Although Schüssel came under pressure, many in the ÖVP blamed the SPÖ, rather than their leader, for the party's problems. It helped that the ÖVP did not have an alternative candidate ready to take over the top position (Luther 2009*a*, 8-9).

A 1997 survey of MPs found that ÖVP MPs saw their party as closer to the FPÖ than to the SPÖ on a number of dimensions, including the welfare state, income policies, and socio-cultural issues. The ÖVP and SPÖ were closer on issues of European integration and security; unsurprisingly, the greatest divides on nearly every issue were between the SPÖ and FPÖ (Müller and Jenny 2000, 152). Major parties choose coalitions while thinking about the issues they care most about at that time, as argued in Chapter 1 (Section 4). The ÖVP could have preferred either the SPÖ or the FPÖ in the late 1990s, depending on what mattered most at the time and which partner allow it to achieve more of its policy goals. As the 1999 election approached, Schüssel indicated that he was not opposed to working with the FPÖ, and some elites within his party echoed the sentiment. The floor leaders Khol (ÖVP) and Scheibner (FPÖ) discussed the possible outcomes, with Khol saying they might work together if they received a "suitable result" from the election, meaning the ÖVP could not suffer too severe a loss (Höbelt 2003, 180). The ÖVP committed itself to going into opposition if it fell to third place, and while this was indeed the outcome, this threat is thought to have mobilized ÖVP voters who would have otherwise stayed home. Prior to the 1999 election, the grand coalition option (with SPÖ leader Klima as chancellor) generated the most support from voters, with 57% saying they had a positive feeling about this coalition. Nearly half (45%) had a positive feeling about Schüssel as chancellor of an ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, and almost as many (41%) felt positively about Haider leading the same coalition. While not the most popular option, the idea of these ÖVP-FPÖ coalitions generated enough positive support to be taken seriously (Plasser and Ulram 2000, 258).

This section has shown that, despite a preference for collaboration with the far right (on policy and/or office grounds), mainstream-right party leaders chose an alternative coalition in the face of strong internal opposition. The FPÖ in 1986 was not electorally strong enough to convince Mock that a coalition between the ÖVP and FPÖ was necessary, but by 1995, Schüssel was well aware that the FPÖ would continue to gain support (to his party's detriment) if it remained in opposition. He also saw the opportunities that would be afforded to him – including the possibility of becoming chancellor – through alliance with the far right. The slim majorities held by the ÖVP-FPÖ pairing in the 1986 and 1995 elections, and the likelihood of MP defections, made these coalitions too risky a venture, given their

probability of collapse. The next section examines the elections from 1999 through 2008, when the ÖVP again preferred the FPÖ as a coalition partner. Internal ÖVP opposition to the FPÖ weakened as the FPÖ continued to grow, to Schüssel's advantage, as he would soon form two "black-blue" governments between the parties.

5.3 Mainstream right prefers policy benefits from a coalition with the far right (Scenario 1)

After each of the four elections from 1999 to 2008, the ÖVP preferred to form coalitions with the far right (the FPÖ in 1999 and 2002, and the FPÖ/BZÖ in 2006 and 2008), due to the expected policy gains from these coalitions and the ability to hold the chancellor's position. Contrary to the expectations of my argument, however, these coalitions formed after only two of these four elections, 1999 and 2002. Below, I explain why the ÖVP preferred to work with the far right, and why the party formed coalitions with the SPÖ in 2006 and 2008 instead of the FPÖ/BZÖ. Briefly, the ÖVP saw both office and policy benefits from collaborating with the FPÖ that it would not have received from working with the SPÖ after each of these elections. However, fractures within the FPÖ led to the formation of a splinter party, the BZÖ, in 2005, and the refusal of the two far-right parties to collaborate made it impossible for the ÖVP to form a governing coalition with the far right. The ÖVP did not hold a majority with either far-right party individually, and would thus have needed the support of both to form a government. It thus turned to the SPÖ – its second-best option – in 2006 and 2008.

Although Schüssel – and before him, Mock – faced strong internal opposition from ÖVP MPs and elites when he offered the FPÖ as a potential coalition partner, the evidence from the 1999-2008 period suggests two important elements: First, principled opposition seems to decrease as the advantages of working with the far right grow, and second, principled opposition also seems to be diminished by the experience of governing with the far right.

Far right is preferred and included

The electoral threat posed by the FPÖ to the ÖVP reached a high-water mark in 1999, when the FPÖ finished second in the national election. For the first time in the post-war period, three parties received roughly equal shares of the vote: The SPÖ won the election with 33.2%, and the FPÖ and ÖVP found themselves in a virtual tie, each with 26.9% of the vote (separated by just 415 votes, out of a total of 4.6 million votes cast). The SPÖ's victory was a bit hollow, as the party received the lowest vote share in its history. The ÖVP was, prior to the election, expected to drop to record-low vote shares, so the sting of their third-place finish was made more tolerable by the loss being smaller than anticipated. The FPÖ was the clear winner in the 1999 elections, improving to its best-ever vote share and a second-place finish, albeit an incredibly close finish. Any combination of two of the three largest parties would have had a sufficient majority in 1999 (Table 5.7).

Party	Votes (%)	Parties	Seats (%)
SPÖ	33.2	SPÖ-ÖVP	63.9
FPÖ	26.9	SPÖ-FPÖ	63.9
ÖVP	26.9	ÖVP-FPÖ	56.8
Grüne	7.4		

Table 5.7: 1999 election: Results and coalition options

The ÖVP insisted that the voters had spoken and that they would respect the result (and their third-place finish). Schüssel said he would not take part in coalition negotiations and the ÖVP would sit in opposition. Austrian Federal President Thomas Klestil (an ÖVP candidate when elected in 1992 and 1998) was only in favor of the ÖVP participating in a coalition with the SPÖ. He set up a series of meetings between the three parties to determine what common ground was possible. The meetings demonstrated more commonalities between the ÖVP and FPÖ than between the ÖVP and SPÖ. The ÖVP and FPÖ were no longer fundamentally divided over EU membership, with Austria having joined four years earlier, and they agreed on some fiscal matters and on the benefits of NATO membership. Haider was willing to compromise on his stated preference of a flat tax (that would have taxed individuals at 23% of their income) in favor of overall tax reductions.

More than two months after the election, Schüssel said he would, with the support of his party, enter into negotiations with the SPÖ in an effort to prevent Austria from remaining without a government; these negotiations began in December 1999. He did not take the FPÖ option off the table, but observers still read his statement as an endorsement of another grand coalition. Schüssel never intended to take his party into opposition, but during the exploratory talks, kept his preferences quiet. He knew he needed to be seen as seriously attempting to form a coalition with the SPÖ, but had decided years earlier that a coalition with the FPÖ was the only way to turn around his party's fortunes. Some scholars point to Schüssel's desire to "castrate" the FPÖ by bringing it into government (e.g. Luther 2003, 136). Likewise, ÖVP MPs recall their leader's concern that failure to make Haider accountable, through governmental participation, would further increase his party's support. Schüssel is said to have asserted that "another grand coalition [in 1999], in four years Haider will be chancellor" (Interview with member of ÖVP Politische Akademie, 2011; interviews with ÖVP MP, 2011). However, these coalitions would not have formed if they had not been in the ÖVP's interest.

In interviews, ÖVP MPs acknowledged that they had felt at the time there was scant overlap between their party and the SPÖ, but disagreed about the resulting implications. Some ÖVP members – most importantly, Schüssel and other party elites – welcomed the idea of working with the FPÖ, and, in some cases, strongly preferred this coalition to another grand coalition. Partnering with the FPÖ meant that the ÖVP could hammer out a government policy much closer to their ideal points than any program emerging from compromises with the SPÖ. Importantly, the ÖVP had not held the Austrian chancellorship since the

1966-70 period, and reports suggest that Schüssel was eager to take up this role, a role he would not be able to fill in an SPÖ-led coalition.

Negotiations between the ÖVP and SPÖ continued for weeks, as the parties fought over the distribution of ministries and plans for both economic and security reforms (Fallend 2001, 241). After being threatened with new elections by President Klestil (should the parties fail to reach an agreement), the SPÖ executive approved a coalition proposal on January 17, 2000. Then, the ÖVP demanded a pension reform that would need to be signed by the trade unions, plus ÖVP control of the interior and finance ministries. The SPÖ rejected the offer on the 21st.

Whether Schüssel intended these negotiations to fail is still debated. ÖVP elites argue that formal union support of the governments plan was important for the social partnership, portraying it as a simple matter: "Schüssel said the unions have to sign this contract, and [the SPÖ] said no" (Interview with member of ÖVP Politische Akademie, 2011). SPÖ MPs contend that the ÖVP knew all along that the unions would never sign, providing them an easy out to begin negotiations with the FPÖ. One SPÖ MP involved with the negotiations described the situation as "impossible. You can't force the trade union to be part of the coalition treaty. This is something you cannot demand. [Making the unions part of the government agreement] was breaking away from an understanding of how the state works" (Interview with SPÖ MP, 2011).

SPÖ leader Klima (who had been tasked with forming the government) reported to President Klestil that negotiations between the two major parties had failed. In a "surprise" move, Klestil asked Klima to form an SPÖ minority government (Fallend 2001, 241). Presumably, Klestil wished to avoid ÖVP-FPÖ negotiations. Within a week, both right-wing parties had refused to support an SPÖ-led minority government, and Klima said his party would be willing to go into opposition, uncertain how they could form a government.[11]

Three days after SPÖ-ÖVP talks ended, Haider and Schüssel announced they would begin negotiations immediately, giving themselves a week and a half to work out a program.[12] Klestil's November sessions had given the parties a chance to find much common ground, such as agreement on the "integration contract" that would require non-EU nationals who wanted to become permanent residents to pay for language and citizenship classes (Bale 2003, 86). During the negotiations, other potentially problematic aspects of the FPÖ's platform (such as the *Kinderscheck*, a monthly voucher for women with children under the age of six, limited to Austrian nationals) were turned into more acceptable ideas (such as a third year of maternity leave, which was both less expensive and less discriminatory).

Schüssel believed the FPÖ should not be allowed to sit in opposition indefinitely, criticizing the government and attracting an ever-increasing number of voters (Interview with member of ÖVP Politische Akademie, 2011). Yet, he also saw the FPÖ as a partner that could deliver more than the SPÖ would deliver, in terms of policy goals and giving him the

[11] The SPÖ was willing to strike deals with the FPÖ in order to gain the latter's support of the minority government, though these efforts eventually failed (see Chapter 8).

[12] Klestil is said to have considered this an "affront" to his duty of nominating the government *formateur* (Luther 2003, 137).

chancellorship. Haider feared that another term in opposition would be costly in the next election, as FPÖ voters wanted the party to take action (rather than remain in opposition for another several years), and understood that the time was ideal for entering government.

The ÖVP's members were initially divided over the best course of action, with about one-third wanting a grand coalition, a coalition with the FPÖ, and opposition, respectively. Many of the more centrist members of the party preferred (and still prefer) to work with the SPÖ on policy grounds; some felt the FPÖ was unreliable as a coalition partner or beyond the pale (or both). Far-right parties are, themselves, not immune to divides. Indeed, many FPÖ elites felt the party was still unprepared to govern in 2000, including Haider's top deputy (and future Vice-Chancellor), Susanne Riess-Passer. They were ultimately swayed by Haider's insistence that failure to capitalize on the opportunity would cost the FPÖ dearly in the next election (Luther 2011, 459). This was precisely the opposite prediction of the ÖVP leadership, yet both Haider and Schüssel argued for the same outcome. In the end, Schüssel won out, and the FPÖ entered the government as a far-right party for the first time. It is, perhaps, a testament to Schüssel's negotiating skills that he navigated from third place in the votes to the chancellor's seat. In this process, the ÖVP also favorably negotiated with the FPÖ on key policy issues.

Before negotiations between the parties concluded, the other fourteen EU member states issued a declaration saying the formation of a government that included the FPÖ would result in the freezing of bilateral negotiations with Austria. The other countries could not avoid dealing with Austria in the context of the EU, where Austria (like all countries) held a potential veto over a number of issues, but would no longer hold state visits or receive Austrian ministers.[13] Although President Klestil publicly appealed to the other EU members, asking for a repeal of the sanctions, heads of government later reported that he was actually the mastermind behind the idea. Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (a Social Democrat) reported to the Danish Foreign Affairs committee that he believed both Klestil and SPÖ leader Klima had asked other heads of state to issue diplomatic sanctions, a story denied by Klestil but corroborated by other heads of government (Olesen 2003, 554-6; Höbelt 2003, 189-90). Despite the proclamation, Schüssel and Haider announced their government program the next day. The black-blue program was a mix of neoliberal and conservative goals, predominantly fiscal in nature, and clearly driven by the ÖVP. The government aimed to balance the budget by 2002, which involved both higher taxes (on some disability pensions and social insurance for farmers, plus new university and hospital fees) and spending cuts (reducing government spending on education and health care through the new fees, plus cuts to unemployment benefits).

Klestil swore in the new government, but citing the international reaction, first made the two leaders sign a preamble to their government program, one that committed them to tolerance. Schüssel rallied his party around yet another unwelcome international intrusion

[13]Seven months after the coalition entered office, the EU's "Three Wise Men" issued a report critical of the FPÖ, saying the party had "exploited and enforced xenophobic sentiments in election campaigns," but deeming the government as being committed to "common European values," thus recommending that the bilateral sanctions be dropped (Ahtisaari, Frowein and Oreja 2000).

into Austrian affairs, helping stem the criticism he may otherwise have received over his coalition decision. ÖVP members were upset that their party was the subject of international backlash, though they were mollified by the gains they made in the polls shortly after the election (Luther 2011: 460). As a result of the backlash, it was agreed that Haider would formally resign as FPÖ chairman and not take a cabinet position. His number-two within the party, Suzanne Riess-Passer, took over as party chair and became Vice-Chancellor in the cabinet (Luther 2003, 137). Behind the scenes, however, Haider planned to remain very much in charge of his party. His ideal situation involved him as chancellor, but he was content to bide his time outside the cabinet. This arrangement allowed him to criticize the government and the "red-black" corporatist system, something he could not do under Austrian norms of cabinet unanimity. FPÖ membership had been divided over whether to take up a governmental position, but Haider placated the skeptics (who wanted the party to remain critical of the government in opposition) by insisting his party would remain a critical outsider even from within the coalition. These conflicting roles proved to be difficult to simultaneously maintain for any length of time.

Heinisch (2003, 104) describes the 2000 coalition's agenda as an "eclectic mix of neoliberal, cultural-conservative, and populist elements." The social partnership was a major target of the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition; the parties believed that the trade unions would make every effort to block reforms in negotiations between the social partners and the coalition and thus sought to reduce their influence (Müller and Fallend 2004, 810). For example, the government introduced a reform of the executive board of the Austrian social insurance institution, the *Hauptverband*. Under the previous system, labor (meaning, the SPÖ) held two-thirds of the seats, with just one-third going to business, but the seats were split equally under the new system. In other social partnership institutions, the "red" seats were replaced with "blue" FPÖ seats. The SPÖ was, predictably, unhappy with the government's stated aim of "de-politicization," which only replaced the SPÖ with the FPÖ (Fallend 2002, 906-8).

The black-blue coalition had set a balanced budget as one of its goals, and accomplished this in late 2001 (a year ahead of schedule) by increasing taxes and fees such that the national tax levels reached a record high of 45.6%. In 2002, the government increased paid maternity leave from two years to three years, and made people without regular income (including students, farmers, and self-employed individuals) eligible for the maternity pay, as well. Although these benefits did not fit the neoliberal economic scheme, both parties believed they were important for their conservative pro-family agenda. Schüssel had been uncertain that these goals could be accomplished in a coalition with the SPÖ (Luther 2009*a*, 6).

The FPÖ during this period was, at best, "[all voters'] second choice" (Heinisch 2008, 51): Voters who supported the government's policies gave credit to the ÖVP, and voters who opposed the government looked to the SPÖ and *Grüne*, so support for the FPÖ dropped. For many Austrians, the FPÖ's governing team (led by Vice-Chancellor Susanne Riess-Passer) offered a respectable face for the party. Among the FPÖ rank-and-file, however, the governing team was viewed as bending to the ÖVP. Haider was frustrated with the widespread public popularity of his government team, particularly Riess-Passer and Finance Minister Karl-Heinz Grasser, relative to his own. Angry that he remained a *"persona non*

grata," despite bringing the FPÖ tremendous electoral success in his time as leader, Haider stepped up his controversial actions. One notable incident, Haider visiting Saddam Hussein while Riess-Passer was on an official state visit to the United States, was later described by Riess-Passer as the "beginning of the end" (Luther 2003, 140). Riess-Passer wanted Haider to behave more respectably, but could not publicly condemn his behavior when he was inextricably linked to the FPÖ, despite being outside the cabinet (Luther 2011, 463).

The breaking point for the FPÖ came in August 2002, when the cabinet announced that proposed tax cuts would be delayed until at least 2003 to divert funds to flood victims, but that they would move forward with the purchase of 18 costly Eurofighter jets. The FPÖ's June congress had passed a motion affirming its support for the tax cuts, part of the party's election pledge, yet the FPÖ's executive voted – without Haider present – to support the ÖVP in this move. The decision resulted in a "visceral conflict" within the party (Luther 2011, 460-61). Haider hoped to rally public support behind him, and called for a public initiative to reinstate the tax cuts. Not to be outmaneuvered, Riess-Passer announced on live television that the public should be asked to vote on whether the money should be used for flood relief or tax cuts, "well aware" that 70% of the public supported the former (Luther 2003, 140-41).

Although Haider's efforts to win over his party's cabinet ministers and MPs had failed, he knew he commanded significant support among the rank-and-file. One of his trusted MPs, Ewald Stadler, started a petition called "Tax Reform before Interceptor Fighters," circulated among FPO conference delegates; with the signatures of one-third, the party statutes allowed for a party conference to be called (Luther 2003, 141). The petition not only called for FPO ministers to commit to tax cuts and withdraw support for the Eurofighter purchase, but also wanted them to promise to veto eastern enlargement of the European Union unless the Beneš Decrees – which involved the forced deportation of ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia after the war – were rescinded.

Stadler collected votes from nearly 50% of the the delegates and presented the petition to the government team on September 3 – essentially, this was a vote of no confidence in the FPÖ cabinet members. The FPÖ ministers announced that they would resign if the petition was not withdrawn. Haider, not actually wanting his party to break up the coalition, suggested that all signatories meet on September 7 in Knittelfeld to look for a solution. Secretly, the night before the Knittelfeld meeting, he struck a secret deal with Riess-Passer: The ministers would present a compromise document (agreed upon by Haider and Riess-Passer) to the signatories as coming only from the government team, expecting this would pacify the rank-and-file (Luther 2003, 141). At the meeting, however, Haider's supporters were not interested in compromise, demanding a variety of concessions be added and ripping up the ministers' proposal. Riess-Passer and her government team resigned the following day.

Haider proposed a new slate of cabinet members to Schüssel, but the chancellor announced he would call early elections, now set for November 2002, rather than continue the coalition with other FPÖ nominees, now known as the "Knittelfeld Rebels"; Haider hoped the chancellor would back down (Müller 2004, 348). In addition to his desire to avoid another

cabinet of FPÖ MPs adopting Haider's style of confrontational politics, Schüssel wanted to capitalize on his government's achievements over the previous two years, and felt a new election would provide this electoral payoff. Waiting until the end of the parliamentary cycle in 2004, in contrast, risked costing the ÖVP and FPÖ their majority. Also importantly, Schüssel anticipated that many 1999 FPÖ voters would prefer his policies to Haider's "slogans," particularly after convincing popular FPÖ finance minister Grasser (who had resigned after Knittelfeld) to join his new cabinet team (Fallend 2004, 891; Müller 2004, 348). The public seemed to immediately punish the FPÖ for breaking the coalition, as the party's poll numbers dropped while the ÖVP's rose. The FPÖ lost almost two-thirds of its 1999 high-water total in the new election. Few observers thus expected the coalition to re-form after the 2002 election, though it ultimately did, because the ÖVP preferred the benefits from working with the FPÖ to those of the alternatives.

After Haider's actions brought down the first ÖVP-FPÖ government, it seemed the ÖVP would pick a "better" option in 2002, one more likely to last until the end of the parliamentary term. Schüssel felt, however, after negotiations with other parties, that a second attempt at a "reform coalition" (in the words of ÖVP leadership) between black and blue would leave his party with the best opportunity to achieve its goals of "restructuring the country": more privatizations, increased cuts to immigration and asylum, and so on (Fallend 2003, 892). Scholars writing at the time (e.g. Höbelt 2003) did not expect the FPÖ to survive the loss of its leadership team, which included politicians (namely, Riess-Passer and Grasser) who were more popular than was Haider himself. The FPÖ did take the expectedly massive hits to its vote share, but survived well enough to be a potential partner for the ÖVP once more. By the end of the period, the FPÖ had been split in two by its most prominent figure, with some questions about the ability of two parties to occupy the same political space and recover from a period of governing.

In the 2002 elections, the ÖVP saw its best result since the early 1980s (more than 42% of the vote). The FPÖ, on the other hand, lost more than half of its 1999 seats, leading many scholars to believe that the ÖVP's "taming" strategy was effective (see Art 2007). The FPÖ undoubtedly suffered electorally in 2002 as a result of the first coalition, but did the party lose votes, as some scholars suggest, because of the far right's inability to adequately govern? (e.g. Heinisch 2003) The true cause of the FPÖ's vote loss seems to be a combination of punishment for breaking the coalition – a common phenomenon across Western Europe – and, relatedly, the "mercurial" behavior of Jörg Haider. After the Haider-masterminded revolt at Knittelfeld, FPÖ poll numbers dropped dramatically; they had, in previous months, shown the party winning about 20% of the vote (Art 2007, 344-5). Polls suggested that many 1999 FPÖ voters were willing to consider voting for other parties in 2002 (Luther 2003, 142). Ultimately, voters motivated by support for a specific candidate largely voted for the ÖVP, which campaigned with images of Schüssel accompanied by the slogan "who else if not him?" The small subset of coalition-minded voters – those hoping to generate or prevent a particular coalition (in this case, most likely the ÖVP-FPÖ coalition) – were split between the ÖVP and SPÖ (Luther 2003, 144-5).

After the 1999 elections sent the SPÖ to opposition for the first time in thirty years,

a battle ensued over who would become Klima's successor. Interior minister Schlögl on the right and Caspar von Einem on the left were ready to fight, with Schölgl likely to be the victor. However, other ranking politicians of the SPÖ (Heinz Fischer, the party's parliamentary speaker, and Michael Häupl, the mayor of Vienna) refused to support Schlögl, finding him too right-leaning. Alfred Gusenbauer was offered as a compromise candidate on whom both wings of the party could agree. Gusenbauer was uncertain how to proceed with FPÖ relations. The SPÖ's Viennese wing was opposed to cooperation, but the provincial governors favored the flexibility of having the FPÖ as an option in sub-national bodies (Höbelt 2003, 197-8). Gusenbauer was saved from making this decision in 2002, as the ÖVP was clearly the party that would begin negotiations, given its jump in the results.

Party	Votes (%)	Parties	Seats (%)
ÖVP	42.3	ÖVP-SPÖ	80.9
SPÖ	36.5	ÖVP-FPÖ	53.0
FPÖ	10.0	ÖVP-Grüne	52.5
Grüne	9.5		

Table 5.8: 2002 election: Results and coalition options

The ÖVP had multiple options in 2002 (Table 5.8), as in 1999, though the SPÖ, licking its wounds, was not as likely a potential partner for a renewed grand coalition as it was in 1999. The sounding-out talks between the ÖVP and SPÖ were encouraged by the social partnership organizations and President Klestil, and favored by many voters (Fallend 2004, 934). During these talks, the SPÖ demanded that the major policy changes enacted by the ÖVP-FPÖ government over the previous two years be reversed, as a condition for coalition membership. These included the university and hospital fees, as well as the black-blue government's announced plans to purchase 18 Eurofighter jets. A number of ÖVP campaign promises were also opposed by the SPÖ, such as Schüssel's plans to raise the age at which one could receive an early pension, increase health care fees, and move toward a common European Union security policy. Yet, SPÖ leader Gusenbauer wanted to return his party to government, so he indicated that he would be willing to compromise on issues like the pension age. This raised skepticism among the ÖVP leadership, who remained doubtful that the parties could reach a deal, and caused anger from within the SPÖ, with many MPs feeling Gusenbauer was too quick to sacrifice important SPÖ goals (Fallend 2004, 934).

With more than 40% of the vote, any two-party coalitions needed to be formed between the ÖVP and another party (Table 5.9). Not confident that the SPÖ would be able to compromise, the ÖVP opted to also conduct sounding-out talks with *Grüne* and the FPÖ. The ÖVP-*Grüne* talks came as a surprise to many because *Grüne*'s leadership excluded the ÖVP as a possible coalition partner prior to the elections, in large part due to the ÖVP's position on immigration (Fallend 2004, 936). The Greens were the only parliamentary party opposed to restrictive immigration policies, and had been for a decade. Nevertheless, a majority of *Grüne*'s leadership voted to begin talks with the ÖVP (a 21-8 vote). Although a

black-green coalition may have seemed unlikely, the two parties had worked together in sub-national governments in Upper Austria, and some younger, more environmentally-minded ÖVP MPs found such a partnership attractive, even at the national level. Perhaps unexpectedly, the parties were able to find some common ground on the immigration issue, but remained too far apart on financial issues (including the budget and the university fees) and the Eurofighter purchase (Luther 2009*a*, 20). *Grüne* MPs say it was policy issues, not a "principled decision against forming a coalition with the ÖVP," that led to the breakdown of negotiations (Interview with *Grüne* MP, 2011). In pursuing talks with the Greens, the ÖVP showed that, certain of returning to office, it wanted the best policy outcomes possible.

