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Europe – a Gender Equality Project?
Right-wing populism in Europe: a danger for
emancipatory gender policies?

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Picture 1:
Fitna (anti-Islam) movie
Opening shot

http://www.mediareligiecultuur.nl/wp-content/uploads/fitna_wilders.jpg

Picture 2:
Protest against same-sex
marriage and 'gender theory'

<http://rt.com/files/news/22/11/70/00/1.jpg>

Picture 3:
Siv Jensen of Danish People's
party'

<http://www.bt.dk/sites/default/files-dk/node-images/481/4/4481167-folketingsvalg.jpg>

- The Populist Radical Right in Europe
- Defining the PRR's core
- Gender as a secondary ideology
- Policy impact

PRR in Europe

National parliaments in Western Europe

Country	PRR party	Highest VS	Current VS	Seats
Austria**	Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ)	(1999) 26.9	20.5	40 (183)
Belgium	Flemish Interest (VB)	(2007) 12.0	7.8	11 (150)
Denmark*	Danish People's Party (DFP)	(2007) 13.8	12.3	22 (179)
France	National Front (FN)	(1997) 14.9	13.6	2 (577)
Germany	Alternative for Germany (AfP)	(2013) 4.7	4.7	0 (631)
Italy**	Northern League (LN)	(1996) 10.8	4.1	20 (630)
Netherlands*	Party for Freedom (PVV)	(2010) 15.5	10.1	15 (150)
Norway**	(FrP)	(2009) 22.9	16.3	29 (169)
Sweden	Sweden Democrats (SD)	(2010) 5.7	5.7	20 (349)
Switzerland**	Swiss People's Party (SVP)	(2007) 28.9	26.6	54 (200)

Government

Coalition government (**): FPÖ LN FrP SVP

Support minority government (*): PVV DFP

Primary and secondary issues

Defining or primary issues

Populist

- They represent the **'good' people**, the *volonté général*, the **'heartland'**: an imaginary place where the virtuous ideal-type population lives
- The fight the **'evil' and 'corrupt' (left) elite**: politicians, media, **feminists**

Radical Right

- **Nativist** as in the old far right, but not **'extreme'** as in **'anti system'**
- An illiberal and **xenophobic** ideology that creates an **outgroup** that is not part of the **'native'** population
Examples: immigrant, Jewish, Muslim, or Roma people
- Other issues are **racialized**, ethnicized: explained blaming the out-group for being the cause of problems

Example:
SVP poster
Switzerland

*http://
www.rhetorik.ch/
Aktuell/07/10_20/
weltwoche.jpg*

These issues are at the core of their identity and policy agenda

Primary and secondary issues

Binding or secondary issues