Once ÖVP-*Grüne* negotiations stalled, re-forming the black-blue coalition of the previous few years was the obvious decision. Having broken free of the grand coalition pattern, the ÖVP was in no hurry to resume partnership with the SPÖ, the option that would require the most significant policy concessions. The SPÖ resented the ÖVP (and Schüssel in particular) for taking the chancellorship in 2000, a position they felt rightfully belonged to them as the largest party. Some within the major parties, as well as President Klestil, were in favor of a grand coalition, yet the hostility between the parties made this option extremely unlikely.

The FPÖ's stability was perhaps uncertain, but the ÖVP would be the overwhelmingly dominant partner in a renewed ÖVP-FPÖ coalition, and could therefore extract sizable policy concessions from the junior FPÖ. Although the FPÖ team was more experienced than its predecessor had been, it was not organized enough to have a set of clear goals, nor strong enough to achieve them. This allowed the ÖVP to extract more concessions than it had in 2000. On the issues so crucial to the Knittelfeld rebellion (tax cuts and resistance to EU enlargement), the FPÖ gave in to the ÖVP (Luther 2011, 464). Then-FPÖ chairman Herbert Haupt "continued to stress the high policy closeness between the two parties" and "seemed ready to give way on almost all substantive issues, just to stay in government" (Fallend 2004, 936). Further, in the parties' 2002 governmental program, the only traditional FPÖ policies included were restrictions on asylum and immigration. But, by 2002, the FPÖ's demands on immigration had been toned down and brought more in line with the goals of the ÖVP. They wanted, for example, a reduction in immigration levels rather than a total stop to immigration (Duncan 2010, 342).

In addition to the increased office benefits, one-third of the ÖVP's 2002 voters had supported the FPÖ in 1999 (representing a full 50% loss of 1999 FPÖ voters to the ÖVP in 2002), and by re-forming the black-blue coalition, the ÖVP hoped to keep the support of this group (Müller 2004, 350). The ÖVP knew that sending Haider back to opposition would likely mean the return of a formidable FPÖ at the next election, and was not willing to take this chance. After months of informal talks, the parties both voted to begin formal negotiations. The FPÖ vote was unanimous, and while three opposed members of the ÖVP executive board abstained (preferring a coalition with the SPÖ instead), all other members of the ÖVP executive voted in favor of the agreement. The ÖVP ratification thus passed and "clearly carried the handwriting of the ÖVP" (Fallend 2004, 938).

Haider remained in Carinthia but was very much in charge behind the scenes. He believed the FPÖ should stay in government, though the policy goals of the renewed coalition –

essentially, the same goals as before (fighter jets, delayed tax cuts) – did not sit well with the FPÖ faithful. The Knittelfeld rebels (the nationalist wing of the party) were more in favor of the FPÖ going into opposition and were growing increasingly disenchanted with Haider, the man they thought would take up a cabinet leadership position on their behalf. Although Haider espoused (and likely believed) many of the nationalist wing's ideas, he ultimately wanted his party in government while he sat outside and reaped the benefits of criticizing the government.

Although the party caucus voted unanimously for beginning negotiations with the ÖVP after the 2002 elections, the grassroots of the FPÖ only weakly supported this course (Luther 2009*a*, 24). It was increasingly difficult for the FPÖ to justify why it had entered government again, as the weaker FPÖ was "more than once overrun by ÖVP initiatives" (Fallend 2004, 942).42). Haider's position was tenuous: He wanted his party to be viewed as respectable and to govern, but wanted to remain critical of the government – this adversarial approach had been a key part of the party's electoral success in the 1990s – and his personal support came overwhelmingly from FPÖ hard-liners, rather than the more moderate wing. Many of the latter group had left the FPÖ after Knittelfeld, including the popular Reiss-Passer (who left politics entirely after the 2002 elections), so both Haider and Schüssel were concerned about the willingness of FPÖ MPs to follow the party line and of FPÖ voters to turn out for the party.

Thus, after secret negotiations, Haider announced the formation of a new party in April 2005, the Alliance for the Future of Austria (*Bündnis Zukunt Österreich*, BZÖ), saying that the "negative forces [in the FPÖ had] irreparably damaged" the party's brand (Luther 2008, 1004-5). The BZÖ – including the entire FPÖ governing team, a majority of FPÖ MPs, and the entire Carinthian wing of the FPÖ (still the FPÖ's stronghold) – assumed the role of junior partner in the coalition through agreement with the chancellor. Schüssel believed the Haider-led BZÖ would be more reliable than the hardline nationalist remnants of the FPÖ, who wanted a return to opposition and full-time criticism of the government, and had grown weary of Haider's efforts to be both in and out of government. The FPÖ was thereby relegated to an opposition party.

Schüssel backed the FPÖ-BZÖ split primarily because he could, for the remainder of the parliamentary term, behave as if he led a single-party government. The BZÖ claimed its role as a responsible governing partner set it apart from the FPÖ, so Haider's party could not act confrontationally with the ÖVP (Luther 2009*a*, 27). The BZÖ's program largely resembled that of the FPÖ, except on issues such as support for Haider's flat tax and a willingness to expand the EU to Bulgaria and Romania (Fallend 2006, 1044). The new party did not, however, take with it a majority of FPÖ supporters (except in Carinthia), and the BZÖ hovered dangerously close to the 4% threshold. While the new "black-orange" government (with the orange color selected by Haider) was far more stable than had been the "black-blue" because it left behind the FPÖ's nationalist wing, it was also unlikely to survive another election unless the BZÖ dramatically improved its public support, which was flagging without the strength of its nationalist wing. Only in Haider's home province of Carinthia was the BZÖ polling well, in large part because of his strong personal following.

Aware of the uphill battle he faced before the next election, Haider suggested a reunion of sorts between the BZÖ and FPÖ, a suggestion quickly dismissed by the new FPÖ elites (now led by former Vienna party boss Heinz-Christian Strache), feeling Haider had betrayed their party (Fallend 2006, 1046).

The second black-blue (and later, black-orange) government passed restrictive asylum laws during its time in office, which provided for a faster decision on applications (an initial judgment on the applicant's likelihood of success was meant to come down within 72 hours) and increased the length of possible detention. Revisions to the Citizenship Act were passed in 2005, requiring that applicants provide proof of income, and disqualifying any applicants who had a criminal record or who had received welfare payments in the previous three years (Duncan 2010, 348). Although these changes appealed to the right-wing voters, other proposals, such as 2003 reforms to the pension system and the railway, led to national strikes. In addition, the government was criticized by the opposition parties for possibly accepting bribes from the company tasked with building the Eurofighter planes. Overall, the left saw the ÖVP-FPÖ partnership as a failure, while the ÖVP wanted to continue its (in practice) single-party government after the end of the parliamentary term in 2006.

When cooperation with the far right offered the ÖVP more than would have a coalition with the SPÖ, Schüssel opted for the former, as this section showed. Schüssel's desire to continue a coalition with the BZÖ would carry into the 2006 election, held after a full electoral term of governing with the far right, but the parties would not have a majority without the support of the FPÖ. Acrimony between Haider's new party and the party from which he split in 2005 deprived the ÖVP of a right-wing majority, as the next section demonstrates.

Far right is preferred, but excluded

Following six years of right-far right coalitions in Austria, which saw dramatic losses in far-right vote share and culminated in a splintering of the FPÖ, there was a return to the traditional grand coalition between the SPÖ and ÖVP in 2006. There were no other two-party options that held a majority of seats in either election. Had the ÖVP and either the BZÖ or FPÖ commanded a majority, that coalition is likely to have formed instead of an ÖVP-SPÖ coalition, as the ÖVP saw more policy advantages with either of these options, and crucially, saw little overlap with the SPÖ. Both the 2006 and 2008 coalition outcomes could be classified as fitting Scenario 4, as the ÖVP-FPÖ and ÖVP-BZÖ pairings lacked a majority; these elections would thus fit my predicted outcomes. Instead, I have opted for a more conservative classification, one that works against my predictions, because the far right and right mathematically held a majority (though the far right competed as two parties).

The newly-divided FPÖ (now led by Heinz-Christian Strache) and BZÖ (still led by Haider) split the potential far-right vote share in 2006, winning about 15% of the national vote, combined. This was an improvement over the FPÖ's 10% in 2002, its lowest vote share under Haider's leadership. The two parties refused to work together, however, which made the formation of an ÖVP-far right government impossible. Before the election, the FPÖ also promised to remain in opposition, while the BZÖ indicated its strong desire to return to

government, reminding voters of the Schüssel governments' immigration reform and its role in those policies.

Under Strache, the FPÖ quickly returned to its oppositional strategy, focusing on the immigration and security issues that had served the party well in the past. The oppositional role was made possible by Haider's splitting of the parties the year before, and in addition to criticizing the government, the FPÖ campaigned in 2006 with slogans such as "At home, not Islam." Haider chose his former lieutenant Peter Westenthaler (who resigned at Knittelfeld in 2002) to lead the party in 2006 as part of his attempt to portray the BZÖ as the legitimate successor party to the glory days of the FPÖ. When the votes were counted in 2006, the two parties improved 50% over the FPÖ's 2002 showing, attributable to the new (old) strategies of criticizing the government and touting the party's defense of the Austrian nation.

Prior to the election, the ÖVP indicated it would most prefer to continue governing with the BZÖ, but reminded voters that the BZÖ was unlikely to be strong enough to take a major role in the coalition: In other words, "vote for the ÖVP instead of the BZÖ." The ÖVP also said it would consider working with the SPÖ or *Grüne*, but in either case, the party would need to become more "realistic" and "fit for government" (Müller 2008, 177). The ÖVP bested all of its electoral results from the 1990s, but dropped 8% from its 2002 result, and could not form a two-party coalition with either far-right party in 2006.

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
SPÖ	35.3	SPÖ-ÖVP	73.2
ÖVP	34.3	SPÖ-Grüne-FPÖ	60.1
Grüne	11.1	ÖVP-Grüne-FPÖ	59.0
FPÖ	11.0	ÖVP-FPÖ-BZÖ	52.5
BZÖ	4.1	ÖVP-BZÖ-Grüne	52.4
		SPÖ-FPÖ-BZÖ	51.4

Table 5.9: 2006 election: Results and coalition options

Six coalitions were possible after the 2006 election (Table 5.9), but only one two-party coalition. The SPÖ strongly preferred a coalition with the Greens, but the parties were five seats short of a majority (Interview with SPÖ MP, 2011). Some in the ÖVP would have preferred to work again with the BZÖ, but as the smaller of the two major parties, the ÖVP did not initiate the negotiation process. Further, without the support of either Strache's FPÖ or *Grüne*, the ÖVP and BZÖ did not command enough seats for a majority. Many likely ÖVP voters abstained in 2006, leading the party to view the election outcome as a mistake on the part of the voters; the party believed that, had these supporters known the SPÖ would come out on top, they would have turned out to vote (Müller 2009, 492). As it was, the SPÖ won just 1% more than the ÖVP.

The SPÖ said it would not consider any coalition that included either the BZÖ or the FPÖ. The ÖVP, for its part, preferred to work with Haider's BZÖ rather than Strache's

FPÖ; during the 2006 campaign, some ÖVP MPs called the FPÖ "hooligans unfit for government" (Fallend 2007, 883). The FPÖ was willing to consider various coalitions, provided the outcome of the negotiations would reflect its key concerns, but categorically refused to consider any cooperation with the "traitors" in the BZÖ (Müller 2008, 177).

The possibility of an SPÖ minority government was discussed, though, fearing such a government would collapse and lead to early elections (for which the public would likely blame the SPÖ), the party opted to put out feelers for a coalition with the ÖVP. But, the ÖVP knew the president would have to call new elections if a government could not be formed, and was thus not inclined to be cooperative. The president, for his part, said he would not call new elections, and suggested the SPÖ talk with both *Grüne* and the FPÖ; these unlikely allies had worked together over the previous year to investigate claims of wrongdoing by the ÖVP-BZÖ government (Müller 2008, 178-9). The ÖVP opted to send its negotiating team, led by Schüssel, to meet with the SPÖ in the hopes of protecting its policy achievements from the previous six years, aware that Gusenbauer only had the ÖVP as a realistic partner. With additional policy concessions from the SPÖ, the ÖVP hoped to become the strongest party after the next round of elections.

Schüssel's confrontational style of negotiation did little to repair the damaged trust between his party and the SPÖ. Yet, after finalizing the grand coalition's negotiations, the ÖVP remained in control of three important ministries that had traditionally been held by the SPÖ during grand coalitions: the foreign, finance, and interior ministries (Luther 2009*a*, 28). Further, Gusenbauer agreed not to pursue abolishing university fees or stopping the planned purchase of Eurofighters, both key SPÖ campaign promises (Luther 2009*b*, 1049). The opposition parties congratulated Gusenbauer on becoming "the first SPÖ chancellor of an ÖVP government" (Fallend 2008, 904). Victories in hand, Schüssel resigned his position as chairman after this loss, turning it over to Wilhem Molterer, and taking Molterer's role as caucus chair.

The ÖVP finished just 1% behind the SPÖ in 2006. This caused ÖVP elites to believe that best course of action was to maintain their confrontational style toward the SPÖ, having been successful in 2002 with this approach, despite being coalition partners (Luther 2009*b*, 1049-50). During the next two years the grand coalition was, perhaps unsurprisingly, unable to fix the problems it outlined in its coalition agreement: Neither party was willing to compromise, and the government was unable to produce a "constructive agenda" (Müller 2009, 514). To take one example, the ÖVP economic affairs ministry and SPÖ social affairs ministry were regularly at odds, arguing over labor market policy, whether to introduce a guaranteed minimum income, and what to do about rising inflation.

By 2008, the two main parties were entirely dissatisfied with the grand coalition and relations between the parties had become "decidedly fractious" and characterized by "deep mutual distrust" (Luther 2009*b*, 1050). The SPÖ's leadership was skeptical of the ÖVP, feeling Schüssel and his allies were ready to pounce and would end the coalition if they felt the ÖVP would win a majority. Gusenbauer's capitulations during the 2006 coalition negotiations meant his party could not achieve some of its key campaign promises. SPÖ provincial leaders feared his unpopularity would hurt them in sub-national elections, and

losses between 25 and 40% at *Land* elections in 2008 increased calls for his removal (Luther 2009*b*, 1050, 1060). In an effort to save his position as the ÖVP overtook the SPÖ in the polls, Gusenbauer announced that Infrastructure Minister Werner Faymann would replace him as party leader, though Gusenbauer would remain chancellor.

Faymann was more critical of European integration than was Gusenbauer, and far more so than was the ÖVP. The two men wrote a letter to the *Kronen Zeitung* in June 2008, wherein they promised to hold popular referenda on all future EU treaties. Citing this as a clear reversal in policy, ÖVP leader Molterer called for early elections in July 2008, which took place two months later. Molterer hoped to hold the 2008 election before the popular Faymann, then infrastructure minister, was installed as the new SPÖ leader. This would allow the ÖVP to capitalize on its standing in the polls and reap rewards for ending a publicly unpopular coalition, which, despite strong economic growth and reductions in unemployment, was viewed as hopelessly gridlocked (Müller 2009, 514). Molterer expected to make sizable gains over the Gusenbauer-led SPÖ, given the Chancellor's lack of public support, but Gusenbauer announced he would not seek re-election, and Faymann stood as chancellor candidate. SPÖ MPs point to Gusenbauer's stated openness to the idea of an SPÖ-FPÖ coalition as a major reason why the party turned on him as quickly as it did; many believed he had "sold out" to the ÖVP so he could be chancellor, and would strike deals with the FPÖ if it would secure his position (Müller 2009, 514).[14]

As in the 1990s, the FPÖ (and to some extent, the BZÖ) benefitted from the grand coalition's infighting. In 2008 *Land* (state) elections, the FPÖ had improved its vote share over its previous results (50% in Tyrol, 200% in Lower Austria), and national polls suggested the party could again reach the 20% mark in the upcoming parliamentary election (Luther 2009*b*, 1052).The bitter campaigning on the part of the major parties in the run-up to the 2008 elections resulted in sizable gains for the FPÖ and BZÖ (with the two combining for almost 28% of the vote, surpassing the FPÖ's high in 1999), as well as an 8% loss for the ÖVP. In this election, the BZÖ's platform again broadly mirrored that of the FPÖ's, though was viewed as less radical overall (Müller 2009, 515).

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
SPÖ	29.3	SPÖ-ÖVP	59.0
ÖVP	26.0	SPÖ-FPÖ-BZÖ	61.2
FPÖ	17.5	SPÖ-FPÖ-Grüne	60.7
BZÖ	10.7	ÖVP-FPÖ-BZÖ	57.9
Grüne	10.4	ÖVP-FPÖ-Grüne	57.4
		SPÖ-BZÖ-Grüne	53.6
		ÖVP-BZÖ-Grüne	50.3

Table 5.10: 2008 election: Results and coalition options

[14]See Chapter 8 for more on the history of the relationship between the SPÖ and FPÖ.

Seven possible coalitions could have been formed in 2008, the six from 2006 plus the SPÖ-*Grüne*-BZÖ combination (Table 5.10). After the election, opinion polls showed that large majorities of the major party voters – 75% of ÖVP voters and 97% of SPÖ voters – wanted their party to take part in government in any way possible (Fallend 2009, 894). Two-thirds of Austrians favored a grand coalition, but only 61% of ÖVP supporters agreed, compared to 83% of SPÖ supporters. This suggests that a significant proportion of ÖVP voters felt the party had other options from among the smaller parties, while the SPÖ voters wanted a grand coalition or an SPÖ minority government, which was favored by just 8% of the total population (Fallend 2007, 884).

Although the SPÖ could also have formed a minority government, no one believed this would be a long-lasting option, so the SPÖ wanted to return to a more balanced grand coalition.[15] The ÖVP announced that voters had not "honored its work and promises" and, as a result, the SPÖ should first seek possible coalitions from among the other party options (Müller 2009, 517). Molterer resigned after his party's loss in the elections, and his replacement, Josef Pröll, represented the wing of the ÖVP in favor of cooperation with the SPÖ.

SPÖ leader Faymann ruled out coalitions with the FPÖ and BZÖ in 2008, saying they contributed to xenophobia in Austria without proposing any real solutions to the foreigner issue (Fallend 2009, 889). The FPÖ, in turn, ruled out entering government in 2008, but in particular, cooperation with the BZÖ (Luther 2009*b*, 1049). Strache essentially took the FPÖ out of coalition negotiations by insisting that his party would only join a government that promised, for example, to hold referenda on the Lisbon Treaty and Turkish accession to the EU immediately after taking office. The unhappy marriage of left and right was to continue. The SPÖ and ÖVP fought constantly after the 2008 re-formation of the grand coalition. They disagreed on SPÖ proposals to recognize same-sex partnerships, introduce a minimum income level, and change the tax structure so that women were not provided as many incentives to stay at home (Fallend 2009, 894).

All of the alternatives to a grand coalition in 2006 and 2008 required three parties; in interviews several years later, both SPÖ and ÖVP MPs indicated their unwillingness to form three-party coalitions. MPs from the smaller parties were non-committal about the idea, often saying it would depend on the exact combination of parties, but that there was no situation in the "current political landscape... that appears feasible and politically meaningful" (Interviews with *Grüne* MP, 2011). It is telling that, after the 2006 election, ÖVP elites resisted calls to let their divided ranks vote the coalition agreement, opting instead for a vote within the executive committee (Luther 2009*b*, 1058). Enough ÖVP members may have disliked the grand coalition that a three-party coalition could have been explored as an alternative.

Once the FPÖ exited office, the animosity between it and the BZÖ made any coalitions that included both parties impossible in practice, though they remained theoretically possible. Haider organized a meeting with Strache in early October as a way to sound out

[15] Austria's last minority government, the first Klestil cabinet in 1970, lasted just over a year.

any possibilities for future collaboration between the two parties, believing the BZÖ would eventually need to collaborate with the electorally-stronger FPÖ if it wanted to re-enter a coalition. However, Haider's death in a car crash just three days later brought an end to any potential collaboration (Luther 2009*b*, 1056-7); it is likely that Haider's willingness to work with the FPÖ was not shared by others in his party. The ÖVP said it never considered a three-party coalition with the FPÖ and BZÖ in 2006 or in 2008, because the parties had such animosity between them (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011).[16]

Many ÖVP MPs who were initially skeptical of a coalition with the far right in 2000 indicated they would have preferred to work with the far right in 2006 and 2008 rather than the SPÖ, as a result of the office and policy benefits the party received through working with the FPÖ (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011). Even those who were not fully comfortable with another ÖVP-FPÖ coalition feared that continued grand coalitions would result in ÖVP losses, with the party compromising on more left-leaning policies and thus being squeezed electorally from both sides. This suggests that, though principled opposition among the mainstream right's rank-and-file may not disappear entirely, some party members do change their opinion after working with the far right, and others at least soften their position for strategic reasons.

Since 1986, grand coalitions between the ÖVP and SPÖ had been motivated by a desire to keep Haider and the FPÖ in opposition, but were unable to stem the tide of support for the FPÖ. Importantly, the grand coalition had become, by 1999, "both unpopular and increasingly bereft of substance" (Luther 2003, 137). This section illustrated how the ÖVP moved away from grand coalitions when partnership with the FPÖ became more beneficial. Schüssel realized his goal of becoming chancellor and his party was able to extract policy concessions from the FPO during their six-year partnership. Only the split between Haider and the government team, leading to the formation of the BZÖ in 2005 and ensuing tensions between the far-right parties, kept Schüssel and the ÖVP from continuing their collaboration. With the revitalization of the FPÖ after the 2008 election – and corresponding decline of the BZÖ after Haider's death – the ÖVP once again hoped to form a "black-blue" coalition in 2013. As the final coalition section shows, however, the two parties fell short of the necessary numbers.

5.4 Far right not mathematically part of coalition options (Scenario 4)

This section discusses the changes in Austrian politics in the lead-up to the 2013 election (namely, the moderation of the BZÖ and the entrance of two new political parties), and then the election results and coalition formation. Briefly, only one far-right party competed

[16]It is difficult to know whether the ÖVP would have pressed forward for a coalition with the two far-right parties if it felt the expected benefits from such a coalition were significant enough, compared to a coalition with the SPÖ, or if any expected instability was thought to be manageable.

in the 2013 election (the FPÖ), and together, the right and far right did not have enough seats to form a coalition, although both parties wanted to form a coalition.

Two weeks after the promising 2008 elections, Haider, after a night of drinking, crashed his car while driving more than twice the speed limit, and soon died of injuries sustained in the crash. A temporary leadership team was put in place after his death, until Josef Bucher was elected in April 2009. Six months later, Bucher and his team produced a new party manifesto for the BZÖ's new *"rechtsliberal"* (right-liberal) course for his party (with economically liberal and socially conservative positions – not unlike the ÖVP). He announced that there would be no overtures to the FPÖ ("'BZÖ wird 'rechtsliberal"' 2009). The BZÖ branch in Haider's home state of Carinthia was unhappy with Bucher's more moderate course of action and split off from the BZÖ in December 2009, naming themselves Freedomites in Carinthia (*Die Freiheitlichen in Kärnten*, FPK).The BZÖ re-formed a Carinthian branch, led by Bucher, over the next month. At the same time, the new FPK and Strache announced that their parties would remain distinct but cooperate at the national level, like the alliance between the CDU and CSU in Germany, with the CSU operating exclusively in Bavaria; by June 2013, the FPK had formally merged into the FPÖ. Although Haider's BZÖ competed in the 2008 election as a far-right party, by the time of the 2013 elections, Bucher's BZÖ was not a far-right party: The 2013 election manifesto touts the party as offering the "modern middle" option in Austrian politics. Bucher – featured in a full-size picture on the manifesto cover – stresses the importance of investing in young people and cutting back government waste, but does not once mention immigration, asylum, or even crime (Bündnis Zukunft Österreich 2013).

The BZÖ continuously polled below the 4% threshold in the year prior to the elections, the minimum vote share required to win parliamentary seats. Without the strength of its founder, the party suffered from not having a charismatic leader and not having a strong platform to distinguish itself from its competition. In contrast, the FPÖ – recognized as the party of immigration restrictions and related policies – polled at 20% or higher over the same period. Haider had long been an attraction for voters, and his death severely impacted the likelihood of future success for the BZÖ. In 2008, 49% of BZÖ voters listed Haider as a motive for their vote; the next-most popular answers (which included the party's program) received only 13%. Even popular leaders, such as *Grüne*'s Alexander Van der Bellen and the FPÖ's Heinz-Christian Strache, inspired a much smaller share (19 and 11%, respectively) of their party's supporters to turn out (Plasser and Ulram 2008, 20-26).

Two new parties competed in the 2013 election: the Euroskeptic Team Stronach for Austria (*Team Stronach für Österreich*, or Team Stronach) and the liberal NEOS (*Das Neue Österreich*, The New Austria). NEOS was formed in late 2012 from a variety of liberal organizations, including the Liberal Forum (the FPÖ splinter group that formed in 1993). Team Stronach was formed shortly prior to this, by an Austro-Canadian billionaire, Frank Stronach, and despite not having contested a national election, entered the parliament with five seats after MP defections from other parties (one from the SPÖ, two from the BZÖ, and two independents). NEOS was not interested in collaboration with the FPÖ, but Team Stronach seemed like a potential fit, as a right-leaning (though not far-right) party. FPÖ

leader Strache announced in November 2012 that he would be open to a coalition between his party, the ÖVP, and Team Stronach after the 2013 elections (Prodhan 2012).

The 2013 election returned six parties to the 183-seat Austrian parliament for the first time in history: the four established parties (SPÖ, ÖVP, FPÖ, *die Grünen*), alongside the two new parties, Team Stronach (11 seats) and NEOS (9 seats). The BZÖ fell below the 4% threshold in 2013 and lost all of its seats in parliament. Only two two-party coalitions were mathematically possible after the 2013 elections, with the SPÖ partnering with either the ÖVP or FPÖ; this was the first election since 2002 where more than one two-party option was possible. Other alternatives would have required three or more parties, with all majority-winning, non-surplus two- and three-party coalition options presented in Table 5.11.

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
SPÖ	27.1	SPÖ-ÖVP	54.1
ÖVP	23.8	SPÖ-FPÖ	51.9
FPÖ	21.4	ÖVP-FPÖ-Grüne	60.1
Grüne	11.5	ÖVP-FPÖ-Stronach	54.1
Stronach	5.8	ÖVP-FPÖ-NEOS	53.0
NEOS	4.8		

Table 5.11: 2013 election: Results and coalition options

A spokesperson for the outgoing SPÖ-ÖVP coalition said, shortly after the election, that the "ditches [between the two major parties]...were deeper" than before ("Koalitionspoker: Gräben zwischen SPÖ und ÖVP werden tiefer" 2013). Despite this, the SPÖ – still the largest party, even with its losses, and therefore tasked by the Austrian president to start negotiations – asked the ÖVP to negotiate. The SPÖ felt this was the "last chance" for a grand coalition, and that the two parties would form the most stable government, with three parties only contributing to the slowing down of government (Völker and Jungnikl 2013; John and Weissensteiner 2013). The SPÖ's bargaining position was weak, as it needed the support of either the ÖVP or FPÖ (or both) to form a majority coalition, unless it wanted to attempt a four-party negotiation with all other parliamentary parties (the SPÖ-*Grüne*-Stronach-NEOS combination would have held a three-seat majority). The ÖVP's leader, well aware of the SPÖ's position, said that coalitions "as before" could not continue; he insisted that all coalition options were on the table due to the losses suffered by the ÖVP and SPÖ, a "wake-up call" from voters ("ÖVP droht SPÖ: 'Koalition wie bisher, das geht nicht"' 2013; "'Alle Optionen sind offen': Spindelegger bleibt flexibel" 2013).

Weeks after the election, 75% of the public, tired of two-party grand coalitions, registered its support for a broader coalition of three parties; the two major parties received their lowest combined share of the seats in the post-war period, with a majority of just 54.1%. The most popular option was the so-called "Kenyan" coalition made from the SPÖ, ÖVP, and the Greens, after the three colors of Kenya's flag (black, red, green; Seidl 2013). This surplus

coalition option was not considered by the ÖVP, which did not want to form a coalition that would inevitably produce left-leaning policy outcomes.

Team Stronach had, at times, polled at more than 10% prior to the election, so its 6% total was a disappointment. Stronach himself left Austria shortly after the election, though not before dismissing many national and regional party heads. Strache ruled out a coalition with the ÖVP that relied on support from Team Stronach, saying it would be "negligence" to work with Stronach and that the two parties would not "build on sand." He noted that, with Stronach's dismissal of two former BZÖ MPs, votes that could have been cast instead for the FPÖ had been wasted, and voters "duped" ("Auch Strache will nicht mit Team Stronach" 2013). Even elites within the ÖVP, who were not supportive of another grand coalition, felt Team Stronach was no longer a viable coalition partner for itself and the FPÖ, with one noting that "only chaos would result" (Prodhan 2013).

The NEOS party leader said his party would support the ÖVP and SPÖ but not any coalition with the FPÖ, citing the distance between the parties on the EU and on immigration ("'Sie brauchen Hilfe': Neos wollen mit SPÖ und ÖVP regieren" 2013). Given these parameters, and without Team Stronach as a viable partner, the only option from Table 5.11 was, once again, a grand coalition. Ultimately, only the SPÖ and ÖVP formally engaged in any coalition talks, and then came together for the thirteenth grand coalition in post-war Austria. ÖVP leader Michael Spindelegger said the coalition would discuss privatization, while SPÖ Chancellor Faymann said pension reforms were also on the agenda, and both parties would move toward cutting the Austrian deficit by 2016 (Shotter 2013).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated that the policy and office benefits offered by a coalition with the FPÖ prompted the ÖVP to change course, abandoning the policy of *Ausgrenzung* practiced after Haider's 1986 election. Isolation was initially not a costly strategy for the ÖVP, which wanted to pursue EC/EU membership with the support of the SPÖ. Further, the lackluster electoral success of the FPÖ prior to 1986 left many in the ÖVP feeling that keeping the FPÖ in opposition would dampen public enthusiasm for Haider's party.

As the far right continued to top its previous vote share with each new election, ÖVP elites – led by new party leader Schüssel – felt it was time to re-evaluate the strategy of exclusion. The ÖVP realized that working with the FPÖ would bring policy outcomes closer to its own ideal points than would coalitions with the SPÖ in 1999 and 2002, and allow the party to hold the chancellor's position. The ÖVP preferred to work with the FPÖ (and BZÖ) in 2006 and 2008, but opted for the SPÖ rather than efforts to force cooperation between the two far-right parties, which, even if successful, would have generated a highly unstable and volatile coalition. Analysis of the ÖVP's coalition decisions in 1986 and 1995 has shown that major party leaders do not want to go up against strong internal opposition in order to form their most-preferred coalition, fearing the loss of their jobs or the early collapse of the government (prompted by rebellious MPs). Similarly, major party leaders are

unlikely to form a coalition when pursuit of its key policy goals would be difficult, even if the party would be the senior partner. The ÖVP's decision to pursue EC membership with the SPÖ, rather than be the senior partner to the anti-EU FPÖ, in 1990 and 1994 reflects this hierarchy of preferences.

Since the FPÖ's inclusion in government in 2000, several long-standing features of the Austrian party system have changed. Namely, the FPÖ has become, for many voters and members of other parties, a feasible governing option. Although not all Austrian MPs have been persuaded by the allure of a three-party government, the idea is taken more seriously than ten years ago, largely due to the decline of two-party dominance in Austria. The country has experienced governments that were neither single-party nor grand coalitions, and some members of the electorate (as well as members of parliament) now prefer such arrangements. Given that a single-party majority cabinet seems nearly impossible, a renewed ÖVP-FPÖ coalition is preferable for many in the ÖVP, when faced with the alternative of the often further-away (in policy terms) SPÖ as partner.

Chapter 6

Coalition Formation in the Netherlands

Although the major mainstream parties in both the Netherlands and Austria long served as the representative of a particular social class (and in the Netherlands, the combined class-religion groups), there are several important differences between the two sets of parties and party systems that matter for coalition formation and far-right inclusion. First, the low electoral threshold in the Netherlands (0.67%, vs. 4% in Austria) results in both more parliamentary parties and a number of small parliamentary parties. These small parties, on their own, may only have two or three seats, but together, can reach 10% (or more) of the total seats. This can make coalition formation – and day-to-day parliamentary dealings – more difficult for the major parties, as it is simpler to negotiate with one party that has 10% of the seats than it is to reach agreements with four separate, small parties. The low threshold and large number of parliamentary parties in the Netherlands also means that coalitions are a necessity; no party has ever won a majority of seats. This makes sorting through possible coalitions more complicated in the Dutch case, but nevertheless, the behavior of the mainstream right vis-à-vis the far right is consistent with Austrian case and with the expectations outlined in Chapter 1.

Second, the way parties in each country dealt with the aftermath of World War II influenced the ability of far-right parties to succeed electorally. While the major Austrian parties did more to embrace the past and rehabilitate former Nazi party members, these individuals were left out of Dutch political life. Early Dutch far-right parties, with links to fascism, were electorally unsuccessful. The major mainstream-right parties did not need to sacrifice any of their goals to leave these parties in opposition. It was only once parties without these ties emerged in the 2000s that the far right became both an electoral threat to the mainstream right and a potentially beneficial coalition partner.

6.1 Coalition Formation in the Netherlands

In the post-war Dutch political system of *verzuiling*, or pillarization, five main parties represented the traditional pillars. The VVD (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) for the secular middle-class and the PvdA (*Partij van de Arbeid*, Labour Party) for the secular working class were joined by the three religious parties: the KVP for practicing Catholics (*Katholieke Volksparij*, Catholic People's Party), the CHU for Dutch Reformed (*Christelijk-Historische Unie*, Christian Historical Union), and the ARP for Calvinists (*Anti-Revolutionaire Partij*, Anti-Revolutionary Party).[1] These three parties merged in 1977 to form the CDA (*Christen-Democratisch Appèl*, Christian Democratic Appeal). Since 1977, the CDA, VVD, and PvdA have served as the major mainstream Dutch parties.

In the first several decades of the post-war period, Dutch coalitions were formed by the five pillar parties, to the exclusion of all others. As a result, surplus governments – those including a non-mathematically necessary party – were more common, and represented 87% of the time in office before 1967 (Andeweg 2008, 257, 260).[2] The first non-pillar party to join a government was the small DS '70 (a PvdA splinter group) after the 1971 election, and since the 1980s, the most common non-major governing partner is D66, a social-liberal party that tends to be ideologically between the major left party (the PvdA) and the major right parties (CDA, VVD), thus making it an attractive compromise partner.[3]

Dutch governments may prepare no more than four budgets for *Prinsjesdag*, the third Thursday of September, when the monarch travels to parliament and reads the government's plan for the year. As such, depending on the month a cabinet is installed, it may serve for more than four years.[4] With an extremely low minimum threshold – needing just 0.67% of the national vote to enter parliament – between 9-14 parties have entered the *Tweede Kamer* (Second Chamber, the lower house of parliament) after every election since 1971, the beginning of de-pillarization and changing voter loyalties (see Chapters 2 and 3).[5] In contrast to the Austrian parliament, which only 10 parties have entered since 1945, the *Tweede Kamer* has been home to 32 parties since 1946. Focusing on the period since 1982, the relevant elections for this chapter, 23 parties have won seats in the Dutch parliament.

[1] See Chapter 3 (Section 1) for details about these parties and about pillarization.

[2] Since 1980, only two surplus coalitions have formed, both times including D66 (1981, 1998). These coalitions are not discussed in this chapter, as neither election resulted in a far-right party winning seats in parliament.

[3] When smaller parties perform particularly well in an election, Gladdish (1983, 278) notes that this serves as a bellwether, telling the major parties that voters are dissatisfied. This may increase the chances that a non-major party enters government, not only because the party has won a useful number of seats, but as an effort on the part of the major party to appease the voters.

[4] Of the ten governments that took office between 1981-2010, six fell early.

[5] An average of 10.7 parties have entered parliament in the 14 elections since the 1970s, compared to 8.4 parties in the 7 elections from 1946-67. The ability of small parties to enter parliament, and the willingness of voters to support them, is particularly notable when we consider the latter period includes only one religious party for 12/14 elections, as opposed to the three that formerly competed.

However, only seven parties have won 15 or more seats (representing 10% of the total): the three major parties (CDA, PvdA, VVD), plus D66 (Democrats '66) in 1994, LPF (Pim Fortuyn's List) in 2002, SP (Socialist Party) in 2006, 2010, and 2012, and PVV (Party for Freedom) in 2010 and 2012.

As shown in Table 6.1, despite the large number of parties winning seats, Dutch coalitions since the 1980s have included no more than three parties. Each of these coalitions has included two – but never all three – of the major mainstream parties. The extreme proportional representation, introduced prior to the election of 1918, means no Dutch party has ever won an outright majority; the CDA came the closest, winning 54 seats (36%) in 1986 and 1989. This makes coalitions a necessity. Although there have tended to be many mathematically-possible coalition options after Dutch elections since the 1980s, in practice, the formation usually revolves around the larger – and thus more mathematically useful – parties. Minority coalitions, though common in some Western European countries, are "not done" in the Netherlands (Van Holsteyn 2007, 1140). The accepted wisdom is that they are not sufficiently stable, and no minority cabinet has ever formed after coalition negotiations (though minority caretaker cabinets have governed on occasion between the fall of a negotiated cabinet and new elections).

Cabinet	**Election**	**PM party**	**Other parties**
Van Agt II	1981	CDA	PvdA, D66
Lubbers I	1982	CDA	VVD
Lubbers II	1986	CDA	VVD
Lubbers III	1989	CDA	PvdA
Kok I	1994	PvdA	VVD, D66
Kok II	1998	PvdA	VVD, D66
Balkenende I	2002	CDA	LPF, VVD
Balkenende II	2003	CDA	VVD, D66
Balkenende IV	2006	CDA	PvdA, CU
Rutte I	2010	VVD	CDA, PVV
Rutte II	2012	VVD	PvdA

Table 6.1: Dutch governing coalitions, 1981-2012

This table excludes interim and caretaker cabinets.

Coalition formation in the Netherlands has traditionally been shaped by three people: the monarch, the *informateur*, and the *formateur*.[6] After an election, the monarch will meet with the presidents of both chambers of parliament, as well as the leaders of each parliamentary party. Weighing the information provided by all of these politicians about which parties should participate in the government and who should be tasked with overseeing the negotiations, the monarch next appoints an *informateur*. The *informateur* is usually a senior (or retired) politician, and he also speaks with the leaders of each party to evaluate

[6]These procedures were changed with an act of parliament in 2012, which decreased the role of the monarch; see the discussion of the 2012 coalition for more.

which combinations are likely to form a coalition; the major parties thus strive to be the largest party after an election, so the monarch will tap them to start negotiations (Irwin 1983, 70). He reports back to the monarch, who, on the basis of this advice, appoints the *formateur*.[7] The *formateur* begins negotiations with the parties recommended by the *informateur*, and he is typically the leader of the largest involved party. If negotiations are successful, the *formateur* is appointed as Prime Minister by the monarch.

The monarch's role should not be downplayed: The selection of the *informateur*, and thus the *formateur*, can make some coalitions more likely than others, as negotiations are then driven by the preferences of the *formateur*'s party, which may not be the largest or the party seen as the "biggest winner" of the election.[8] This feature of Dutch politics has shaped some coalition outcomes, as the discussions below will show.[9]

My theory expects that the mainstream right – in this case, the CDA and VVD – will break tradition and work with the far right only when three conditions are met:

1. The mainstream right and far right hold a sufficient number of seats in parliament to govern, and the far right is not a superfluous coalition member.

2. A coalition with the far right provides the mainstream right with better policy benefits than do other available coalitions.[10]

3. The mainstream right is not concerned about the stability of a coalition with the far right.

Unless these conditions are met, I expect that the major mainstream parties on both the left and the right will exclude the far right from government for both principled and strategic reasons. In the Netherlands, exclusion has been largely strategic: The far right was either not electorally viable or other coalitions were far more attractive to the major parties (whether for policy and/or office reasons alone, or due to concerns about stability).

Given that there are so many parties in the Dutch parliament, without imposing some restrictions, we could end up with thousands of coalition options through which to sift. As a result, the lists of possible coalitions after each election, as outlined in this chapter, follow several rules: They are limited to a maximum of four parties, the parties hold at least 76/150 seats for a majority, surplus coalitions are not included, and any coalitions fitting

[7]If the *informateur* cannot recommend a potential coalition, a new *informateur* is appointed and the process is repeated.

[8]The idea of election "winners" and "losers" features prominently in Dutch politics, with politicians and scholars alike often expecting that the party whose electoral results are the most-improved relative to the previous election will be taken seriously in the negotiation process. Conversely, the leader of the largest party may not be appointed *formateur* if his party lost a significant number of seats in the election.

[9]This was perhaps most clearly true in 1994, when Queen Beatrix, faced with conflicting advice about whether to appoint a Labour or Christian Democratic *informateur*, opted for the former, paving the way for the CDA to be left outside government for the first time since 1918.

[10]Office benefits include being the senior partner in government and/or holding particular ministries, which also influence a party's ability to achieve policy benefits.

these criteria are included (without respect to which are more or less likely due to ideological overlap); the party names are listed at the end of the chapter, in Table **??**.[11] The four-party limit is a practical restriction, but it is also true that no coalition since 1972 has had more than three governing parties; this coincides with the formation of the CDA, which reduced the number of "pillar" parties from five to three.

These coalition rules are more generous than might be suggested by Dutch coalition history: They do not require that two of the three major parties be included in the government, though this has been the outcome of every post-war coalition. They allow for a non-surplus pairing of all three major parties, although such a coalition has never formed. Further, they do not exclude parties based on size or general willingness to join coalitions. In practice, the smallest parties to ever participate in a post-war coalition had 6 seats (D66 in 1972 and 2003 and CU in 2006), and the so-called "testimonial" parties (e.g. SGP) typically refuse to compromise on their beliefs in order to join coalitions. Yet, very small parties and testimonial parties are included in the coalition option tables whenever they add a mathematically necessary number of seats for the other parties to reach a majority.

Scenario	**Election**	**Expectation**
1. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right	**2002, 2010**	Inclusion
2. Have majority with far right and prefer policy benefits from coalition with far right, *but* concerned about stability	2003	Exclusion
3. Have majority with far right, *but* prefer policy benefits from coalition without far right	1994, 2006, 2012	Exclusion
4. Far right not mathematically part of coalition options	1982, 1986, 1989	Exclusion

Table 6.2: Coalition cases, by scenario

Cases in bold are instances of far-right inclusion

In this chapter, I explore five of the coalition scenarios from 2002-2012 (shown in Table 6.2), explaining why the LPF and PVV were sometimes included by the mainstream right when the parties had other coalition options (in 2002 for the LPF, and 2010 for the PVV), but excluded when other coalitions were more appealing to the mainstream right.[12] I begin

[11]By these rules, there were as few as three coalition options (in 1982 and 1986), and as many as 21 (in 2010).

[12]I omit a detailed discussion of coalition formation after the 1982-98 elections: The CP and CD were never mathematically viable coalition partners in 1982 and 1989 (and won no seats in 1986 and 1998).

with Scenario 1, demonstrating why the CDA and VVD preferred to work with the far right, and then move to why these parties chose to exclude the far right in 2003, 2006 and 2012 (Scenario 3).

The key distinction between Scenarios 2 and 3 is that, in Scenario 2, the mainstream right would ideally form a coalition with the far right were it not for concerns that the coalition would soon fall apart (as was the case in Austria in 1986 and 1995, shown in Chapter 5). In Scenario 3, however, the mainstream right does not want to form a coalition with the far right because it prefers the policy or office benefits from working with another party or set of parties.[13]

Table **??** lists the electoral results of the five Dutch far-right parties that have competed: the Center Party (CP) from 1981-89, the Center Democrats (CD) from 1986-98, the Center Party '86 (CP'86) in 1994, Pim Fortuyn's List (LPF) from 2002-06, and the Party for Freedom (PVV) from 2006-12. As detailed in Chapter 3 (Section 4), the early far-right parties were electorally unsuccessful, never winning more than three seats in parliament. The appeal of the far right as coalition partner shifted dramatically with the LPF's second-place victory in 2002, the first time a non-major party placed in the top three electorally.

Although the electorally-unsuccessful Dutch far right parties of the 1980s and 1990s may have prompted the major parties to take some action with respect to immigration (see Chapter 4, Section 1), they were excluded from coalitions. However, as the sections below will show, this was not simply because the major mainstream-right parties felt the far right was unfit for government. During these decades, the far right only won seats in four of the six elections, and only factored into a handful of mathematically-possible four-party coalition options in 1994; after the other elections, the major mainstream right parties had either two- or three-party coalition options they preferred on both policy and office grounds. Using the rules outlined above (coalition must have at least 76/150 seats, no surplus parties, and a maximum of four parties), we can see how the far right's opportunities to participate in coalitions increased over time. After the 1982-89 elections, the far right was not part of any of the 11 total coalitions that meet these rules, thus classifying these elections as Scenario

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Though the CD won 3 seats in 1994 and could have taken part in a four-party coalition, the mainstream right preferred the policy benefits from other coalitions. The formation behavior of the CDA and VVD after these four elections is, however, consistent with my argument about how parties make coalition decisions. The CDA partnered with the VVD in 1982 and again in 1986 due to common economic goals and shared beliefs in NATO membership, for example; the CDA also gained seats at the expense of the VVD in 1986, making the Christian Democrats a stronger senior partner (Irwin 1983, 71). The CDA partnered with the PvdA in 1989, as Labour was willing to make policy compromises in order to enter office, having been in opposition since 1982. In 1994, the PvdA and VVD worked together (with D66) given shared positions on social issues of the day (Irwin 1995, 73). As noted by Bale (2003, 78), the exclusion of the CP and CD was "rarely as watertight... as implied." The CDA and VVD had no reason to include these parties in government during the 1980s, and as shown in Chapter 4, would soon begin to co-opt their themes to try to win voters.

[13]In practice, the driving factor in these cases tends to be policy concerns, such as the incompatibility between the Austrian ÖVP and FPÖ over EU membership in the late 1980s and early 1990s, or, as discussed in this chapter, budget disputes between the VVD and PVV in 2012.

Election	Party	Votes (%)	Seats
1981	CP	0.1	0
1982	CP	0.8	1
1986	CP	0.4	0
	CD	0.1	0
1989	CD	0.9	1
1994	CD	2.4	3
	CP'86	0.4	0
1998	CD	0.6	0
2002	LPF	17.0	26
2003	LPF	5.7	8
2006	PVV	5.9	9
	LPF	0.2	0
2010	PVV	15.5	24
2012	PVV	10.1	10

Table 6.3: Dutch far-right parties: Vote shares and seat totals, 1981-2012

The *Tweede Kamer* has a total of 150 seats.

4 (when the far right is not mathematically part of coalition options).[14] In 1994, there were 18 possible coalition options and the far-right CD only featured in 4: PvdA-CDA-CD with either the Orthodox RPF or SGP, or the Socialists, plus PvdA-VVD-CD-GL. Although these coalitions fit the four rules above, they were all four-party coalitions with just one-seat majorities (76/150), and both the PvdA-CDA and PvdA-VVD pairings could have formed a three-party coalition with a more sizable majority – to say nothing of the ideological issues involved with, for example, putting the far-right CD in a coalition with the Socialists. No far-right party won seats in the *Tweede Kamer* in 1998.

In the five elections since 1998, however, the far right could have participated in 35 of the 66 total coalition options, or 53%.[15] The dramatic increase in the post-2000s far-right (LPF and PVV) vote shares, compared to that of the CP and CD, corresponded to a more pivotal position in parliament. As the rest of the chapter demonstrates, this mathematical viability combined with what policy benefits the far right could offer the mainstream right resulted in the far right joining governments in 2002 and 2010.

[14]In 1982 and 1986, any combination of the three major parties could have formed a majority coalition, for a total of 6 options, and in 1989, five options were possible: CDA-PvdA, CDA-VVD, and the PvdA-VVD combination with either D66, GL, or SGP + GVP.

[15]See the 2002 options in Table 6.4, 2003 in Table 6.6, 2006 in Table 6.7, 2010 in Table 6.5, and 2012 in Table 6.8.

6.2 Mainstream right prefers policy benefits from a coalition with the far right (Scenario 1)

Moving to the elections when the far right was included, 2002 and 2010, we see somewhat similar situations: a far-right party with a strong electoral performance, leading many (if grudgingly) to deem the party an electoral "winner" that should be taken seriously, in accordance with the weight given to it by the voters. This is not, however, the reason these parties were included in coalitions; the far-right was included because it offered the major mainstream right parties more power and policy leverage than did other possible coalition options, as this section illustrates.

Pim Fortuyn's List in 2002

The period of prosperity for the three "purple" coalition parties – partially driven by the booming economy – was over after eight years in office at the 2002 elections, when the trio of PvdA-VVD-D66 lost 44% of their combined 1998 seat total, a loss spread fairly evenly across the three parties. Kok had submitted his government's resignation to the Queen in April 2002, just a month before the scheduled election, after a report emerged with details of the Srebrenica massacre that occurred in Bosnia in July 1995; his government took responsibility for the Dutch peacekeepers' failure to prevent the massacre. Polls do not suggest that this resignation had much to do with the three parties' drop in support, nor could it have been the economy (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2004, 553). Not only was the economy as solid as it had been in the years prior to the election, but only 12% of respondents in an election survey from 2002 mentioned economic issues as being of chief concern to them (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003, 55). Instead, the immigration issue dictated the 2002 results.

In August 2001, former professor Pim Fortuyn announced he would run for parliament, and was chosen three months later as the leader of *Leefbaar Nederland* (Livable Netherlands, LN), a recently formed party. Within a few months, Fortuyn was climbing in the polls and, as a result of his campaigning, the 'foreigner issue' was firmly established as the top issue in Dutch politics. The LN dropped Fortuyn in February 2002 after he made strongly anti-Islamic and anti-immigrant statements; to the surprise of observers, most LN supporters professed their support for Fortuyn, though he had not yet established his own party (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003, 46). The LPF formed shortly thereafter (see Chapter 3, section 4).

The primary beneficiaries of this agenda change were the new LPF and the resurgent CDA, the "winners" of the election (the LPF won 26 seats and the CDA won 43, up from their 29 seats in 1998). Fortuyn's assassination several days before the election is generally thought to have dramatically increased the vote share for his three-month-old party, with the outrage at his death and commitment to free speech – even among those opposed to his politics – driving up the numbers. The CDA went through a leadership crisis in late 2001, when both the party leader and party chairman resigned. The then-unknown Jan

Peter Balkenende was selected as leader and, with very little preparation, had to run the party's campaign. Balkenende made the foreigner problem (in particular, asylum seekers) a top priority, which likely benefitted his party once Fortuyn placed the issue on the agenda shortly thereafter (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003, 45).

The outcome of the May 2002 election was "no surprise [based on pre-election polling], but still without precedent" (Andeweg and Irwin 2009, 24). Although Fortuyn was assassinated by a left-wing activist just nine days before the elections, his party won 17% of the vote, the best-ever debut by a new party.[16] The "purple" parties lost a combined total of 43 seats, the biggest ever-loss for an incumbent coalition: D66 lost 7, the VVD lost 14, and the PvdA lost 22 seats, the worst-ever loss by a single party.

Along with the LPF, the other big "winner" was the CDA, gaining 14 seats in 2002, with the Christian Democrats' mobilization on the basis of immigration concerns cited as a primary reason; the Socialists also criticized the "purple" governments' focus on multiculturalism at the expense of integration, and gained four seats at the election (Lucardie 2003, 1033). After the election, CDA leader Balkenende said the results showed "a clear desire for change" on the part of the Dutch public, comments echoed by a *GroenLinks* MP, who said the top-three finishes for the CDA, LPF, and VVD were a sign that the Dutch voters wanted "the pendulum to swing to the right" (de Lange 2012, 913).

The queen appointed a Christian Democrat, Piet Hein Donner, as the 2002 *informateur*, and Donner reported to the queen that, after speaking with party leaders, the only "realistic" option was a CDA-LPF-VVD coalition (Lucardie 2003, 1034). PvdA, GL, GL, and SP had all indicated they would prefer to go into opposition and recommended the CDA-VVD-LPF option be pursued, a stance echoed by the CU and SGP (Hippe, Lucardie and Voerman 2002, 31). It is common in the Netherlands for election "losers" to prefer to go into opposition, citing the wishes of the voters; in this case, the only parties that gained seats over their 1998 result were the CDA (+14) and the Socialists (+4), so even if the CDA and SP had wanted to form a coalition, they would have needed at least one more party to participate. Of the 16 mathematically-possible coalition options (Table 6.4), CDA-VVD-LPF was the only right-leaning possibility with a majority.[17] The other coalition options with a majority would have been centrist or left-leaning in nature, given the necessary inclusion of one or more left-wing parties (e.g. CDA-PvdA-GL or PvdA-LPF-VVD-GL, each with two left-wing parties).

The VVD, citing its losses in the election, also indicated a preference for opposition, but agreed to participate in the negotiation on the condition that "*erg veel*" (quite a lot) of its policy preferences be part of the government's plan (Hippe, Lucardie and Voerman 2002, 32). The three right-wing parties held similar positions on issues of particular importance in 2002, such as a desire to restrict immigration, cut government spending, and reduce real

[16]Scholars view this result not as a sympathy vote or a protest vote, but as an expression of widespread public concern about immigration, and the feeling that the LPF could best handle this issue (e.g. Van der Brug 2003, 102; Art 2011, 181).

[17]Lucardie and Voerman (2007, 252) note that the CDA may have also wanted to "pacify the unrest and discontent" surrounding Fortuyn and his assassination.

estate taxes (Lucardie 2003, 1034). The formation period was rather short, lasting just 68 days before the queen swore in Balkenende as prime minister, leading a government with the VVD and LPF – notably, the new minister for integration and immigration would come from the LPF. Scholars say there is no evidence to suggest that the CDA and VVD planned to "neutralize" the LPF by including it in the coalition, and thus forcing the party to be responsible (e.g. de Lange 2012, 913). Instead, the major mainstream-right parties were pleased with the policy outcomes they expected from governing with the LPF. This coalition was not one formed of desperation, or a last-minute attempt to find a combination that could govern.

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Party**	**Votes (%)**
CDA	27.9	SP	5.9
LPF	17.0	D66	5.1
VVD	15.4	CU	2.5
PvdA	15.1	SGP	1.7
GL	7.0	LN	1.7
Parties	**Seats (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
CDA-VVD-PvdA	60.0	CDA-LPF	
CDA-VVD		+ PvdA	61.3
+ LPF	**62.0**	+ GL	52.7
+ GL	51.3	+ SP	52.7
+ SP	51.3	+ D66	50.7
+ D66, CU	52.0	PvdA-LPF	
+ D66, SGP	50.7	+ VVD, GL	55.3
+ D66, LN	50.7	+ VVD, SP	55.3
CDA-PVDA		+ VVD, D66	53.3
+ GL	50.7	+ VVD, CU	50.7
+ SP	50.7		

Table 6.4: 2002 election: Results and coalition options

The coalition agreement and ensuing policies reflected aspects of each of the partner parties' campaign goals: measures to make individuals more self-sufficient (by "radically reversing" the involvement of government in health, education, and other fora) for the CDA, spending and tax cuts for the VVD, and immigration restrictions for the LPF (Lucardie 2003, 1034; Christen-Democratisch Appèl 2002, 8). By agreeing to a number of immigration restrictions – the coalition agreement included plans to increase punishments for businesses that hired illegal immigrants, restrictions on family reunification, and plans for compulsory integration and language courses, with fees paid by the migrant – the major mainstream right parties could simultaneously fall more in line with public sentiment and receive the LPF's support for their key issues.

The leaderless LPF was ill prepared for the strains of office, and had a difficult time finding credible MPs it could send to ministerial positions; Fortuyn is said to have described his recruited MPs as "incompetent" (Art 2011, 181). Although the LPF received nine positions in the cabinet (4 of 14 ministries and 5 of 14 state secretaries, who serve as deputy ministers), only one of these went to someone with prior political experience; the other eight were pulled from outside the LPF's parliamentary faction. Two factors combined to ultimately doom the party: There was no agreement about who should be Fortuyn's successor, and there were severe ideological disparities among the LPF MPs and ministers alike, former supporters of all three major parties who were united only by their support of Fortuyn (Art 2011, 183); by 2006, the LPF's support had dropped to just 0.2% of the national vote, and the party dissolved shortly thereafter (see Chapter 3, Section 4). More immediately, the LPF's problems led to the breakup of the CDA-VVD-LPF coalition after 82 days, as discussed in the third section of the chapter.

The Party for Freedom in 2010

CDA leader Balkenende served as Prime Minister for three post-election cabinets during the 2000s: the 2002 government that included the VVD and the far-right LPF, a 2003 coalition with the VVD and D66, and a 2006 partnership with the PvdA and CU.[18] The longest-lasting coalition of Jan Pieter Balkenende's tenure, that between his CDA and the PvdA, nevertheless fell before the end of its parliamentary term in 2010. The PvdA resigned from this coalition three years after it began due to disagreements about whether or not Dutch forces should remain in Afghanistan; Labour wanted a withdrawal of forces, while the Christian Democrats felt remaining in Afghanistan was the best option. This issue may have been simply the final straw in the strained CDA-PvdA relationship, with personal differences between the parties' leaders and policy disagreements surrounding the financial crisis (Aarts and van der Kolk 2011, 578).

Benefitting from the governing parties' problems, the VVD became the largest party after the 2010 elections, a status it had not obtained in over a century; the last Liberal prime minister left office in 1908. The PvdA, with 30 seats, took second place. These two parties were considered strongest on the issues of the day, namely, the need for reductions in government spending. The CDA and VVD took very similar positions, calling for the minimum age for state pensions to be raised from 65 to 67 (also supported by the parties of the left, and opposed only by the far-right PVV and the Socialists), and both opposed the left-wing parties' calls for raising taxes on high-income earners while cutting mortgage tax deductions (Lucardie and Voerman 2011, 1073).

As in 2006, no two parties could form a coalition without the help of at least one other party (Table 6.5). The VVD and PVV preferred to work together, with the addition of the

[18]Balkenende also led a caretaker cabinet formed after the fall of the 2003 cabinet, wherein the CDA and VVD led the government until new elections could be held. Although scholars do identify this cabinet as "Balkenende III," it is not discussed in this chapter because it did not follow an election, and thus no coalition negotiations took place.

CDA, but the latter was not in favor of cooperation with the PVV. Further, the CDA's massive electoral losses (down from 41 to 21 seats, its lowest total in history) made some within the party think that going into opposition was the most appropriate move. If it were to enter a government, the party preferred the grand coalition of the three large parties working together, a combination which would still leave the government three seats short of a majority, and which the PvdA did not want. For the PvdA to work with the VVD or the VVD and CDA together, it wanted the coalition to involve parties of the center or left, namely D66 or GL (Aarts and van der Kolk 2011, 580).

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Party**	**Votes (%)**
VVD	20.5	D66	6.9
PvdA	19.6	GL	6.7
PVV	15.5	CU	3.3
CDA	13.6	SGP	1.7
SP	9.8	PvdD	1.3
Parties	**Seats (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
VVD-PvdA-CDA	54.7	VVD-PvdA	
PvdA-CDA		+ PVV	56.7
+ PVV, SP	60.0	+ SP	50.7
+ PVV, D66	56.7	+ D66, GL	54.0
+ PVV, GL	56.7	+ D66, CU	50.7
+ PVV, CU	53.3	+ GL, CU	50.7
+ PVV, SGP	51.3	**VVD-CDA**	
+ PVV, PvdD	51.3	**+ PVV**	**50.7**
+ SP, D66	50.7	+ SP, D66	51.3
+ SP, GL	50.7	+ SP, GL	51.3
PvdA-PVV		VVD-PVV	
+ SP, D66	52.7	+ SP, D66	53.3
+ SP, GL	52.7	+ SP, GL	53.3

Table 6.5: 2010 election: Results and coalition options

The first priority of the Liberal *informateur*, Uri Rosenthal, was to explore a VVD-CDA-PVV coalition, though he soon decided the CDA's reluctance was too great for a VVD-CDA-PVV coalition. Two additional *informateurs* were appointed to help explore two other options: a "center" coalition of VVD-CDA-PvdA, and a "purple-green," or "purple plus," coalition of VVD-PvdA-D66-GL. The PvdA did not want to work with the CDA and VVD together (as the two major right-wing parties would pull policies away from the PvdA) and thus strongly preferred the latter option, so it was the next visited by the *informateurs* (Interview with PvdA MP, 2011).

These negotiations ultimately failed over budget disagreements; the VVD's main campaign goal was ten billion euros in spending cuts. The VVD clearly preferred its eventual

right-wing coalition to the negotiated "purple plus." Those involved with the negotiations on the VVD's side maintain the official line, that the two sides could not reach close enough agreement on budget issues (Interview with VVD MPs, 2011). Members of parliament from the PvdA, however, dispute this claim. They, along with representatives from D66 and GL, claim the VVD never truly wanted to form this coalition, and was hoping all along to force the CDA's hand so the VVD could have the coalition it thought would benefit itself more, as a partnership with the CDA and PVV would bring policies much closer to the VVD's ideal positions than would an alliance with three left-wing parties. PvdA MPs say that the deal reached on the budget as part of the "purple plus" coalition actually involved more of the items the VVD wanted than did the right-wing coalition (Interview with PvdA MPs, 2011).

Rosenthal thus turned to a VVD-CDA minority government supported by the PVV, meaning the latter would sign an agreement to vote with the coalition on certain issues, but would not have any ministerial portfolios.[19] The idea of a VVD-CDA-PVV coalition, even with the PVV outside the government, deeply divided the already-fragile CDA, which saw its leader Balkenende resign on election night. The highly unusual proposition of a minority government led to another unusual event, a large CDA congress in October 2010, where more than four thousand members turned out to vote on what the party should do. With a two-thirds majority in favor, the CDA decided to move forward with the coalition.

The VVD and CDA signed their coalition agreement, with PVV signing on only to four areas: immigration, fiscal policy, security, and care for the elderly. Despite his initial hard-line on maintaining the age of pension eligibility, Wilders quickly reversed position once it became apparent that he could receive immigration restrictions in return. While the VVD generally agreed with the PVV's position on the need for increased restrictions, it announced they would agree to disagree on Islam as an ideology vs. a religion; while politicians may criticize other ideologies, attacking specific religious groups brings them more legal scrutiny (Interview with VVD MP, 2011). With just a one-seat majority – the smallest of any cabinet since 1946 – any defections could prove disastrous for the government, which would already need support from opposition parties on the issues not agreed upon by the PVV.[20]

The 2002 coalition with the LPF generated less of an outcry than did the 2010 coalition with the PVV, though the other governing partners remained the same. Neither the CDA nor the VVD seemed divided over the 2002 coalition; this could be a result of acknowledging that the LPF should have its chance in office, or recognition of the importance of immigration to voters, or a combination thereof. The VVD was similarly unified after the 2010 coalition, which gave its party the premiership for the first time, though VVD MPs admit they understand the importance of keeping disputes internal. In stark contrast, 44 members of the CDA wrote an open letter in August 2010, during the negotiations, stating:

[19]Those involved with negotiations on the VVD's side say the PVV had even fewer qualified ministerial candidates than did the LPF, making the support agreement preferable (Interview with VVD MP, 2011). The PVV itself is thought to have preferred a support agreement, which allowed itself more freedom while still having influence over its valued policy areas, in particular, immigration.

[20]The 1946 Beel cabinet was a minority government of the KVP and PvdA.

> "The PVV stigmatizes a significant minority of our population, making it the scapegoat for almost all of our society's problems. The PVV not only threatens the freedom of Muslims, but also the principles of our law and, thus, the freedom of all of us."[21]

The divisions within the CDA in 2010 about the appropriateness of governing with the far right – not present in 2002 when working with the LPF – were a reflection of the party's internal problems at the time, and possibly Wilders' sharper criticisms of Islam, relative to Fortuyn. More so than at any point since the formation of the CDA in 1977 and the end of pillarized voting, the Dutch Christian Democrats have faced an identity crisis over the past several years, evident during the 2010 formation process. Some CDA members felt the party needed to move right and embrace the voters' desire for immigration restrictions (and by extension, cooperation with the PVV), while others felt they needed to hold on to the party's religious roots and belief in treating all members of society fairly. Ultimately, the former group won out. The CDA preferred government to opposition, and knew the coalition with the VVD and PVV would be the way to enter office in 2010, given the VVD's negotiations with the left-wing parties. The Christian Democrats were asked to form the government in 2002, while the VVD did so in 2010, leaving the CDA to wait to be asked to join negotiations by the VVD.

Why was the PVV such an attractive partner, relative to the other coalition options, for the mainstream right in 2010? Given the number of other "purple plus" parties, the VVD may have been a minority within the more left-leaning cabinet, even though it would have retained the premiership. Situated between the CDA and PVV, any negotiations with those parties would likely end up closer to the VVD's ideal points (Interview with VVD MP, 2011). In exchange for moving toward its preferred policies on immigration, the PVV was willing to compromise on the issues of most importance to the VVD, such as the budget cuts; their flexibility on non-core issues is clear in Wilders' flipping positions on the retirement age. Further, Liberal leaders were not concerned that they would alienate voters by collaborating with the far right; VVD voters were believed to be supportive of the coalition with the PVV, preferring it to the "purple plus" option (Interview with VVD MPs, 2011). VVD MPs have blamed themselves for not adequately handling the immigration issue, and thus driving voters to the LPF and, later, the PVV (Interview with VVD MPs, 2011).

This section showed that the far right will be brought into coalition when doing so allows the mainstream right to achieve policy outcomes closer to its preferred points than it would if it formed a different coalition. It is important to note that, despite the deep divisions caused by the coalition with the PVV, the CDA still opted to join the far-right supported coalition rather than sit in opposition, which would not serve either the party's goals for

[21] Originally published in *Trouw*, a Christian Democratic newspaper. Translation, author's own. See http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail /1117222/2010/08/12/Manifest-CDA-rsquo-ers-tegen-PVV.dhtml. Original: *"De PVV stigmatiseert een aanzienlijke minderheid van onze bevolking, maakt deze tot zondebok voor vrijwel alle problemen van onze samenleving. Zo bedreigt de PVV niet alleen de vrijheden van moslims, maar ook de beginselen van onze rechtsstaat en daarmee de vrijheid van ons allen."*

office or policy. After the 2002 and 2010 elections, the LPF and PVV respectively offered the CDA and VVD the opportunity to achieve policy benefits that the other mathematically-viable coalitions did not. In 2002, the major mainstream-right parties and the far right had significant overlap in their policy interests, and more so than other possible coalitions. In 2010, the far right's preferences overlapped to a degree with the interests of the mainstream right parties, and the party was willing to sign on to support a series of VVD-CDA policies in exchange for immigration restrictions.

As the next two sections demonstrate, there were three other elections when the far right could have formed a majority coalition with one or both of the Dutch major mainstream-right parties, but other coalitions were preferable to the mainstream right, either because of concerns about coalition stability (2003) or because the other options were better for the mainstream right in terms of policy benefits (2006, 2012).

6.3 Mainstream right prefers the policy benefits from a coalition with the far right, but is concerned about coalition stability (Scenario 2)

For a coalition to fall under Scenario 2, the mainstream right must – in a policy/office benefit vacuum – prefer to work with the far right more so than it prefers other coalition options. However, this coalition with the far right will ultimately be passed over for a next-best option if the mainstream right fears that the coalition is unlikely to last. This could result from rebellion within the mainstream right or within the far right, as was the case after the 1986 and 1995 Austrian elections from Chapter 5, or a far-right party in extreme disarray, as the leaderless List Pim Fortuyn was in 2003.

The 2002 CDA-VVD-LPF cabinet had been in office just a few weeks before problems emerged.[22] The LPF rank-and-file were divided over who should lead them, and these internal tensions soon affected the LPF elites and cabinet members, who fought amongst themselves, having a "paralyzing" effect on the government (Irwin and Van Holsteyn 2004, 554). Gerrit Zalm, the VVD leader, grew frustrated with the LPF ministers' behavior and withdrew his support for the government in October. Shortly thereafter, Prime Minister Balkenende agreed that the coalition was unable to be salvaged and submitted his resignation to the queen, just three months after the cabinet's formation. Irwin and van Holstein (2004, 554) note that this was the first time a Dutch cabinet fell over personal issues, rather than policy disagreements.

In the few months before the January 2003 elections, the CDA and VVD parties argued that the voters should return them to office to continue what they had started, but this time, without the unstable LPF. Between the cabinet's fall in October 2002 and the new elections, polls shifted from appearing as if the CDA-VVD pairing would hold a majority on its own to

[22]See also the discussion in Chapter 3, Section 4.

seeming that the PvdA would actually be the largest party (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 158). Many believed the CDA and PvdA would thus form a coalition. While a CDA-PvdA coalition would have had a majority, the CDA was reluctant to form such a government; on election night, CDA leader Balkenende noted that a right-wing coalition was still possible with the addition of D66. D66 had stated during the campaign that this coalition was not its preferred option, but was not fully off the table. As a result, the informateur had the CDA begin negotiations with the PvdA, a move that was supported by all party leaders except Balkenende, who said the partnership was "certainly not a won race" (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 162). The parties struggled to agree on economic policies, but just as stories emerged about compromise on austerity measures, the CDA proposed modifications to these plans, prompting the PvdA to walk away. The underlying motivation seems to have been Balkenende's clear preference to work with the VVD rather than the PvdA, and the move damaged the relationship between Balkenende and Wouter Bos (the PvdA leader). The 2003 election was, as a result, the only time in post-war history that a two-party coalition was mathematically possible and not formed in favor of a three-party (or more) coalition.

New *informateurs* were appointed to determine which coalitions could command a majority, this time focusing instead on the CDA-VVD pairing. Although these parties could have formed a majority coalition with the LPF, D66, SP, or a four-party coalition with the religious parties, CU and SGP (see Table 6.6), the CDA-VVD-SP option was never seriously considered, due to much stronger overlap between the other minor-party alternatives and the major right-wing parties. Given that the CDA and VVD wanted to continue their partnership, they had five mathematically-possible options (Table **??**): the Socialists, the far right, the Greens, D66, or a combination of the religious parties, CU and SGP. Neither right-left pairings were considered to be serious options, so that limited the coalitions to three: the LPF, D66, or CU+SGP (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 163). After the quick end to the first Balkenende cabinet – the second shortest in Dutch history – neither party was in favor of re-forming a government with the unstable LPF. The three parties would have held a majority of seats, even with the LPF's sizable losses, but the likelihood of the LPF being a reliable partner was rather small. The LPF revolved around Fortuyn, and without him, was adrift; the VVD's leader deemed the re-forming of the 2002 coalition a "bizarre" option (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 163). The VVD further did not see how it could cooperate with the orthodox parties, particularly the Calvinist SGP, which, at this point, still did not allow women to be party members.[23]

The *informateurs* established that the CDA and VVD strongly preferred D66 to the other options (LPF or CU/SGP), and that D66 was receptive to this. In exchange for its participation, the D66 leader wanted education cuts to be stricken from the budget cuts the CDA and VVD wanted, and for the other two parties to promise to introduce proposals for a new electoral system, to which the major parties agreed.[24] The major mainstream-right

[23]This party statue was changed in 2006, after the Court of the Hague ruled that the SGP was in violation of the UN Treaty on Women, and would thus lose state funding unless it complied.

[24]A series of electoral reform bills, such as a proposal for a new mixed-member electoral system, did move

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Party**	**Votes (%)**
CDA	28.6	GL	5.1
PvdA	27.3	D66	4.1
VVD	17.9	CU	2.1
SP	6.3	SGP	1.6
LPF	5.7		
Parties	**Seats (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
CDA-PvdA	57.3	**CDA-VVD**	
PvdA-VVD		+ SP	54.0
+ SP	52.7	+ LPF	53.3
+ LPF	52.0	+ GL	53.3
+ GL	52.0	**+ D66**	**52.0**
+ D66	50.7	+ CU, SGP	51.3

Table 6.6: 2003 election: Results and coalition options

parties were able to conclude the agreement "with relative ease," paving the way for the second Balkenende cabinet (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 163).

There is accepted wisdom in Dutch politics that *"de breker betaalt,"* or, literally, "the breaker pays": the idea that voters will punish the party responsible for the early fall of the cabinet at the upcoming election. This, combined with the disarray of the LPF, may have contributed to the party's losses, even though the party's eight seats in 2003 would otherwise have been viewed as a "quite respectable" result, given that the party had been polling closer to 2% in October 2002 (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2004, 161; Art 2011, 184).[25] Although the LPF could have been included in 2003, the CDA and VVD opted to ally instead with D66, forming a coalition that supported their agenda but did not come with the instability that was all-but guaranteed with the LPF in 2003. In hindsight, this may have been beneficial to the mainstream right, as they were still able to secure support for their policy goals (those established in 2002), and ultimately ended up sacrificing very little, as the D66's main objectives of electoral reform failed. Indeed, some of the party's reform bills were opposed by its right-wing coalition partners.

The LPF, now renamed simply "Fortuyn," campaigned with a relatively unknown leader in 2006 (Lucardie 2007, 1045). The party lost many voters to Geert Wilders' new Party for Freedom (PVV) and won only 0.2% of the vote in the election, losing all of its parliamentary seats, and eventually dissolved in 2008. The next section explains why the CDA and VVD opted not to include the PVV in 2006 and 2012; in contrast to the 2003 election, the decision

through the upper and lower houses of parliament during the coalition's tenure, though none were successful. The D66 leader and Minister for Institutional Reform, Thom de Graaf, resigned in 2005 after a bill for the direct election of mayors failed (Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 1204).

[25]The elections of 2006 and 2012, discussed below, also feature parties that are thought to have suffered electorally for causing the cabinet's downfall - D66 in 2006 and the PVV in 2012.

was motivated by policy benefits, rather than stability concerns.

6.4 Mainstream right prefers the policy benefits from a coalition without the far right (Scenario 3)

In this section, the elections of 2006 and 2012 are discussed: After each of these elections, the far right entered parliament and could have taken part in a coalition with the major right-wing parties, but was passed over for alternative parties. Although the specifics of each election are unique – the breakthrough PVV was somewhat of an unknown factor in 2006, but was the party blamed for breaking the coalition in 2012 – the common theme is that the mainstream right preferred the policy benefits it anticipated receiving from other coalitions.

The Party for Freedom in 2006 and 2012

The CDA-VVD-D66 government (formed in 2003) presided over the rotating presidency of the European Union (European Council) in the second half of 2004, during which time they set the date for beginning accession negotiations between the EU and Turkey. VVD MP Geert Wilders, concerned about Islam in the Netherlands and strongly opposed to Turkish membership in the EU, abandoned his party, opting to finish out his term as an independent MP (officially, as part of *Groep Wilders*). The murder of Theo van Gogh – responsible for the critical film about Islam, *Submission Part 1*, a collaborative effort with VVD MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a former Somali asylum seeker – two months later fueled tensions between Muslim immigrants and some of the Dutch population, and helped give credence to Wilders' ideas. Wilders formed the PVV in February 2006, and from the beginning, the party's strongly anti-Islamic stance was apparent (Van Holsteyn 2007, 1141).

VVD Immigration Minister Rita Verdonk played a significant role during this period, both in the collapse of the second Balkenende cabinet and in the continued prominence of anti-immigrant sentiment in the Netherlands (which, in turn, aided the PVV's success). Verdonk was given the nickname *Ijzeren Rita* (Iron Rita) for her hard-line stances on immigration, and is said to have imitated Fortuyn's rhetoric and style (Aarts and van der Kolk 2007, 834). During her four years in the government, Verdonk proposed a series of integration and asylum crackdowns, such as the 2005 Civic Integration Abroad Act (*Wet inburgering in het buitenland*), which required would-be migrants to first pass both an oral language test and a written Dutch civics exam in their home country before qualifying for a temporary residence permit (Goodman 2011, 233-4). In April 2006, the VVD held an election for the new party leader, which many thought could result in a serious leadership crisis. Mark Rutte, representing the libertarian wing of the VVD, narrowly beat Verdonk, representing the anti-immigration wing, with 51% of the vote.

The fall of the cabinet was precipitated by the actions of two VVD MPs, Verdonk and Hirsi Ali. Hirsi Ali became the subject of a 2006 documentary that alleged she provided false information on her 1992 asylum application. Verdonk announced that Hirsi Ali had,

therefore, never legally received Dutch citizenship, and the latter announced the next day that she was resigning from parliament. This prompted an intense parliamentary debate that ended with resolutions ordering Verdonk to both reconsider her ruling and re-process Hirsi Ali's naturalization right away. Multiple stories emerged wherein the discrepancies on Hirsi Ali's application had been widely known – including by Verdonk – for years, suggesting the sudden position change was a political power-grab.

Six weeks later, Verdonk announced that Hirsi Ali would be allowed to keep her Dutch passport, though parliament spent the next day questioning both Verdonk and Prime Minister Balkenende. Hours into the debate, Balkenende revealed that, in exchange for Verdonk's decision, Hirsi Ali was made to write a letter accepting blame for the whole situation. Immediately, *GroenLinks* proposed a no-confidence vote for Verdonk, which, problematically, was supported by the CDA and VVD's coalition partner, D66. The motion failed and Verdonk did not resign (as D66 hoped she would), so instead, D66 resigned from the government, leaving the CDA and VVD to carry on until new elections were held.

In the November parliamentary elections, Verdonk, despite being the number-two candidate on the VVD's list, received nearly 70,000 more personal preference votes than the party leader, Rutte. This unprecedented result was driven by Verdonk's running of her own personal campaign, complete with staff, campaign bus, and slogan. Though the VVD had, at the beginning of 2006, expected gains in the next election and a continuation of its government with the CDA. The internal divides between Rutte and Verdonk ultimately cost the party, which dropped 3% and six seats in 2006 (Table 6.7).[26] Scholars also point to the VVD's appeals toward the political center, while ignoring the right wing (and the PVV), as damaging (e.g. Van Holsteyn 2007, 1144); the VVD would not repeat this mistake in 2010. The upstart PVV, led by Wilders, entered parliament with nine seats. This came even after Wilders had been left out of the major television debates, as poll numbers predicted little success for the PVV (Aarts and van der Kolk 2007, 834-5). The cabinet-breakers, D66, lost half of their seats (going from 6 to 3), and the big "winners" were the Socalists (SP), nearly tripling their 2003 total (from 9 to 25 seats).

The election results took the option of a two-party coalition off the table – no combination of the big three parties had enough seats for a majority (Table 6.7), so a CDA-VVD coalition could not command a majority on its own, but neither could a left-wing coalition be formed. The way forward was not obvious, and the queen appointed a Christian Democratic *verkenner*, or explorer, Rein Jan Hoekstra (Lucardie 2007, 1046). Hoekstra's role was to see if a coalition could be formed between the CDA and PvdA, possibly including the SP; many of the queen's advisors had suggested the Socialists as a potential partner (Van Holsteyn 2007, 1146). After consultations, the *informateur* told her that there were too many differences

[26]The VVD would soon lose the internal distractions: Members of the newly elected *Tweede Kamer* voted in late 2006 to suspend the eviction of illegal immigrants until a new government could be formed, which Verdonk refused to implement. She was censured by the lower house in December 2006 and lost her portfolio, though she kept her seat in parliament (Aarts and van der Kolk 2007, 836). Verdonk was eventually expelled from the VVD in September 2007, after criticizing the VVD's positions on immigration, and formed her own short-lived party, *Trots op Nederland* (Proud of the Netherlands), in 2008, which failed to win any seats.

Party	Votes (%)	Party	Votes (%)
CDA	26.5	GL	4.6
PvdA	21.2	CU	4.0
SP	16.6	D66	2.0
VVD	14.7	PvdD	1.8
PVV	5.9	SGP	1.6
Parties	**Seats (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
CDA-PvdA		CDA-VVD	
+ SP	66.0	+ SP	58.7
+ VVD	64.0	+ PVV, GL	52.7
+ PVV	55.3	+ PVV, CU	52.0
+ GL	54.0	+ GL, CU	50.7
+ CU	**53.3**	CDA-SP	
+ D66	51.3	+ PVV, GL	54.7
+ PvdD	50.7	+ PVV, CU	54.0
+ SGP	50.7	+ PVV, PvdD	51.3
PvdA-VVD-SP	53.3	+ PVV, SGP	51.3
		+ GL, CU	52.7
		+ GL, D66	50.7

Table 6.7: 2006 election: Results and coalition options

between the CDA and SP to form a workable coalition, a conclusion with which the leaders of these parties agreed. Hoekstra thus considered the feasibility of a CDA-PvdA partnership with one of the other "winners": the CU, PVV, and PvdD. Feeling there was more potential for agreement between the CDA-PvdA pairing and the ChristianUnion (CU, a religious party that is socially right-wing but economically centrist or left-of-center, thus giving it overlap with both the CDA and PvdA), Hoekstra invited the three parties' leaders for a meeting, the conclusion of which was a recommendation to the queen that this partnership be explored further. After a month of negotiations, Balkenende was sworn in as prime minister for the fourth time in February 2007, leading a government of the Christian Democrats, Labour, and the Christian Union. The three governing parties' stated platform was "Working together, living together," which focused on social cohesion rather than economic liberalism, with stated goals of "sustainable growth, respect, and solidarity" (Lucardie 2008, 1074).

What about the far-right PVV? Van Holsteyn (2007, 1146) notes that "no one wanted [the PVV] in coalition," but this more accurately describes the small religious parties and the left than it does the mainstream right. Rather, there was not a reasonable coalition that could have been formed to include the far right. Although 7 of the 19 mathematically-possible coalitions in Table 6.7 do include the PVV, four of the seven would first require the unlikely combination of the Christian Democrats and the Socialists, one that was quickly ruled out in the formation process. The three other possibilities for the PVV were a three-party coalition

with the CDA and PvdA, or a four-party coalition with the CDA-VVD-PVV and either GL or CU. *GroenLinks*, though it only lost one seat from its 2003 share of eight, continued a four-elections-long trend of decline, and its leader announced the party would go into opposition after the 2006 election results. Removing GL from the sets of available coalitions does not leave many viable options. With the PvdA and the CU opposed to working with the PVV, there was no option in 2006 that would have brought Wilders into coalition. There were more viable coalition options for the CDA in 2006, given other necessary parties' reluctance (or refusal) to work with the PVV.

As explored earlier, after the fall of the CDA-PvdA-CU government in 2010, the PVV became a formal support party for the VVD-CDA minority government, signing a *Gedoogakkoord* (Tolerance Agreement). Although fiscal issues were thought to be part of the set for which the cabinet would have support, given their inclusion in the *Gedoogakkoord*, they ultimately brought down the government. In early 2012, the three parties met to negotiate new austerity measures to cope with the financial downturn, with plans to cut about 16 billion euros and bring the Dutch deficit under the European Union-mandated 3% of GDP. After almost two months of negotiations, Wilders walked out of the negotiations in April 2012.[27] He defended his position by saying Brussels wanted to "bleed" the Dutch people; cuts to pensioners were among his chief objections (Waterfield 2012). Wilders' refusal to continue negotiations ended with the government's resignation and new elections called for September 2012.

During the 2012 campaign, financial matters were the main focus, with calls for austerity from the VVD, calls for slowing down cuts from the PvdA, and attacks on Brussels from the PVV. Rutte made Wilders' leaving the austerity negotiations a campaign issue, though said prior to the elections that he would not rule out working with the PVV in the future, then adding that he would also not rule out working with the Socialists, no matter how unlikely it may be ("Pledge to decimate the PVV was 'a weak moment', says prime minister" 2012). In contrast, Wilders made leaving the EU and the Euro his primary goals (the party's manifesto was titled "*Their* Brussels, *Our* Netherlands"), and the PVV was the only party to campaign on the issue; all other parties supported remaining within the EU and the Eurozone (Partij voor de Vrijheid 2012; Otjes and Voerman 2013, 166). The pre-election polls showed the VVD in first, with the Socialists an incredibly close second (polling upwards of 30 seats), but they dropped in the week before the election, replaced by the PvdA (Van Holsteyn 2014, 324).

When the votes were tallied, Rutte's VVD gained ten seats (winning 41, their best-ever result) and the PvdA, now led by Diederik Sansom, eight; the PvdA was expected to win, at most, 20 seats, so their total of 38 was considered a very impressive outcome (Van Holsteyn 2014, 323).[28] The PVV's focus on leaving Europe was thought to have contributed to their

[27]One of the PVV MPs left the party in March 2012, retaining his seat as an independent, which officially left the cabinet without a majority, holding only 75/150 seats. His departure was prompted by the PVV's launching of a website where the Dutch public could make complaints about migrants from Eastern Europe, which he said discriminated against law-abiding migrants (Otjes and Voerman 2013, 164).

[28]The performance of the new PvdA leader, Diederik Sansom, in election debates is thought to have

loss of nine seats at a time when Dutch voters clearly supported pro-Europe parties. The most striking outcome of the election for many was the devastating losses of the CDA, which dropped to just 8.5% of the vote and only 13 seats, by far its worst total ever.

Only one two-party coalition was possible in 2012 – VVD-PvdA – and this was indeed the outcome of the formation process. Interestingly, no other parties had more than 10% of the parliamentary seats, which meant no three-party combinations were possible (Table 6.8). In early 2012, the *Tweede Kamer* had implemented new rules for coalition formation: Instead of the *informateur* and *formateur* being appointed by the monarch, they would be voted into the position by the lower house of parliament. The day after the election, the leaders of each parliamentary party met and nominated an "explorer," one of the current VVD ministers, to first determine which parties should be part of the initial round of negotiations, and second, who should be nominated as *informateur*. The "explorer," Henk Kamp, offered that he and Wouter Bos (the leader of the PvdA in the late 2000s) serve as *informateurs*, a proposal supported by a majority within parliament (Otjes and Voerman 2013, 168).

Van Holsteyn (2014, 325) says most felt the VVD-PvdA cabinet was the "only realistic political alternative," given the problems of the VVD-CDA minority government and the number of parties with only a handful of seats. The leaders of the VVD and PvdA supported this combination, as did the CDA, D66, PVV, CU, and SGP leaders; in contrast, the Socialist leader called the VVD-PvdA option a "pointless exercise," instead preferring to join a coalition with the PvdA, CDA, and D66 ("Kamp spreekt alle lijsttrekkers" 2012; this combination would have had a majority of seats (Table 6.8).[29]

While the two parties had different views on the best economic course, both agreed on the importance of stability and remaining in the EU, and after four failed cabinets in ten years, the Dutch voters wanted to elect a government that would provide this stability. For the first time in Dutch post-war coalition negotiations, the involved parties decided to divide the political issues and each propose policies for their respective topics, resulting in a somewhat inconsistent set of policies. For example, the agreement included income-sensitive health care premiums for the PvdA as well as budget cuts to meet the 3% EU targets for the VVD.[30] Just 50 days after the process began, the government was formed, making this the shortest formation in the Netherlands in forty years (Otjes and Voerman 2013, 168).

The PVV's inclusion in government was unlikely in 2012 for several reasons, despite its inclusion in two-thirds of the mathematically-possible coalitions (Table 6.8): The party stood alone in its opposition to the Netherlands' EU membership at a time when voters

contributed to his party's gains, as well as the inability of the Socialists' leader, Emile Roemer, to present himself as a viable prime ministerial candidate (Otjes and Voerman 2013, 166-7). Scholars believe that left-wing voters ultimately felt more comfortable supporting the PvdA, the more likely cabinet participant, than the SP (Schumacher 2012).

[29]The only other party leader to argue against the VVD-PvdA pairing was the PvdD leader, who supported either a VVD-led right-wing coalition or a PvdA-led left-wing combination ("Kamp spreekt alle lijsttrekkers" 2012).

[30]The health care provision was, however, highly controversial – especially among VVD voters – after the media picked up the size of the income-redistributing effect. VVD leader Rutte issued an apology for agreeing to the measure even before the official swearing-in (Van Holsteyn 2014, 325).

Party	**Votes (%)**	**Party**	**Votes (%)**
VVD	26.6	CU	3.1
PvdA	24.8	GL	2.3
PVV	10.1	SGP	2.1
SP	9.7	PvdD	1.9
CDA	8.5	50PLUS	1.9
D66	8.0		
Parties	**Seats (%)**	**Parties**	**Seats (%)**
VVD-PvdA	**52.7**	VVD-SP	
VVD-CDA		+ PVV, D66	55.3
+ SP, PVV	56.0	+ PVV, CU	50.7
+ SP, D66	54.0	PvdA-SP	
+ PVV, D66	54.0	+ CDA, PVV	54.0
		+ PVV, D66	53.3
		+ CDA, D66	52.0

Table 6.8: 2012 election: Results and coalition options

were far more concerned about economic stability than Europe, and Wilders announced to Kamp the day after the election that he would take the PVV into opposition. This position might have been softened if one of the major parties came calling, but given the political situation surrounding this election, it is difficult to imagine the VVD or CDA doing so. This case falls under Scenario 3 rather than Scenario 2 because the primary motivation for the PVV's exclusion in 2012 was a lack of common policy ground. It is not the case that the VVD preferred the policy stances of the PVV at this point, but worried about the far-right's reliability; rather, the VVD felt it needed to look elsewhere to achieve its economic goals. This section shows that, even when far-right parties can mathematically take part in a right-wing coalition, they are unlikely to be included when there is another coalition that offers more attractive policy or office outcomes for the major mainstream-right party or parties. Although the far right may also be unreliable as a coalition partner, this is not the primary motivation for their exclusion in these cases.

6.5 Conclusion

Far-right exclusion in the Netherlands, as stated at the outset of this chapter, was never as firm as many believed. Neither of the "Center" parties ever had enough seats to factor into coalition options in the 1980s, and in 1994, the far right only featured in a handful of four-party coalition options, none of which were preferable for policy or office reasons over the coalitions that actually formed in the eyes of the mainstream right.

Once far right parties became successful in the Netherlands, they began to be included

in government coalitions. Of the five elections contested by either the LPF or the PVV, the far right was included twice. Yet, the other three coalitions, when considered closely, are not surprising for their non-inclusion of the far right, either because of concerns about coalition stability (2003) or because the mainstream right had more-preferable policy options (2006, 2012). In the future, we would expect Dutch leaders to anticipate the possibility of government instability and early collapse if they opt to work with the far right. This may come at a small enough cost – the CDA and VVD in 2003, as well as the VVD in 2012 did not suffer at the polls after cooperation with the far right – such that leaders are willing to take the gamble.

Name	Abbr.	English Name	Party Type
Algemeen Ouderen Verbond	AOV	General Elderly Alliance	Pensioners'
Centrumdemocraten	CD	Center Democrats	Far right
Christen-Democratisch Appèl	CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal	Christian Democratic
Centrumpartij	CP	Center Party	Far right
Communistische Partij Nederland[a]	CPN	Communist Party of the Netherlands	Communist
ChristenUnie	CU	ChristianUnion	Protestant
Democraten 66	D66	Democrats 66	Social liberal
Evangelische Volkspartij[a]	EVP	Evangelical People's Party	Protestant
GroenLinks[b]	GL		Green
Gereformeerd Politiek Verbond[c]	GPV	Reformed Political League	Orthodox Protestant
Leefbaar Nederland	LN	Livable Netherlands	Centrist
Lijst Pim Fortuyn	LPF	Pim Fortuyn's List	Far right
Politieke Partij Radikalen[a]	PPR	Political Party of Radicals	Catholic / Green
Pacifistisch Socialistische Partij[a]	PSP	Pacifist Socialist Party	Left-socialist
Partij van de Arbeid	PvdA	Labour Party	Social Democratic
Partij voor de Dieren	PvdD	Party for the Animals	Animal rights
Partij voor de Vrijheid	PVV	Party for Freedom	Far right
Reformatorische Politieke Federatie[c]	RPF	Reformatory Political Federation	Orthodox Protestant
Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij	SGP	Reformed Political Party	Orthodox Calvinist
Socialistische Partij	SP	Socialist Party	Socialist
Unie 55+		Union 55+	Pensioners'
Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie	VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	Liberal

Table 6.9: Parliamentary parties in the Netherlands, 1982-2012

[a] Parties merged to form GL in 1991.

[b] "GroenLinks" literally means "GreenLeft" but the party does not translate their name into English.

[c] Parties merged to form CU in 2000.

Chapter 7

The Mainstream Right and Far Right in Majoritarian Systems: France and the United Kingdom

The three preceding chapters have shown that major mainstream-right parties will borrow from the far right's agenda, and are unwilling to pay any kind of significant price, whether in the form of sitting in opposition or even diminished policy influence, for the sake of keeping the far right out of the governing coalition. This argument has been illustrated through analysis of 14 elections in Austria and the Netherlands, but as this chapter will show, the logic of major mainstream parties' strategies with respect to the parties on their extremes is neither limited to proportional systems, nor to the right half of the political spectrum. Through extensions to the two majoritarian systems in Western Europe – France and the United Kingdom – we see that the major parties behave in many ways as they would in more proportional systems.[1] The necessary electoral pressure mainstream-right parties must face before striking deals in these systems is greater than in proportional systems, because the electoral rules limit far-right parties' legislative presence. However, when sufficiently threatened, the mainstream right will seek to borrow from and make deals with the far right.

7.1 The mainstream right and far right in France

The French far-right *Front National* (National Front, FN) is one of the most prominent, long-lived, and successful far-right parties actively contesting elections in Western Europe today, though it has only once won more than two seats in parliament as a result of the electoral system. Despite its lack of presence in parliament, the FN has still posed an electoral threat to the major mainstream-right parties. As a result, they have behaved as

[1]See Jackman and Volkert (1996) for more on electoral systems and the far right, and Givens (2005, Ch. 5) on strategic voting and the far right.

major right-wing parties in PR systems have: They have adopted pieces of the FN's agenda in an effort to win back (or keep) voters, and they have struck electoral deals at the subnational level when threatened with a second-round loss, as this section will show.

From the FN's emergence in the early 1980s until 1998, there was no national-level inclusion of the far right by the mainstream right, but national leaderships encouraged, and later tolerated, collaboration between their party and the FN at local and regional levels. Beginning in 1998, the mainstream right engaged in a more serious *cordon sanitaire* at all levels, going as far as to expel regional party members who struck deals with the far right. Both the mainstream left and right opted for a "Republican front" against the far right during a period where the FN's support tended to be electorally unnecessary. If a far-right candidate advanced to the second round of an election to compete in a three-way run-off against both the mainstream left and right, one of the mainstream candidates would stand down and throw their support to the other. However, this "Republican front" disappeared in 2011, after President Nicolas Sarkozy adopted a much more accommodative response to the FN as the far right's electoral fortunes improved.

Parties and Elections in France

There is one major mainstream-right party in France today, the *Union pour un mouvement populaire* (Union for a Popular Movement, UMP), formed by Jacques Chirac in 2002. Although it is considered the successor party of the *Rassemblement pour la République* (Rally for the Republic, RPR), RPR members were joined in the new UMP by the right wing of the *Union pour la Démocratie Française* (Union for French Democracy, UDF).[2] The center-right UDF and Gaullist RPR were regular allies from the 1970s through the merger. Together, the UDF, RPR, and UMP represent the major mainstream-right parties of interest in this chapter.

A neo-fascist group, *Ordre Nouveau*, created the *Front National* in the early 1970s as a "crypto-fascist" party in the model of the Italian Social Movement in order to have a more "respectable" political face (Copsey 1997, 104; Dézé 2004, 25). Jean-Marie Le Pen, a former Poujadist member of the French Assembly, was tapped to lead the party.[3] The FN was initially an electoral failure, and a split quickly emerged between Le Pen and his supporters and the radicals who did not want to engage in political competition. The party was not even able to muster the 500 signatures required for Le Pen to compete in the 1981 presidential election, and won less than 0.2% of the parliamentary vote that year. The FN increasingly picked up the immigration theme in the early 1980s, around the time the mainstream parties started to politicize race in France, giving the party a vision for achieving electoral success (Copsey 1997, 106). Immigration gave the FN a central theme around which it could mobilize

[2]The more centrist faction of the UDF formed *Mouvement démocrate* (Democratic Movement, MoDem), which is a small party in France today.

[3]Although some FN supporters may have been Vichy sympathizers, the core – including Le Pen – came of age in the Fourth Republic (Art 2011, 120).

and this strategy soon paid off: At the 1984 European Parliament elections, the FN won 11.2% of the vote.

Elections in France follow a two-round, majoritarian system: If no candidate wins a majority of votes in the first round, the top two candidates advance to a run-off election. As a result, politics tends to be dominated by the representatives of the major mainstream parties. Socialist President François Mitterrand moved to the PR system in the hopes of both minimizing his party's losses and maximizing the strength of the far right, which would, in turn, damage the mainstream right's chances (Marcus 1995, 131-2). In this election, the FN won 35 seats; it would lose all but one in the next (back-to-majoritarian) election (Table 8.1).

Year	**1st Round**	**2nd Round**	**Seats**	**Presidential**[a]
1981	0.4	0	0	-
1986[b]	9.7		35	
1988	9.7	1.1	1	14.4
1993	12.6	5.9	1	
1995				15.0
1997	14.9	5.6	1	
2002[c]	11.3	1.9	0	16.9
2007	4.3	0.1	0	10.4
2012	13.6	3.7	2	17.9
Average	9.6	2.8		14.9

Table 7.1: *Front National* election results, 1981-2012

[a] These totals represent the first round only, as the FN candidate has only once advanced to the second round, with Jean-Marie Le Pen winning 17.8% of the final vote in 2002.
[b] The electoral system was changed to proportional representation for the 1986 election.
[c] A splinter far-right party, the MNR, contested the 2002 election as well, winning 1.1% of the first-round vote.

The National Front has averaged 9.6% of the first-round vote from 1981 through 2012, and 10.9% since their first election. Their second-round average of 2.8%, however, means the party seldom wins enough seats in a particular constituency to actually secure the seat. In more than 30 years of majoritarian elections, the FN has won only five seats – total. Had the PR system remained in place, the FN would have been a kingmaker in parliament for many of the subsequent elections, forcing the mainstream right to collaborate with them in order to avoid deals with the left (Ivaldi 2007, 175-6).

Borrowing from the *Front National*

Major parties on the right (and left) in France have continuously borrowed from the FN's agenda since the 1980s, stressing immigration and related concerns (crime, integration,

and insecurity as a result of these issues) when trying to win voters from the far right. At times when the FN's support was flagging, such as the early 1990s, the major parties have preferred to stress other important issues of the day (see Bale 2008, 320). Bale (2008, 321) notes that mainstream-right politicians have taken far-right-like stances in response to national situations, such as security threats or riots, and not "simply to head off Le Pen." While this is true, it is important to remember that these incidents also tend to boost far-right support.

To attract voters, the most common strategies on the part of mainstream-right politicians have been to either commit to far-right agenda items or to say very little – as opposed to denouncing the FN – in the hopes of retaining voters who might be turned off by strong anti-immigration language while also attracting FN voters, who might refuse to vote for a politician who had insulted them. When politicians on the mainstream right have opted to denounce the FN, they have been careful to draw a distinction between the party / Le Pen and the voters as to not discourage FN supporters from voting mainstream right (Marcus 1995, 136). This does not prevent the mainstream right from talking about immigrants in a negative way, however: Chirac pointed to immigration as a cause of unemployment and local tensions in 1984 and then to the "noise" and "smell" of immigrants in 1991 (Marcus 1995, 136; Mayer 1998, 22). Le Pen's themes were borrowed by other right-wing politicians of the time, as well, such as former president Valery Giscard d'Estaing talking about the immigrant "invasion" of France in 1991 (Mondon 2013, 28).[4] However, adopting far-right positions on immigration goes beyond mere rhetoric. Mainstream-right governments in France have passed a number of restrictive immigration laws since the 1980s as a way to stem the tide of far-right support and cater to public opinion.

After taking office in 1986, the government of Prime Minister Jacques Chirac (under the presidency of Mitterrand) adopted more restrictive immigration laws to counteract the threat posed by the FN. Chirac's Minister of the Interior, Charles Pasqua, said this was the only way to win back FN voters (Ellinas 2008, 8). The proposed "*Loi Pasqua*" would have allowed the police and local governments to have more say in immigrant deportation and have restricted the automatic attribution of French citizenship. The proposal was withdrawn after strong parliamentary opposition (Marthaler 2008, 385); it was introduced again and passed several years later. During Chirac's two years in office, his government also instituted random identity card checks and deported 101 illegal immigrants from Mali on a chartered plane.[5] Pasqua said that the FN and the RPR/UDF shared the "same concerns and values" on the "essential" issues (Ivaldi 2007, 170).

[4]Politicians on the left were also not immune from the threat of the far right, and would discuss immigration in similar, albeit softer, terms than Le Pen did. Socialist Prime Minister Laurent Fabius said that Le Pen "asked the right questions" in 1984, and Socialist President Mitterrand felt the "tolerance threshold" for immigration had been reached in 1989 (Schain 2002, 238; Mondon 2013, 28). Even the Communists joined in the anti-immigrant borrowing, condemning racism while publishing material that asked voters, "should we close our eyes when immigrants are involved, so as not to be considered a racist?. . . Absolutely not" (Hainsworth and Mitchell 2000, 453).

[5]A Socialist Prime Minister under Mitterrand, Edith Cresson, said she would also deport illegal immigrants on chartered planes. Cresson's government was also responsible for setting up detention centers for

Becoming law in 1993, the revitalized "*Loi Pasqua*" restricted the abilities of asylum seekers to appeal decisions, increased policy powers to detain and deport illegal immigrants, and increased the waiting period for family reunification from 1 to 2 years. Illegal immigrants would not receive a change of immigration status if they married a French citizen, and French mayors were authorized to annul any suspected marriages of convenience (Hollifield 2014, 172).[6] Pasqua's bill was supplemented by a bill passed in 1997, named after the then-current Minister of the Interior, Jean-Louis Debré. The "*Loi Debré*" was intended to remedy perceived loopholes in the Pasqua law, creating a registry of French citizens and allowing officials to fingerprint anyone from outside the EU applying for a residence permit.[7] As in Austria and other European countries, each restriction passed by the mainstream right was met with the FN "shifting the goalposts": When Chirac announced plans to step up deportations, Le Pen brought more attention to immigrants' receiving of welfare benefits (Ellinas 2008, 11).

After Jean-Marie Le Pen's success in the 2002 presidential election, the UMP interpreted the result as a public belief that the center-left and center-right were not tough enough on immigration, and made the issue a major focus of Chirac's second term (Marthaler 2008, 387). Nicolas Sarkozy was appointed Minister of the Interior and set to work toughening France's immigration laws, and the position of the UMP, specifically.[8] Sarkozy's first immigration piece of legislation – "Law 2003-1119 on immigration control, the residence of aliens in France, and nationality" – is commonly referred to as "*Loi Sarkozy.*" The law called for increases in the number of illegal immigrant deportations (going from 10,000 in 2002 to 25,000 by 2006) and decreases in the number of asylum seekers entering France (Marthaler 2008, 387).

In late 2005, police were called to investigate a robbery in a suburb of Paris and attempted to arrest a group of immigrant teenagers. Three of the boys ran from police and were electrocuted after trying to hide in an electrical substation, prompting a series of violent riots and arsons around Paris, and soon, around the country. Interior Minister Sarkozy referred to the rioters as "scum" and suggested the *banlieues* (suburbs) outside Paris, where many immigrants lived, be cleaned out with power washers. The media blamed Sarkozy for instigating further protests and violence, but his statements were supported by a sizable majority of the French people (Fichtner 2007).

The 2006 Immigration and Integration Law, the second so-called "*Loi Sarkozy*," advocates the idea of *immigration choisie*, or chosen immigration, through which immigrants are (or not) deemed qualified to enter France based on their potential economic contribution.

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asylum seekers in France (Hainsworth and Mitchell 2000, 453).

[6]The Socialist government of 1988-93 had reversed elements of the first Pasqua law.

[7]The first version of the law was condemned by the European Parliament, which likened it to a Vichy law, because it included a requirement that French citizens needed to report any visa-holding, non-EU foreigners who stayed in their homes to the local police. Local officials would have the authority to then verify that the foreigner was no longer staying with that individual after the visa expired (Hollifield 2000, 126-7).

[8]Sarkozy was described as a political "pariah" after backing Edouard Balladur rather than Chirac in 1995, but became the "rising star of the right" under the Chirac presidency (Mondon 2013, 27).

Sarkozy defended the centerpiece of his law by saying that "selective immigration is a defense against racism" (quoted Marthaler 2008, 390). It also increased both the residence period before which family reunification is possible (from 12 to 18 months) and the waiting period before which permanent residents can apply for citizenship (from 2 to 4 years). Any migrants wishing to apply for permanent residence in France would need to demonstrate their ability to speak French and a commitment to French values, and any migrants wishing to enter France would need to first show they had the means to support themselves and family members (Chou and Baygert 2007, 5-7; Marthaler 2008, 391). Prior to 2006, illegal immigrants who had been in France for 10 years could be regularized; this provision was eliminated in the new law.

While passing immigration restrictions, Sarkozy also called for pro-multicultural measures such as allowing immigrants the right to vote and creating a French Muslim Council to better incorporate Islamic voices.[9] By the time Sarkozy ran for president in 2007, however, he had back-peddled, particularly once President Chirac commented that French citizenship is linked to the right to vote, and that integration policies should reject multiculturalism. Sarkozy opted to focus instead on his (more widely popular) immigration positions (Marthaler 2008, 389, 390). Mondon (2014, 303) says that no French politician borrowed from the *Front National* "with the consistency and eagerness that Sarkozy demonstrated" from the beginning of his 2007 campaign.

Sarkozy established the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity, and Co-Development shortly after taking office in 2007. This ministry was one of his campaign pledges, and made the explicit link between French national identity and immigration (one that had long been implicitly made in politics); 90% of right-wing voters and 50% of left-wing voters supported the ministry's formation (Marthaler 2008, 382). Other changes during Sarkozy's term included a greater number of expulsions of illegal immigrants and Roma, a law banning burqas in public places, and the prohibition of Muslim prayers on the streets (Shields 2013, 181). Sarkozy's measures were met with large majorities of support from both the center-right and far-right voters, so his efforts were not designed to capture the FN's space while sacrificing the UMP's (Marthaler 2008, 393).

During his two presidential campaigns (in 2007 and 2012), Sarkozy gave several speeches that lifted language from Jean-Marie and Marine Le Pen, respectively. Where Le Pen said "love France or leave it" in the 1980s, Sarkozy said that "people. . . should feel free to leave a country which they do not love" (quoted Marthaler 2008, 391). He even described himself as "neither left nor right" and a representative of the people of France, just as Le Pen had (Mondon 2013, 37).[10] In 2012, Sarkozy picked up on Marine Le Pen's use of halal meats as

[9]Marthaler (2008, 389) notes that it is unclear whether Sarkozy wanted to put his rivals on the defensive (by asking why they did not also support multicultural policies), to garner votes among the newly-enfranchised immigrants, or because he genuinely supported these measures.

[10]The left also ramped up its immigration talk during the 2007 campaign. The Socialist candidate for president, Ségolène Royal, outlined an immigration plan that was "more conciliatory than Sarkozy's," but with "little [else] to distinguish" it (Marthaler 2008, 391). She pledged to reinstate the ability of illegal immigrants to be regularized after 10 years, but on a case-by-case basis rather than automatically, as before,

a flashpoint and warned that the "civilization of the French Republic" was being threatened by immigration (Shields 2013, 183). Sarkozy's interior minister compared the annual influx of immigrants to the population of Rennes – a traditional FN comparison – and Marine Le Pen thanked him for agreeing with her (Mondon 2014, 305-6).[11] Paralleling the arguments made by the Dutch far right, for example, Sarkozy raised concerns about Islam in the guise of protecting women and French secularism (Mondon 2014, 310). Sarkozy was open about his attempts to court far-right voters, saying in 2006 that he would "go and get them one by one" if need be, and that he did not understand why critics said he was trying to appeal to the FN electorate: "that's entirely correct. Why shouldn't I talk to an electorate that was ours?" (Mondon 2013, 37).

As Marcus (1995, 142) points out, tougher anti-immigration rhetoric and policies can backfire if the government then does not fully deliver. He cites the Chirac government's failure to pass their Nationality Bill before the 1988 election as one such case that benefitted the FN. Borrowing from the FN was a successful plan in 2007, when 38% of voters who supported Le Pen in the 2002 election voted for Sarkozy instead, with 53% again voting for Le Pen (Marthaler 2008, 391). The same strategy failed five years later, as we see below. Sarkozy could not again pull large numbers of far-right supporters to his camp, as he was "unable to convince them that he could deliver" on his immigration promises (Mondon 2014, 313).

Mainstream-Right Parties' Alliances with the Far Right in France

As a result of the two-round electoral system, the FN is "often. . . in the enviable position of selling its support in the second round to the highest bidder," receiving either power or influence (or both) in return (Downs 2002, 42). Regional assemblies in France (the elected bodies of France's administrative regions) have been directly elected since 1986, giving the FN another level of government in which to have influence.[12] From 1986-98, these assemblies followed a PR system, allowing the FN to win enough seats to be a political player in a number of regions.[13] The mainstream right's willingness to make deals with the far right at the sub-national level has fluctuated in accordance with the mainstream right's strength relative to that of the Socialists, and, relatedly, with the strength of the FN. When the mainstream right is particularly strong, it does not need the support of the far right.

and proposed a variant of Sarkozy's "selective" immigration that would entail working more closely with sender nations.

[11] As in 2012, the Socialist candidate for president also made appeals to voters concerned about immigration. Before the second round of voting, François Hollande reminded voters that he had supported the burqa ban in 2010 and would "of course" keep the law in place. He added that it was "necessary, indeed essential" to have limits on economic migration to France (Mondon 2013, 40).

[12] These assemblies were dissolved in 2014, and regions are now governed by the set of département councils in that region.

[13] Before the 2004 elections, the move to a majoritarian system hurt the FN's chances, and the party lost 119 of its seats around the country (Ivaldi 2007, 176-7).

Although mainstream right parties may have preferred to not strike deals with the far right, this position was "almost impossible to maintain" from "the very earliest days of the [far right's] electoral breakthrough" (Schain 2002, 238-9). 1983 marked the first deal between the FN and the mainstream right, when, prior to the municipal elections, the RPR gave places on its lists to FN candidates. Most notably, FN secretary-general Jean-Pierre Stirbois was offered the number-two position on the RPR's list in Dreux, in northern France; 8 more FN candidates were included on the list. Stirbois had won 12% of the vote in the 1982 mayoral election, and the RPR wanted to ensure a separate FN list did not cost them the victory. The RPR-FN list campaigned to "reverse the flow of immigrants" in Dreux (Marcus 1995, 53).[14] This partnership, which resulted in three FN candidates being named as assistant mayors, was "tacit[ly]" approved by the national leaders of the UDF and RPR (Marcus 1995, 144; Schain 1999, 11).

Dreux set off divisions within the mainstream right about how whether to ally with the far right. These divisions were both internal to the parties, but also showed the tensions between the national and local arms of the mainstream-right parties. While many national elites denounced deals with the FN (e.g. Chirac saying cutting a deal with Le Pen on their Paris list would be an "unnatural alliance"), local elites understood the importance of making these alliances to secure their power and continued to rely on FN support to pass budgets (Marcus 1995, 133, 138-9). Hainsworth (2000, 20) characterized the mainstream right's approach to sub-national deals with the far right as "*laissez-faire*."

Voters supported the idea of alliances with the FN; a 1984 poll found 46% of UDF supporters and 62% of RPR supporters felt their parties should make a deal with Le Pen before the next parliamentary elections (Marcus 1995, 135). Chirac stressed that there was no alliance between the right and the far right, that no concessions had been made to the FN, and that regional deals, where they happened, were absolutely necessary to obtain a majority; Marcus (1995, 140) says this was "by no means the case" and points to a number of policy concessions made to the far right in these deals. Chirac denounced the FN's "simplistic, anti-immigration, pro-guillotine stances" while "turning a blind eye" to his party's deals with the far-right around the country (quoted in Downs 2002, 42). The FN won 137 regional council seats in 1986 and formally concluded an agreement with the RPR president in the region of Languedoc-Roussillon. Of the remaining 21 mainland regions, the FN secured governmental positions or other, lesser, positions of power in 10 (Schain 2002, 239).

The mainstream right has maintained alliances (or defended the need for alliances) with the far right even in the face of inflammatory declarations by the FN's leader. Jean-Marie Le Pen's now-infamous quote from September 1987, wherein he referred to gas chambers as a "minor detail" of World War II, prompted the French left to insist that the right abandon any collaboration with the FN. Though "shocked," the RPR and UDF accused the Socialists

[14] The right lost by only 8 votes to the Socialists in this election, but a new election was held later in 1983 after ballot irregularities were discovered. The RPR reversed its initial decision to run a joint list and competed on its own in this second election, but after Stirbois and the FN won almost 17% of the vote in the first round, the national UDF and RPR representatives endorsed a joint list for the second round, which ultimately won (Marcus 1995, 53-4).

of exploiting Le Pen for their own gain, and the UDF president said ending regional alliances with the far right would be an "absurdity" (quoted Marcus 1995, 142-3). Before the 1988 national elections, the RPR and UDF announced they would jointly contest seats, running only one mainstream-right candidate in each constituency, and would refuse any deals with the FN. Despite this pronouncement, some mainstream right candidates decided to stand down in the second round when beaten by the FN candidate in the first round (Marcus 1995, 63-4). After yet another reference to the gas chambers, this time after the election – Le Pen called RPR minister Michel Durafour "*Durafour-crematoire*" - the RPR announced in September 1988 that it condemned deals with the FN and disciplined two local politicians who had tried to make deals with the far right (Marcus 1995, 146). These regional alliances continued for several more years, despite the pressure from the national party.

The right's stance shifted after the 1992 regional election, wherein the RPR/UDF won 20 of 22 regional presidencies in a landslide election. This prompted some of the regional presidents to renounce their deals with the FN (Marcus 1995, 148). Ivaldi (2007, 170, 172) points to a "significant shift... toward a clearer refusal by top-level leaders of the mainstream right" to ally with the FN, and the use of "neither Le Pen, nor Mitterrand" to describe the mainstream right's strategy. This coincided, however, with changing electoral fortunes for the mainstream right. The mainstream right parties continued their dominance over the left in the 1993 parliamentary elections, going from a total of 255 seats in 1988 to 449 in 1993 (80.6%; 242 RPR seats and 207 UDF seats). The Socialists retained only 53 seats, down from 260 in 1988. With such an enormous gap between themselves and the mainstream left, the right could easily denounce Le Pen and the FN – strong stances against alliances are easily made from a position of power.

By 1997, the situation had shifted again. The Socialists won 38.2% of the second-round vote in the 1997 election, and with their left-wing partners, controlled more than half of the seats in parliament. Mainstream-right elites began to suggest that their parties needed to appeal to far-right voters in order to win future elections (Mayer 1998, 21). The National Front was expected to perform well in the 1998 regional elections, having won majorities in four city councils in the southern part of France from 1995-97 (Ivaldi 2007, 167). Valery Giscard d'Estaing, then president of the Auvergne region of France, appointed 37 FN regional councilors to assorted posts (such as school boards) in his region in early 1998; he hoped that this favor would secure him far-right support in the election (Schain 2002, 235). The far right took part in 5 of the 22 regions' governing coalitions after the 1998 election, despite "direct prohibition" from the RPR and UDF national elites, and two "major speeches" from Chirac opposing such collaboration (Schain 2002, 239). One mainstream-right leader justified the willingness to align with the FN in regional elections by pointing to the Socialists' alliance with the Communists, reformed in 1998, by saying "it is worse to be taken hostage by the Communists rather than the *Front National*" (quoted in Ivaldi 2007, 178). This parallels comments made by an RPR minister in 1984, who said that Le Pen, at least, had not taken orders from abroad as the French Communists had, thus making them a more reasonable partner for electoral alliances (Marcus 1995, 138).

The mainstream right, led by Chirac, decided in 1998 that the sub-national alliances

with the far right would not be tolerated. Three UDF politicians were elected to regional council presidencies in 1998 with the support of the FN, and were then actually expelled from the party by the more centrist faction.[15] This prompted President Chirac to appeal to the mainstream "republican" right to listen to the "voice of their conscience" rather than play "political games" and make deals with the FN (Hainsworth and Mitchell 2000, 454). The "republican front" alliance of left and right against the far right lasted until 2011. During this period, however, the mainstream right did not need the support of the far right: The RPR/UDF (or UMP) was comfortably ahead of the Socialists in national elections, and could exclude the FN without paying a significant cost. This policy ended in 2011, after President Sarkozy decided he could benefit from the FN's support – though, as the next section shows, his refusal to formally strike a deal after the 2012 presidential elections ultimately cost him a second term.

The 2012 Election and Future of the *Front National*

The UMP's refusal to ally with the FN – all the while, borrowing heavily from the latter's agenda – took a hit in 2012, and may end up as another turning point in the mainstream right's strategy. Although scholars were skeptical of the FN's ability to survive after Jean-Marie Le Pen's exit from politics (e.g. Ivaldi 2007, 184), his daughter Marine has maintained – and improved upon, in many cases – the party's fortunes. Marine Le Pen became leader in 2011 and revamped the FN's party program, removing references to policies such as forced repatriation for legal immigrants and review of previously-granted naturalizations (Shields 2013, 191). More than half of the country deemed the FN to be a "party like the others" in a 2012 survey, and majorities of both UMP and FN voters interested in an electoral agreement between the two parties (Shields 2013, 192).

Seeing the popularity of Marine Le Pen, and knowing that co-optation of FN themes was successful in 2007, Sarkozy made a number of immigration pledges during his 2012 campaign: to cut legal immigration by 50%, restrict immigrants' eligibility for state benefits, scale back family reunification, and to consider withdrawal from the Schengen Agreements, which allow for free movement among member states in Europe (Hewlett 2012, 409). At the same time, Marine Le Pen engaged in the "de-demonization" of her father's party. She softened the party's previous socially conservative policies, such as opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage, and reached out to Jewish communities in France after dropping the FN's anti-Semitic stances. While still strongly opposed to immigration and French involvement in the EU, the FN no longer takes overtly racist positions, giving the party a more acceptable public face.

Abandoning the "republican front," Sarkozy instead promoted a strategy of "*ni, ni,*" (neither, nor) for the 2012 presidential election. This idea had been in place since the 2011 cantonal elections (where the FN won 1.3 million first-round votes, and nearly one million second-round votes): He would neither encourage vote shifting to the left, nor to the far

[15] The right wing of the UDF formed a short-lived party and eventually merged into the UMP in 2002.

right, in the second round of run-off elections. Marine Le Pen indicated she was willing to discuss coalition deals with the UMP prior to the election, but the mainstream right rejected this offer (Shields 2013, 188). This decision is thought to have sealed Sarkozy's fate.

Sarkozy was able to retain the support of many traditional conservative voters, but those leaning toward the FN were "sufficiently disillusioned" with Sarzoky, and voted instead for the far right (Hewlett 2012, 409). Marine Le Pen did not instruct her supporters to vote in a particular way in the second round, but did announce that she would spoil her ballot. With an additional 20% of Le Pen first round voters, Sarkozy would have beaten Hollande in 2012 (Shields 2013, 184-5). This represented the first time that the mainstream right paid a price for refusing to ally with the far right at the national level: Polling data have shown that the number of votes moving from the right to the far right after the first round was smaller than the right's margin of victory in 1995 for Chirac and 2007 for Sarkozy, ensuring victories. Le Pen's edging out of Lionel Jospin in 2002 to advance to the second round handed Chirac re-election in a contest he was "far from certain to win," had he faced Jospin in the second round (Shields 2013, 184-5). In these earlier elections, the mainstream right did not need to form an alliance with the FN to win. The major right-wing parties in France have responded to the far-right FN with their own interests in mind: Borrowing popular far-right rhetoric to win voters and only steadfastly refusing to make deals when the far right (rightly or wrongly) was not viewed as making a difference to the ultimate outcome.

In the 2012 legislative elections, *Front National* candidates stood in all but 6 of the 577 constituencies, qualifying for the second round in 61, or just over 10%, 32 of which were three-way contests including a left-wing and a UMP candidate. The FN results were impressive, considering the electoral rules had again been changed in 2003 to disadvantage small parties: Rather than needing 12.5% of the vote to advance to the second round, candidates now needed 12.5% of registered voters – a much steeper task, particularly when facing a 42% abstention rate in the first round of the 2012 election (Shields 2013, 188).[16] Although the FN won 13.6% of the first-round votes, it won only two seats in the legislature when the election had concluded. Shields (2013, 189) contrasts this with the vote share of three other parties that also won two seats each; their first-round totals ranged from 0.6% to 1.8%, but all three benefitted from some amount of cooperation with larger parties.

What might the future hold for the FN's success? The faces of the new-look FN, like Marine Le Pen and her niece, Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, are not tainted by associations with the fascist past in France, nor did they grow up in the revolutionary-minded 1960s France (see Shields 2013, 190). This separation, if lessons are to be drawn from far-right parties elsewhere in Western Europe, bodes well for their ability to attract voters who may have previously found the FN distasteful.[17] The twice-divorced Marine Le Pen – which alone flies in the face of traditional FN values – has endeavored to cut off racist and anti-Semitic

[16] For a first-round victory, a candidate must receive at least 50% of the vote as well as 25% of registered voters' support (not only the voters who cast ballots) to avoid a run-off.

[17] Although the party name remains the same, the transformation could result in the type of success recent Dutch far-right parties have had and early far-right parties did not, as a result of their associations with the inter-war government in the Netherlands.

factions within the party. This has boosted her party's popularity among female voters, a typically hard-to-attract segment for any far-right party. Sarzoky's moves rightward and the revamped look of the FN under Marine Le Pen have "blurr[ed] the boundaries" between the right and far-right in France (Hewlett 2012, 414). Unlike her father, Marine Le Pen is "increasingly [viewed] as a credible contender" (Mondon 2014, 313). Sarkozy himself deemed Marine Le Pen's FN a "democratic party" that was "compatible with the Republic" (Mondon 2014, 311), so national-level agreements between the right and far right are not as unthinkable as they may have been ten years ago – provided that the FN manages to win seats in the legislature.

Although the French two-round system disadvantages the *Front National*, it is less unfavorable to the far right than is the British electoral system. The level of electoral pressure necessary for the mainstream right to strike deals with the far right is greater in a pure majoritarian (first-past-the-post) system than in the two-round system, contributing to the different responses in these two countries.

7.2 The mainstream right and far right in the United Kingdom

The electoral fate of British far-right parties parallels that of the Dutch far-right parties: With publics and elites less willing to tolerate anything that felt like neo-fascism than, for example, in the Austrian case, far-right parties faced large hurdles to respectability. It was not until the 2000s that far-right parties were able to make electoral breakthroughs in either country, in large part because they were completely divorced from the fascist legacies of other far-right parties. Immigration has been a political issue in the UK for much longer than in the Netherlands, however, and that resulted in mainstream-right borrowing of the issue as early as the 1960s, beginning most prominently in the 1970s. This section illustrates how the British Conservatives have picked up immigration when public opinion has moved in that direction, often without prompting from the far right, and how they began to consider electoral "coalition" deals with the far right after the latter posed an electoral threat in 2010.

Parties and Elections in the United Kingdom

The United Kingdom's first-past-the-post electoral system presents an even more difficult hurdle to representation for small parties than does the French system, as a party must win more seats in a constituency than any other party to win the seat. Unless a small party is geographically concentrated, like the Scottish National Party or Plaid Cymru, winning even one Westminster seat is incredibly difficult. Contemporary British politics have been dominated by the two major mainstream parties, the Conservatives on the right and Labour on the left.

The first several decades of the far right in the British post-war period featured parties that could possibly be classified as "extreme right," in that they were also anti-democratic.[18] The British National Front was formed in 1967 by members of two post-war fascist organizations, and focused initially on extreme nationalism and anti-Semitism, soon adding anti-immigrant positions when it was clear the public responded to statements like that of Enoch Powell and were fearful of continued race riots in the country (Copsey 1997, 110). John Tyndall became NF leader in 1970; Tyndall had been active in later-banned paramilitary groups and the National Socialist Movement in the 1960s, until deciding that "open Nazism" would not take root as a political movement in the UK (Copsey 1997, 112; Eatwell 2004, 63). Copsey (1997, 113) points to latent support for the NF in the late 1970s, with as many as 15% of survey respondents saying "it would be good for Britain if some NF candidates were elected to parliament," but lacking even a "modicum of legitimacy," the support remained latent.

The National Front had dissolved into factionalism (between the more- and less-extreme members) by the late 1970s, and Tyndall decided to form a new party, the British National Party (BNP) (Eatwell 2004, 65). The BNP carried many of the agenda items of the NF: support for the death penalty, forced repatriation of legal immigrants, and bans on abortion and homosexuality. Tyndall's new party was, perhaps unsurprisingly, electorally unsuccessful. The BNP had won just one local council seat since its founding in 1982. The party rank-and-file wanted a leader who could improve their standing, and by the end of the 1990s, felt that Tyndall was no longer the one who could deliver (Copsey 2007, 66). He was replaced in 1999 by Nick Griffin, a former NF activist, who set out to revitalize the BNP. For example, a central BNP theme was biological racism, but Griffin announced in 2001 that the BNP "does not claim that any one race is superior to any other, simply that they are different" (quoted Eatwell 2004, 69).

Griffin focused his energy on local elections, with early success. The BNP won more than ten local council seats from 2001-03, became the second-largest party in the town of Burnley, and narrowly lost the 2002 mayoral race in Stoke (Eatwell 2004, 62). Griffin also strategically targeted his party toward economically disadvantaged (often Labour-dominated) areas of England, and engaged in community-based strategies like those employed by the far-right FN in France and FPÖ in Austria (Goodwin 2014, 890, 896). He also tried to professionalize the BNP by training rank-and-file members and shedding the party's 'hooligan' image. Despite Griffin's efforts, scholars still believe the party is run by "fascist extremists who pass themselves off as respective members of a legitimate political party" (Copsey 2007, 61). Notably, Griffin was convicted of distributing material likely to incite racial hatred in 1998 (though acquitted of similar charges seven years later), and the party was court-ordered to modify its whites-only membership policy in early 2010.

While the BNP was making efforts to move away from the extremes, a single-issue, Euroskeptic party began moving toward the far right. Prompted by his opposition to the

[18] See Mudde (2007, 24) for definitions, and Eatwell (2004, 62) for reasons why the extreme right and fascists in Britain have long been unsuccessful.

Maastricht Treaty, history professor and Bruges Group (an anti-EU think tank) member Alan Sked formed the UK Independence Party in 1993, aiming to remove Britain from the EU. UKIP's early electoral results were lackluster, with just three MEPs elected in 1999, but the party won 16% of the vote in the 2004 EP election. UKIP is considered by experts to have evolved into a far-right party around the time of the 2005 election (see, e.g., Ford and Goodwin 2014, Ch. 2) as a way to attract more Conservative voters, after realizing it needed to broaden its policy appeals – rather than focusing solely on the EU – and that many right-wing Conservatives were unhappy with the more moderate David Cameron as leader.[19]

With Nigel Farage's election in 2006 as UKIP leader, the party's fortunes improved.[20] Farage's goal was to take UKIP from a single-issue, anti-EU party to one with serious positions on domestic issues, and proposed measures such as a flat tax, plus a five-year immigration freeze while criticizing the political establishment for ignoring the preferences of the British public – common far-right themes (Lynch, Whitaker and Loomes 2012, 736). This shift prompted Tory leader David Cameron to call UKIP a party full of "fruitcakes and loonies, and closet racists, mostly" in a 2006 interview. UKIP founder Sked agreed with Cameron, saying "there is a trend of this party to the far right. After I left it became much, much more in evidence and it is in evidence today." Farage defended his party's ability to talk about immigration without being an extremist party (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 84).

Farage left his position as leader in 2009 to focus on winning a seat in the upcoming general election, and his replacement, former Conservative peer Lord Pearson of Rannoch, pushed the party further to the far right. He advocated for a burqa ban in the UK and invited Dutch far-right leader Geert Wilders to speak in the House of Lords and show his controversial film, *Fitna*.[21] Pearson's anti-Islamic stances did not sit well with all UKIP members, who felt he had taken a step too far toward the BNP, crossing the line they worked hard to maintain. UKIP rank-and-file were also displeased with a privileged peer representing them, and their frustrations reached a critical point just before the 2010 election. Pearson had asked UKIP candidates to stand down in favor of Eurosceptic Tory candidates, and went as far as to ask voters in certain regions to cast their votes for these Conservatives rather than the UKIP candidates (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 86). Pearson resigned a few months after the election, aware that he was both unpopular and ill-equipped for the position (having never held elected office), and Farage was re-elected.

[19]Ford and Goodwin (2014, 70-71) place this move after the 2005 election, when UKIP finished behind the BNP in nearly three-quarters of the seats contested by both parties. The 2005 UKIP manifesto does address a number of far-right themes, such as wanting to "approach zero net immigration" and give migrants a "Britishness" test, that were absent in earlier manifestos (UK Independence Party 2005, 7). That said, these elements were in the fifth section of the manifesto and were clearly not the centerpiece. The shift was clearly in place by the 2009 European Parliament election, and so the 2010 general election will also be used here as the first contested by the far-right UKIP.

[20]Farage was a founding member of UKIP and first served elected office as a UKIP MEP in 1999. He was re-elected as an MEP in 2004, 2009, and 2014.

[21]The Home Office banned Wilders from entering the country on security grounds, though Wilders appealed and was allowed entry in 2010.

Although UKIP and the BNP have drawn their support from very similar bases in the past decade, disaffected Tory voters (particularly middle-aged, Eurosceptic voters) and women are more likely to support UKIP than the BNP (see Ford, Goodwin and Cutts 2012, 205-7 for a review of the data). This has led to the popular saying that UKIP is simply "the BNP in blazers." A key advantage for UKIP is that the party is not tainted by associations with fascism, unlike both the NF and BNP. This "reputational shield" makes UKIP a more acceptable option in the eyes of the public (Ford, Goodwin and Cutts 2012, 228).

Year	Party	Vote %
1983	NF	0.1
1987[a]	BNP	0.0
	NF	0.0
1992	BNP	0.1
1997	BNP	0.1
2001	BNP	0.2
2005	BNP	0.7
2010	UKIP[b]	3.1
	BNP	1.9

Table 7.2: British far-right parties' election results, 1983-2010

[a] The BNP won just 553 votes, and the NF 286 votes, out of more than 32 million votes cast.

[b] Before its ideological move, UKIP won 0.3% in 1997, 1.5% in 2001, and 2.2% in 2005.

UKIP has been, by far, the most palatable far-right party in the post-war UK, and its greatest national result to-date was 3.1% of the vote in the 2010 elections (Table 7.2). On the other hand, this made UKIP the fourth-most popular party in these elections, based on vote share.

The Conservatives and Immigration

The Conservatives' main goal when discussing immigration was, until just a few years ago, to demonstrate how they were better-suited than Labour to handle the issue and to respond to public concerns. As immigration would move in and out of the set of issues about which the public cared, the Conservatives would correspondingly ramp up (or all-but ignore) the topic. The two major British parties have, for many decades, pursued relatively similar immigration policies, though the Conservatives have tended to use harsher language (Smith 2008, 416). This changed in 2010, when the Conservatives needed to address a serious right-wing challenger – UKIP – on immigration for the first time, and their immigration agenda shifted correspondingly.

The Conservatives, not unlike other catch-all major right-wing parties in Europe, need to strike a careful balance between appealing to those on the rightmost wing who want

immigration restrictions, and the more moderate segment (made up of people with business interests in low-cost labor – and thus, more immigration – and those who feel the 'race card' is distasteful), which tends to include much of the party's elite. Bale (2013, 33) notes that Margaret Thatcher's famous statement about British people being "really rather afraid... [of the UK being] rather swamped by people with a different culture" was a statement more popular among the party grassroots than the party elite.

Immigration has been a politicized issue in Britain for much longer than in most Western European countries, dating back to the 1950s. For the first few decades, however, it was almost exclusively a racial issue following de-colonization, and did not become the sort of issue we think of today until the late 1970s. One of the earliest and most well-known Conservative statements about immigration was made by Enoch Powell (formerly a cabinet minister under Macmillan) in 1968, when he discussed the implications of the Race Relations Act (passed in 1965 and updated in 1968, which outlawed racial discrimination in the UK) and the predicted 3.5 million new Commonwealth immigrants arriving in the next two decades. Powell singled out the "Sikh communities' campaign to maintain customs inappropriate in Britain," and famously warned of "the river Tiber foaming with much blood" (Powell 1968).

After Powell's 'rivers of blood' speech, the Conservatives 'won' the issue and were viewed by the public as being toughest on immigration (Eatwell 2010, 219). Back in office after the 1970 election, the party "hinted" at a tighter policy for immigration and promised to revisit nationality legislation, though did not pursue this before being ousted by Labour in 1974 (Bale 2013, 31). The 1979 Conservative manifesto came at a time of increasing public anxiety over immigration and explicitly detailed restrictive policy moves: a quota system for immigrants, a promise to introduce a new Nationality Act defining rights to citizenship, eliminating permanent residency for temporary residents, and essentially limiting family reunification to wives and children under 18 (Conservative Party 1979). The Thatcher government followed through, and passed the British Nationality Act in 1981. This act modified the rule of *jus soli* such that British citizenship would only be automatically granted to a child born in the UK if at least one parent was a British citizen or permanent resident. Tory strength on immigration and nationalism during the Thatcher administration provided yet another blow to the extreme/far-right parties in the 1980s, particularly after the Falklands War (Eatwell 2004, 65-6).

By the late 1990s and early 2000s, the public focus had shifted to worries about multiculturalism and asylum; the UK was the main target of asylum seekers entering the EU in 2002 (Eatwell 2004, 70). The opposition Conservatives needed an issue on which they could draw support, given the sizable advantage enjoyed by Labour on issues like the economy (Bale 2013, 31). They settled on immigration, even though they were beginning to lose their strong issue-ownership advantage, due to the last Conservative administration's (under John Major) reluctance to use the "race card" (Eatwell 2010, 220). The party focused on "bogus" asylum seekers, the influx of migrants expected after the 2004 EU enlargement, and the need for a points-based immigration system.[22]

[22]For their part, after being accused of having a "soft touch" on asylum by the media (and the Conserva-

The 2005 Conservative campaign was led by Michael Howard, and their main cry on immigration was that talking about immigration did not make them racist (Figure 7.1 was the introduction to the immigration section of the 2005 manifesto). Howard portrayed the Liberal Democrats and Labour as willing to allow an unlimited number of migrants into the UK, and argued for both a points-based migration system and a quota for asylum seekers (Smith 2008, 422-3).

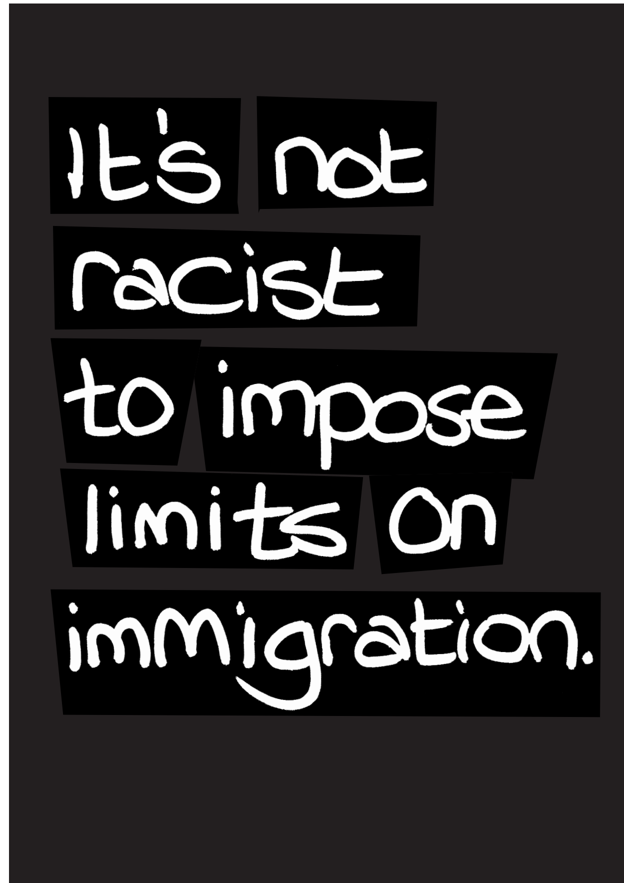

Figure 7.1: Immigration tagline in the Conservative Party manifesto, 2005

Source: Conservative Party (2005, 18).

The Conservatives were able to hold steady against the right-wing challenge from the BNP and UKIP in 2005, but lost more liberal voters, as well as ethnic minority voters, to

tives, such as in William Hague's "foreign land" speech), Tony Blair's government took a series of steps to adjust this perception. One such policy was the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, which cracked down in several ways: Asylum seekers would be dispersed around the UK rather than being allowed to concentrate in London and would no longer receive welfare benefits, but weekly food vouchers. The ability for officials to detain people was increased, and anyone bringing illegal immigrants into the country would be fined £2,000 per person.

the Liberal Democrats and to Labour as a result of their campaign (Eatwell 2010, 220). The failure of this strategy prompted a strong reversal in focus and tone from the Tories. David Cameron was elected as Conservative leader after the 2005 election, winning two-thirds of the vote. While immigration tended to be an effective point of attack against the increasingly-unpopular Labour government, Cameron wanted to replace the "megaphone" with the "dog whistle," though he had been responsible for the 2005 manifesto (Bale 2013, 31-2; Eatwell 2010, 220). His victory was viewed as a new approach to immigration and a broad "decontamination" strategy for the party to ensure liberal-minded Conservative voters remained in their camp (Gruber and Bale 2014, 241-2). Cameron appointed a left-leaning MP as his shadow immigration spokesperson, and shifted the focus to Labour's mismanagement of immigration. The shadow cabinet criticized the effect of Labour's "open approach" to immigration on housing and public services (Smith 2008, 424).[23]

During the last Labour term (2005-10), immigration was consistently one of the top issues of concern in public polling, frequently one of the top two (Carey and Geddes 2010, 853). Both the BNP and UKIP won seats in the 2009 European Parliament election, a bell-wether of sorts for the next British general election (the BNP won 6.3% of the vote and 2 seats, while UKIP won 16.6% of the vote – good for second place behind the Tories – and 13 seats; see Table 7.4). The Conservatives decided to switch tactics, and address these parties directly by telling voters they should support the Tories rather than the far right. Cameron told an audience in May 2009 that a vote for the BNP was a vote for "a bunch of fascists" (Eatwell 2010, 220). By the time of the 2010 election, Cameron had "dialed down the rhetoric but pumped up the policy" on immigration, in an effort to attract those who might defect to UKIP while still appealing to the traditional Conservative voter (Bale 2013, 32).

The 2010 British General Election and the Future of UKIP

Deals between the mainstream right and far right in the UK never received any thought before UKIP's far-right turn. Even when the NF and BNP had small (generally isolated) successes, they never represented "truly serious" competition for the Conservatives (Gruber and Bale 2014, 237-8). UKIP became more of a threat to the Conservatives in 2010 because the party had hit on issues that resonated with traditional Conservative voters and, importantly, because UKIP began to pursue a more effective strategy of campaigning. As recently as the 2005 general election, UKIP "had hardly bothered" to interact with and rally supporters, while even the BNP produced leaflets and knocked on doors. Farage wanted to build the party from the ground up and established local centers and grassroots campaigns, researching local opinion and putting up billboards (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 70, 94, 242-3). The party could not indefinitely run candidates for hundreds of seats without some kind of

[23] The Labour governments of both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown passed immigration restrictions during this time. The Borders, Citizenship, and Immigration Act, for example, was passed in 2009 and added new requirements for citizenship. Previously, someone would have been eligible to apply for British citizenship after five years of residence, but under this act, would now have to earn points to qualify for citizenship (through civic contributions, economic or other skills, etc.).

result; UKIP ran in 489 constituencies but received its deposit back – meaning won at least 5% of the vote – in only 7.8%, costing the party £225,000 ("How UKIP became a British political force" 2013).

The 2010 election was a turning point for relations between the mainstream right and UKIP. Table **??** shows the number of seats where 1) the Conservatives lost the constituency to another party and 2) the margin of victory over the Conservatives was smaller than the number of votes won by the far right in that constituency. In other words, this table shows the number of seats where the Conservatives would have won the seat, had the far-right voters instead supported them. For example, a constituency where Labour beat the Conservatives by 1,000 votes, but also where the far right won 2,000 votes, would be included in the table. It is, of course, not realistic to assume that all far-right voters would have voted Conservative, or even voted in the election at all rather than abstaining. Table **??** thus also presents a tougher standard (column 4): the number of seats where, if the Conservatives had 50% of the far-right vote (or less), they would have won the seat.

Year	**Tory seats**	**Needed for majority**	**FR pivotal seats**	**FR pivotal, needing <50%**
1970	330	0	2	1
1974[a]	297	21	2	1
	277	41	2	0
1979	339	0	6	3
1983	397	0	1	1
1987	376	0	0	0
1992	336	0	1	0
1997	165	165	0	0
2001	166	164	0	0
2005[b]	198	125	6	2
2010	306	19	40	19

Table 7.3: Conservatives' loss margins relative to the far right, 1970-2010

Far-right parties included in this table are UKIP (2005-10), BNP (1983-2010), and NF (1970-1992)

[a] There were two elections in 1974 after a hung parliament, wherein the first-place Labour Party fell 17 seats short of a majority (301, with 318 needed) and was unable to govern as a minority party. The top 1974 row comes from the February election and the bottom from the October election.

The number of seats where the far right was relevant does jump in 2005 if we include UKIP – to 26 total, and 14 where less than 50% of the far-right vote would be needed to win – but this is still significantly short of the 125 total seats needed for a Conservative majority.

The most important line in Table **??** is the last, where we see that, for the first time, the Conservatives could have benefitted from even a portion of the far-right vote share. In every prior election contested by at least one far-right party, with the exception of 1974,

the Conservatives either had a comfortable majority or were significantly shy of a majority in the Commons. In both 1974 elections, even though the Conservatives were closer to a majority, the far right NF was a non-factor in the elections. Many Conservatives felt UKIP denied them the outright victory in 2010 (Gruber and Bale 2014, 242). Farage had offered a pre-electoral pact with the Conservatives before the 2010 election, wherein he would stand down UKIP candidates in areas where the Conservatives were most in need of these votes in exchange for a guaranteed referendum on EU membership. This offer was not taken seriously by the Conservatives.

As part of his grassroots approach, Farage decided UKIP should focus on by-elections and highlight immigration, rather than Europe. This strategy was first attempted in 2009, where the party won 11.8% in a by-election (just two months after winning 16.5% in the EP election), a result that encouraged Farage to contest by-elections in earnest after the next general election (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 242-3). In the 20 by-elections held between 2011 and 2014, UKIP contested all but one, came in second eight times, and won twice.[24] In two of the second-place victories, UKIP's share of the seats was larger than the Conservative's margin by which it lost to Labour.[25] Perhaps most notably, in the five 2014 by-elections, UKIP won two – in Clacton and in Rochester and Strood, both constituencies where a Tory MP defected to UKIP and contested their seats as a result – and came in second in the other three. Ford and Goodwin (2014, 246) portray UKIP's performance in by-elections as going from "amusing sideshow" to "genuine threat" in the eyes of the mainstream parties and the media.

Year	**Party**	**Vote %**
1989	NF	0.01
1994	-	-
1999	BNP	1.1
2004	BNP	4.9
2009	UKIP	16.6
	BNP	6.3
2014	UKIP	26.6
	BNP	1.1

Table 7.4: British far-right parties' European Parliament election results, 1983-2010

UKIP's successes in by-elections continued, and the Conservative administration further stepped up its immigration strategy in response, including the "go home" campaign, which involved billboard vans (along with actual billboards and posters) threatening illegal immigrants with expulsion if they did not voluntarily leave the UK (Figure 7.2). Cameron's

[24]UKIP did not contest the one Scottish by-election.

[25]This happened first in Eastleigh in February 2013, where Labour bested the third-place Conservatives by 2,783 votes, and UKIP won 11,571, and then again in Heywood and Middleton in October 2014, where a share of UKIP's 11,016 votes could have benefitted the Conservatives.

government promised to cut migration levels from the "hundreds to the tens of thousands" (quoted Gruber and Bale 2014, 238). These moves were a "clear indication of the Tories' willingness to make policy concessions to UKIP" to ensure they would remain in office after the 2015 elections (Gruber and Bale 2014, 241). UKIP was the first-place party after the 2014 EP election, winning 27.5% of the vote and 24 seats, compared to Labour's 20 and the Conservatives' 19 seats.[26]

Figure 7.2: "Go home" vans (Conservative-Lib Dem coalition, 2013)

Source: Hope (2013).

Prompted by UKIP's successes in these and local elections, the idea of an pact between the Conservatives and UKIP gained traction in the media. Cameron has continued to reject the idea, saying in 2013 he wants to give voters "a clear choice," and in 2014 that the Tories "don't do pacts and deals. We are fighting for an all-out win" (Stewart 2013; "No Conservative pact with UKIP, says David Cameron" 2014). These statements could be interpreted as saying he would consider them after the election, if the numbers warranted such an alliance, and in early 2015, the prime minister (and his Chancellor of the Exchequer) refused to explicitly rule out a post-election partnership with UKIP (Chorley 2015). Farage insisted in February 2015 that he would not consider joining a coalition, "no matter how tempting ministerial cars may be," adding that UKIP would "only do a deal [support a minority government] with anyone on the condition that there is an in/out referendum on the EU" – a referendum Cameron has promised will take place by 2017 ("Ukip 'will not enter a coalition"' 2015). Cameron appealed directly to disaffected Conservative voters in the weeks before the 2015 election, urging them to "come home" and avoid a Labour government (Dominiczak 2015).

Gruber and Bale (2014, 250) point out one possible solution for the Conservatives: replacing Cameron as leader, as many UKIP-sympathetic Conservatives feel Cameron is much

[26]UKIP supporters in EP elections are not necessarily "core" UKIP voters who will also support the party in Westminster elections, but this first-place victory certainly did not go unnoticed by the Conservatives. See Ford et al. (2012) for details on the two UKIP electorates.

further away from their values than is UKIP, and do not feel he has done a good job as prime minister (Webb and Bale 2014, 964). At present, UKIP "can hardly be dismissed as a distraction" (Gruber and Bale 2014, 249). But what does the future hold for the party? Pre-election polls indicate UKIP could win more than 10% of the vote at the 2015 general election, and it may be difficult to improve upon that number in future elections. In addition to the obvious electoral hurdles UKIP faces, many of their core supporters live in traditionally safe seats: urban areas in the North and Midlands for the blue-collar voters, typically won by Labour, and pensioners in the southern coastal regions, typically won by the Conservatives (Ford and Goodwin 2014, 255).

The shift in the Conservatives' behavior since 2010 demonstrates that the party will behave strategically to fend off threats from its extreme. Neither the National Front nor the British National Party ever posed a legitimate electoral threat to the mainstream right, and so the Tories behaved accordingly. They picked up immigration when the public mood shifted in that direction, in an effort to show they were more qualified than Labour on the issue, and downplayed immigration when public concerns abated. Until UKIP, the far right's history and messages were too extreme to have widespread resonance among the British public. The UK's first-past-the-post shelters the mainstream right from far-right parties. However, the past few years have shown that, if the far right can overcome the hurdle of respectability – which better enables it to overcome the electoral hurdles – the Conservative Party will not pay a cost to keep the far right on the outskirts of British politics.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that, even though majoritarian systems disadvantage far-right parties, these parties are still able to electorally threaten the mainstream right parties. When this occurs, the major right-wing parties respond in the same way as major parties in proportional systems: They borrow from the far right's agenda, and they consider "coalition" deals. Although no such deals have been struck at the national level, it is only in the past few years that the far right in France and in the United Kingdom has been able to garner enough votes to potentially cost the mainstream right a national election victory. In the end, the *cordon sanatoria* around the far right may have held longer than elsewhere in Western Europe, but only because of the effects of majoritarian electoral systems – not because these mainstream-right parties were more committed to excluding the far right.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: Mainstream and Extreme Parties in Western Europe

This dissertation has argued that the major mainstream right parties in Western Europe approach the far-right parties in a highly pragmatic way. When the far right becomes an electoral threat, the mainstream right will borrow from their positions. When a coalition including the far right offers more preferable policy outcomes for the mainstream right than other options, the mainstream right will aspire to bring them into government. The far right will only be excluded so long as doing so is relatively costless for the mainstream right: The mainstream right parties will not sacrifice important policy or office goals in order to isolate the far right. For this reason, as the far right's electoral clout has grown, the mainstream right has moved to forge alliances with surprising alacrity – in many cases, even when other governing coalitions were available.

This argument has been illustrated through analysis of 14 elections in Austria and the Netherlands, as well as extensions to France and the United Kingdom, both countries with majoritarian electoral systems. In this concluding chapter, I extend the logic to the major mainstream left parties. There is not something particular to the mainstream right that makes them behave a certain way with respect to the far right; we see that the major left parties prioritize office and policy when deciding on coalition options, also. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the continued potential for mainstream right parties to borrow from and collaborate with far-right parties.

8.1 The mainstream left and extreme parties

There are fewer instances of major mainstream-left parties contemplating electoral deals with far-left parties than there are comparable situations on the right. This is not the case because major left-wing parties have a different goal calculus than major right-wing parties, but simply because there are far fewer far-left parties in recent decades of Western European politics than far-right parties, and, further, because the far left tends to be less electorally

successful than the far right. The examples we have do illustrate, however, that left-wing parties behave just like right-wing parties in their pursuit of office and policy when dealing with electorally threatening extremist parties, as shown in this section.

The Austrian SPÖ and FPÖ

We can begin with an unusual case - the sole example of a coalition between a major left-wing party and a far right party, that of the Austrian SPÖ and FPÖ, which governed from 1983-86. As explained in Chapter 3 (Section 5), the FPÖ was not firmly considered a far-right party until 1986, when Jörg Haider was elected leader and redirected the FPÖ (prompting the SPÖ chancellor to dissolve the coalition), which is why the analysis in Chapter 5 begins with the 1986 election. It is true that the FPÖ took a more "liberal turn" during the early 1980s, trying to model itself after the German FDP (Art 2006, 178).Yet, the FPÖ was still the post-war incarnation of the pan-German *Lager* – home of the Nazis during the interwar period, causing the Allied occupiers to ban their participation in the first post-war elections. Art (2006, 178-9) notes that, while the FPÖ elites may have liberalized in the 1970s, the party's base did not. Thus, it is still worth exploring this what factors led to the mainstream left's decision to ally with the FPÖ – although some of the party elite were not on the far-right side, the overwhelming majority of the party rank-and-file, as well as the party's base, were.

A new leader, Alexander Götz, brought the FPÖ "sharply to the right" in 1978 in the hopes of forming a coalition with the ÖVP after the 1979 elections (Pulzer 1983, 276). This effort failed when the SPÖ won an outright majority of seats, prompting Götz's replacement with the more liberal Norbert Steger, left to oversee the tensions between the German-nationalist wing and the liberal wing of the FPÖ. He tried to appeal to a "new middle class" and even secured the FPÖ's (short-lived) membership in Liberal International, but Steger's course was increasingly unpopular within the FPÖ and with voters, and the party received its lowest-ever vote total (5%) in 1983 (Pulzer 1983, 276). Steger genuinely wanted to steer the FPÖ away from the right and appeal to center-left voters, even if it meant alienating the right-wing base, to whom he referred as "*Kellernazis*," or "basement Nazis" (Höbelt 2003, 23-4).

Party	Votes (%)	Parties	Seats (%)
SPÖ	47.6	SPÖ-ÖVP	93.4
ÖVP	43.2	SPÖ-FPÖ	55.7
FPÖ	5.0	ÖVP-FPÖ	50.8

Table 8.1: 1983 election: Results and coalition options

Any combination of the three parliamentary parties would have commanded a majority, albeit a slight one in the case of a coalition with the FPÖ (Table 8.1). Rather than form another grand coalition with the ÖVP new SPÖ leader Fred Sinowatz opted to explore a

coalition with the FPÖ. After 13 years as the sole party in government, the SPÖ had no desire to return to negotiations with the ÖVP if it did not need to do so. Steger's desire for respectability made him a willing partner, and the closer proximity of the new-look FPÖ elites to the SPÖ, relative to the ÖVP's position to the SPÖ made him an attractive partner to secure a majority in the eyes of the SPÖ. With the support of the Steger, who wanted to bring his party to the center-left, Sinowatz and the SPÖ could essentially push through any policies they wanted without needing to negotiate with the right-wing ÖVP. Additionally, partnering with the much smaller FPÖ (with just 12 seats) would allow the SPÖ to dominate the coalition, something it could not do with the ÖVP, which had 81 seats to the SPÖ's 90. SPÖ leader Sinowatz "had little difficulty" reaching an agreement with Steger's FPÖ (Pulzer 1983, 278), and "*die kleine Koalition*," or "the little coalition," entered office. In the resulting coalition, the SPÖ had 13 of 16 seats, to the FPÖ's 3 seats.

After the 1999 election, the first option explored was a minority SPÖ government, which would need the support of either the ÖVP or FPÖ in order to be viable. SPÖ elites were asked to speak with Haider, offering, in exchange for his party's votes in support of the minority government, the ability to nominate as many as four government ministers. SPÖ leader Victor Klima also said that the SPÖ would help the FPÖ improve its international reputation, which could lead to a more permanent coalition in a few years' time. Haider was tempted, but when he asked for the commitments in writing, President Klestil (the go-between) eventually admitted he could not deliver (Höbelt 2003, 181-5). Although this option failed, the SPÖ was also willing to make deals with the FPÖ – stopping short of any formal coalition agreement – in order to secure its goals.

The SPÖ's choice in 1983, as well as their gestures in 1999, indicate that major mainstream-left parties approach coalitions in the same way major mainstream-right parties do: They want to govern, and want to do so in a coalition that provides them policy outcomes closest to their ideal points. We should be careful in drawing too many conclusions from this coalition, and assuming other major left-wing parties will bring the far right into government, both because of the FPÖ elites' more centrist leanings and because there were only three parliamentary parties at this point. The SPÖ needed to choose either the FPÖ or SPÖ; it did not have a small left-wing party with which it could cooperate, as many major left-wing parties have since had. In the next section, we see that the logic of coalition formation extends to these left/far-left pairings, as well.

The Mainstream Left and Far Left

Do the major mainstream-left parties behave differently toward the far left than the major mainstream-right parties do toward the far right? There are few instances of coalitions between the left and far left, but this is not because the mainstream left is less pragmatic than the mainstream right. Rather, far-left parties are fewer in number than far-right parties in Western Europe, and have not enjoyed the latter's level of electoral success. Yet, as this section demonstrates, more than half of the successful contemporary far-left parties have

been involved in governments with the mainstream left, either as a formal coalition partner or as a support party.

Before 1990, the post-war far left in Europe was dominated by Communist parties. Communists tended to be isolated by mainstream parties due to their relationship with the Soviet Union. However, when Communist parties did become electorally successful, they were considered as partners for the mainstream parties: In France, a coalition was formed with the Socialists, and in Italy, a short-lived support arrangement took place between the Communists and the Christian Democrats. In both countries, the mainstream party capitalized on the success of the Communist party, bringing the far left into an alliance that only benefitted the former. This is consistent with the argument made throughout this dissertation: Mainstream parties will ally with extreme parties when doing so benefits their office and policy goals.[1]

François Mitterrand, leader of the newly-formed *Parti socialiste* (PS, Socialist Party), proposed an electoral alliance with the *Parti communiste français* (PCF, French Communist Party) in 1972. The French Communists had been a significant force on the political left throughout the post-war period, routinely winning more than 20% of the first-round vote in national elections. The PCF was a steadfastly Stalinist party that endorsed the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.' Subordinate to Moscow, the party would later support the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Mitterrand wanted to offer voters a true left-wing party, rather than a party that leaned toward the center, and felt the alliance with the PCF would allow him to accomplish this.

The Socialists and the Communists agreed on the "Common Program" in 1972, which outlined an electoral strategy for the left and included many Communist-supported measures, such as nationalizations of multiple industries and a 35-hour work week. By adopting popular Communist policies, Mitterrand steadily improved the fortunes of the Socialists – at the expense of the PCF. Table 8.2 shows the vote shares of the two parties in national legislative elections, and we can see that a rise for the Socialists from 1973-81 is accompanied by a decline for the Communists, particularly in their second-round performances.

As discussed in the last chapter, the French electoral system favors electoral alliances in its two-round system, and the French Communist and Socialist (PCF and PS) parties would risk losing a seat to the right if one of their candidates did not stand down in the second round, assuming both had advanced. Within a decade of the initial alliance, many of these seats favored the Socialist candidate. Mitterrand was elected president in 1981 and, under Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy, the PS and PCF formed a 'unified left' government.

Rochon and Pierre (1985, 449) argue that the only reason these "mortal allies" were able to work together in 1981 was because the Socialists were much stronger than the Communists; had the balance of power been more equal, they say, the PCF would not have acquiesced to the PS. The PCF dropped to 9.8% of the vote and 35 seats in 1986, compared to 44 seats and

[1]The argument focuses on the strategies of mainstream parties and the extreme party on their end of the spectrum, though this chapter does address the two unique instances of crossover, where the Austrian left worked with the far right, and the Italian right with the far left. These are meant to only further illustrate the argument, not to serve as evidence that more crossover coalitions are likely to form today.

	Socialists (%)		Communists (%)	
Election	**1st Round**	**2nd Round**	**1st Round**	**2nd Round**
1973	19.2	23.7	21.4	20.9
1978	22.5	23.3	20.6	18.6
1981	37.5	49.3	16.2	7.0
1986		31.0		9.8
1988	34.8	45.3	11.3	3.4

Table 8.2: Vote shares: French Socialists and Communists, 1973-1988

16.2% of the first-round vote in 1981, despite the move to proportional representation, and in the five elections since, the Communists have averaged just over 7% of the first-round vote. Although the alliance between the left and far left was highly beneficial to the Socialists, it quickly destroyed the Communists. A very similar pattern occurred in Italy, but with the Italian Christian Democrats in the role of the French Socialists.

Just a few years earlier, the Italian Christian Democrats (DC) decided that the way to stop the Italian Communist Party's (PCI) growing electoral support, and be sure to protect against a Communist-led government in the near future, was to moderate the party. The DC politicians asked the PCI to support their minority government after the 1976 election, a decision made (somewhat) easier because the Communists had broken from Moscow, "repudiated" the Bolshevik model, and, crucially, gained 36.2% of the parliamentary seats in 1976, compared to the DC's 41.7% (Shaw 1978, 418).[2] A number of new Communist voters were working-class Catholics, and the DC wanted to bring these voters back to its fold (Shaw 1978, 422).

While the minority support arrangement was in place, debate went on for more than year about whether the DC should officially bring the PCI into the government. The PCI itself was interested in achieving a "certificate of legitimacy" and a more significant role in the parliament, and was willing to move out of its role an an opposition party to do so (D'Alimonte 1999, 144-5). In exchange for its support, the Italian Communists were offered policy concessions and influence over some committee chairs in parliament. The PCI wanted to be part of the coalition and was accused by others on the left of "rapid accommodation of ideas hitherto alien to the party" (Ruscoe 1982, 104). The Communists agreed to support a number of policies with which its base disagreed, such as a reform of the abortion law and a promise to "restrain workers' demands," as to not "antagonize" the Christian Democrats and lose their newly-gained influence (Shaw 1978, 411; Ruscoe 1982, 101, 104).

Former prime minister Aldo Moro was the force behind the DC's inclusion of the PCI, convincing the DC that they needed the Communists' support. After five weeks of negotiation in late 1977, the Christian Democrats and Communists agreed to a government policy,

[2]Prior to the election, observers believed the Communists might emerge as the largest party, but many voters opposed to this outcome strategically shifted their vote to the Christian Democrats (squeezing out some small parties in the process).

one that largely reflected the interests of the former, with "little to show" for the PCI (Ruscoe 1982, 153). Unwilling to risk a new election, with its support waning as a result of collaboration with the DC, the PCI accepted this without complaint. However, Moro was on his way to parliament in 1978 to vote on a formal role for the PCI in this renewed coalition when he was kidnapped, and eventually murdered, by members of the Red Brigade, a Communist terrorist group. The *Compromesso storico*, or Historic Compromise, was abandoned shortly thereafter.

After the Soviet Union collapsed and communism was largely discredited, Communist parties in Western Europe followed one of four paths (March and Mudde 2005, 37): 1) renounce Communism and become a far-left party, 2) become a Social Democratic party, 3) merge with other small parties to form a new left-wing party, or 4) maintain their previous loyalty to communism.[3] There are examples of parties following each path, and those who opted not to adopt Social Democracy are the focus on the remainder of this section.

The literature distinguishes between the contemporary far left and the extreme left, which parallels the definitions used for the far right and the extreme right. Olsen, Hough, and Koß (2010, 4) define the "radical left" as parties that aim for "significant and deep-rooted change to the structures that underpin liberal democratic institutions as well as the market-based system," while the "extreme left" sees "liberal democracy as a sham" and wants to do away with capitalism. Green parties were considered radical after their emergence in the late 1960s and 1970s, but by the 1990s, many had moved into the moderate-left camp after divides between *fundis* and *realos*, which were almost always won by the latter group (March and Mudde 2005, 32-3). The post-Cold War far-left parties often call themselves Communist, Democratic Socialist, Socialist, or simply 'Left.'

The set of far-left parties below (Table 8.3) is based on the lists from March (2008, 128), Dunphy and Bale (2011, 490-91), Olsen, Hough, and Koß (2010, 4), and March and Mudde (2005, 48-9). Together, this comprises 21 "significant" far-left parties that have competed in the post-1989 period, where "significant" follows the definition in March and Mudde (2005, 48): a party that, in this period, won at least 3% of the national vote and at least one parliamentary seat in an election. Some of the extreme-left parties as defined in the 2005 March and Mudde (2005) piece are considered radical left in the 2008 article, so the latter distinction is used here, and extreme-left parties are noted in Table 7.3.

Twelve of the 21 far-left parties in Table 8.3 have participated in governments since the 1990s, either as support parties or as coalition partners with portfolios (or both, at different times). Few "significant" parties are still considered "extreme left," using March's (2008) classification – only 3 of the 21 – but one of those is currently a support party (the Danish Red-Green Alliance). The other two extreme-left parties, the Greek and Portuguese Communist Parties, have not participated in governments during this period, and are cited as "nostalgics" that exclude themselves from coalition discussions (Dunphy and Bale 2011, 490).

[3] The stalwarts following the last path have not been as electorally successful as others (March and Mudde 2005, 27-8).

Country	Name	Abbr.	English Name	Avg. vote	Gov't status[a]
Denmark	Socialistisk Folkeparti	SF	Socialist People's Party	9.1	1994-2001 (s), 2011-14
	Enhedslisten[b] – De Rød-Grønne	Enhl.	Unity List – The Red-Greens	3.2	2011- (s)
Finland	Vasemmistoliitto	VAS	Left Alliance	9.5	1995-2003
France	Parti communiste français[c]	PCF	French Communist Party	7.1	1997-2002
Germany	Die Linke		The Left	9.1	
	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus	PDS	Party of Democratic Socialism	3.1	
Greece	Synaspismós Rizospastikís Aristerás	SYRIZA	Coalition of the Radical Left	15.5	2015-
	Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas[b]	KKE	Communist Party of Greece	6.4	
	Dimokratiki Kinoniku Kinima	DIKKI	Democratic Social Movement	3.0	
Iceland	Vinstrihreyfingin – grænt framboð	VG	Left-Green Movement	12.9	2009-13
Ireland	Democratic Left			2.7	1994-97
Italy	Partito Rifondazione Comunista[c]	PRC	Communist Refoundation Party	5.5	1996-98, 2006-08
	Partito dei Comunisti Italiani[c]	PdCI	Party of Italian Communists	2.0	2006-08
Luxembourg	Kommunistesch Partei Lëtzebuerg	KPL	Communist Party of Luxembourg	1.8	
Netherlands	Socialistische Partij	SP	Socialist Party	7.6	
Norway	Sosialistisk Venstreparti	SV	Socialist Left Party	7.6	2005-13
Portugal	Partido Comunista Português[b]	PCP	Portuguese Communist Party	8.0	
	Bloco de Esquerda	BE	Left Bloc	5.8	
Scotland	Scottish Socialist Party	SSP		1.7	
Spain	Izquierda Unida	IU	United Left	6.9	2004-08 (s)
Sweden	Vänsterpartiet	V	Left Party	6.9	1998-2006 (s)

Table 8.3: Far-left parties in Western Europe since 1989

[a] (s) indicates support party
[b] Labeled as extreme left in March (2008).
[c] Labeled as extreme left in March and Mudde (2005), but radical left in March (2008).

By considering the coalition formation surrounding one of these far-left parties, we can see the dynamics at work that have underpinned the previous chapters. The Danish Socialist People's Party (SF) provided support for three successive left-wing coalitions in the 1990s, led by Social Democratic (SD) Prime Minister Poul Nyrop Rasmussen. The first, formed after the 1994 election, included the Radical Liberals (DRV, a center-left party) and the Center Democrats. The second and third P.N. Rasmussen cabinets included only the DRV, with the Center Democrats having left the government in 1996, unhappy that the Social Democrats had negotiated with the far-left SF (though the party was formally outside the coalition) about the national budget.[4]

In Danish coalition formation, it is more crucial to not have a majority against the government than it is to have a majority of seats held by the coalition partners (a situation called 'negative parliamentarism'). In 1994, both far-left Danish parties (SF and Enhedslisten) announced they did not want to be part of the government, but would support a minority government led by Rasmussen. This made the formation process "quite straightforward," as the three parties, along with the far-left support, controlled a majority of seats in parliament: 75 for the government, plus 19 from the far left for a total of 94, with only 88 needed for a majority (Bille 1995, 320). The Social Democrats controlled 75% of the cabinet posts, an advantage of collaborating with small partners, and together the coalition aimed to reduce unemployment and improve the economy without drastic cuts to public spending – policies criticized by the mainstream right, but supported by the far left (Bille 1996, 316-7).

Rasmussen's SD and the DRV asked voters to return them to office in 1998, and with the support of other small left-wing parties, like SF, the incumbent government had a slim majority of seats. After the election, many of the smaller parties on both the left and the right campaigned against the upcoming referenda on the EU Amsterdam Treaty (Bille 1999, 378-9). Among other measures, the Amsterdam Treaty made the free-movement Schengen Agreements part of European law, and this was a major sticking point for many parties. The Social Democrats would not have been able to bring the SF or other opposed parties into government, knowing that the government would then not be able to put forth a unified front in calling for a 'yes' vote shortly after the coalition formation concluded.

The Danish left was out of office from 2001-11, but moved out of opposition in 2011 with the election of the Social Democrats and the new prime minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt. Thorning-Schmidt had begun closer cooperation between the Social Democrats and the Socialist People's Party after the 2007 election, including presenting common economic proposals for the next election. She hoped to capitalize on the popularity of the SF leader, Villy Søvndal (Kosiara-Pedersen 2012, 417). The SD and SF went into the 2011 election as a team, but both parties lost seats relative to 2007 (1 seat for the Social Democrats and 7 for the Socialist People's Party). Thorning-Schmidt was viewed as less well-suited to handle

[4]The mainstream left needed to ensure it would have the support of the far left, given that the mainstream right had already stated its refusal to support the budget (hoping that its failure would result in new elections that would return them to power). In exchange for its guaranteed support, the SF wanted budget inclusions to improve public transportation, subsidize 'green jobs,' and provide more relief to the unemployed, which it received, and the budget subsequently passed with SF support (Bille 1997, 355).

the economy than the incumbent Liberal prime minister, and voters also seemed to favor the idea of a left-right coalition rather than a solely left or right government, shifting votes away from parties who promised the latter (Kosiara-Pedersen 2012, 418-20).

Despite their losses, the left-wing alliance still commanded a parliamentary majority with the support of other left-wing parties (including the extreme-left Unity List), and Thorning-Schmidt formed a minority coalition between her party, the far-left SF, and the center-left DRV. The Social Democrats held as many cabinet posts as its two partners combined, and had the clearest influence on the negotiated manifesto, which included a number of proposals to jump-start the economy through job creation. From the beginning, both junior partners needed to expend "considerable energy to defend themselves" against accusations of having broken campaign promises by agreeing to the SD's manifesto agenda (Bille 2012, 89). Scholars felt the compromises that would ultimately be necessary to improve the Danish economy (budget cuts, welfare roll-backs, and so on) would be too much for the far left to support (e.g. Kosiara-Pedersen 2012, 422-3). This was ultimately the case, and the SF left the government in February 2014. The party was dissatisfied that the Social Democrats opted to sell a minority share of the national energy company to a subsidiary of Goldman-Sachs. They agreed to continue supporting the government from the opposition benches, however, so the minority cabinet of SD-DRV continued in office.

The case of the Danish far-left Socialist People's Party suggests that the mainstream left does not worry about perceptions of alliances with the far-left, or whether these parties should be left in opposition. Over several coalitions, the major mainstream-left party in Denmark extracted support from the far left, which received some policy concessions in return. Collaborating with the SF allowed the SD to maintain office and pursue its policy goals. Just as the mainstream right approaches the far right, the mainstream left has been interested in collaboration with the far left when it furthers their objectives. In the final section, we return to the far right and think about what the future might hold for these parties and their participation in government with the mainstream right.

8.2 The future of mainstream right and far right cooperation

The previous chapter commented on the future potential for the French and British far-right parties and the deals they might make in the next few years. Here, I turn back to the cases from Chapters 5 and 6 – Austria and the Netherlands – before ending with an overview of recent developments for far-right parties elsewhere in Western Europe.

The 2013 Austrian election likely would have resulted in a coalition between the ÖVP and FPÖ, had the two parties won an outright majority of seats. There is still strong support for the far right in Austria, with the FPÖ winning more than 21% of the national vote in 2013 (compared to 27% for the SPÖ and 23% for the ÖVP). Likewise, there is overwhelming voter oppositions to continued grand coalitions, with 89% expressing a desire for a coalition

other than SPÖ-ÖVP to form in 2013, and 61% explicitly stating they did not want another grand coalition ("Studie: Wähler gegen Fortbestand der Großen Koalition" 2013). MPs from the SPÖ and ÖVP alike expressed their growing disenchantment, and in some cases, actual opposition to, the grand coalition in interviews, yet admit that it continues to form because there are no other viable two-party options. Some in the ÖVP would have preferred going into opposition, though refusing to take part in the government likely would have created a stalemate, as in 1999. Some miss the days of the black-blue coalition, saying "I wish we had the same course again…you can't go on like that with the Socialists" (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011). There is nostalgia for the way the coalition with the FPÖ operated; one MP described it as actual discussion and compromise, whereas the grand coalition turns into each party getting its way in some areas, with no middle-ground compromise (Interview with ÖVP MP, 2011).

ÖVP members see overlap with the FPÖ on social issues – less on economic issues, though they noted that the FPÖ has seldom adhered to a consistent economic policy in the past, making this less of a concern than it might otherwise be – and very little overlap with the SPÖ on any issue. The SPÖ MPs, in turn, agree that there are few commonalities between their party and the ÖVP, but, with just a few exceptions, rule out any overlap with either the FPÖ or BZÖ. The Greens maintain their opposition to working with both the FPÖ, saying that "shared initiatives with the FPÖ rarely exist," and that, in particular, working with the FPÖ is not a viable option because the parties take opposing positions on "human rights, Europe, and socio-political issues" (Interview with Grüne MP, 2011). One MP added that the FPÖ does not have serious positions for areas other than immigration, Europe, and other social issues, which makes for "populist campaigns rather than serious politics" (Interview with Grüne MP, 2011).

FPÖ MPs would not rule out any partners, saying the party, as the third-largest, was not in a strong enough position to do so (Interview with FPÖ MP, 2011). Should the ÖVP and FPÖ win a majority of seats at the next election, a coalition between the two remains a likely outcome. For much of 2014 and 2015, polls have the FPÖ as the largest party in Austria, expected to win between 25-30% of the vote. The ÖVP, SPÖ, and FPÖ are, in many polls, all expected to win about a quarter of the vote, potentially allowing for three two-party coalition possibilities.

In the Netherlands, the electoral future of the far-right PVV has improved recently, after a series of poor showings in the wake of Geert Wilders' decision to break to the coalition with the VVD and CDA in 2012. Initially, the PVV dropped from 15.5% of the national vote in 2010 to 10.1% in 2012, and sub-nationally, the PVV came second-to-last in the 2014 municipal elections, beating only the Party for the Animals, and winning just 16 seats across the country (0.2%). The PVV did receive the second-best total in The Hague (the third-largest city in the country) and has 13% of the seats in the city's municipal body, but no representation in any of the other large cities. After the municipal elections, Wilders asked a PVV crowd gathered in The Hague if they wanted fewer Moroccans in the Netherlands, to which the crowd chanted, "*minder, minder, minder!*" (fewer, fewer, fewer), and Wilders promised to arrange that. By singling out a particular group of immigrants, Wilders left

himself open to charges of racial incitement, and in December 2014, prosecutors indicated they planned to charge him. Wilders described the charges as "incomprehensible," adding that he only "said what millions of people think" ("PVV leader Geert Wilders will be prosecuted for inciting hatred" 2014).

Since then, however, Wilders' party won 13.4% of the 2014 European Parliament vote (down from 17% in 2009), though it maintained its four MEPs and placed third behind the CDA and D66.[5] In the March 2015 provincial elections, the PVV finished in fifth place.[6] For much of 2014 and the early part of 2015, the PVV either led in the polls for the next national election, or placed slightly behind the VVD, with an expected seat total between 20-30 (out of the 150 total), up from the 15 won in 2012. Based on these polls, however, the VVD and PVV would still need the support of another party, and the Christian Democrats have not polled strongly enough to suggest they could provide enough seats for a renewed right-wing coalition.

Politics in Western Europe have not returned to the 1930s, and the contemporary far right is not attempting to overthrow democracy as interwar far-right parties wanted to do, so their governmental inclusion is not cause for similar concern. However, the major mainstream-right parties' unwillingness to pay a cost to marginalize the far right has had appreciable impact on immigration policies in a number of countries. With their continued success, the opportunities for far-right parties to join coalitions across Western Europe remain very much alive.

[5]The governing parties, VVD and PvdA, placed fourth and fifth, respectively, possibly in a show of displeasure with the incumbent coalition.

[6]These determine the composition of the 12 provincial legislative bodies, who elect the members of the upper house of parliament, or *Eerste Kamer*).

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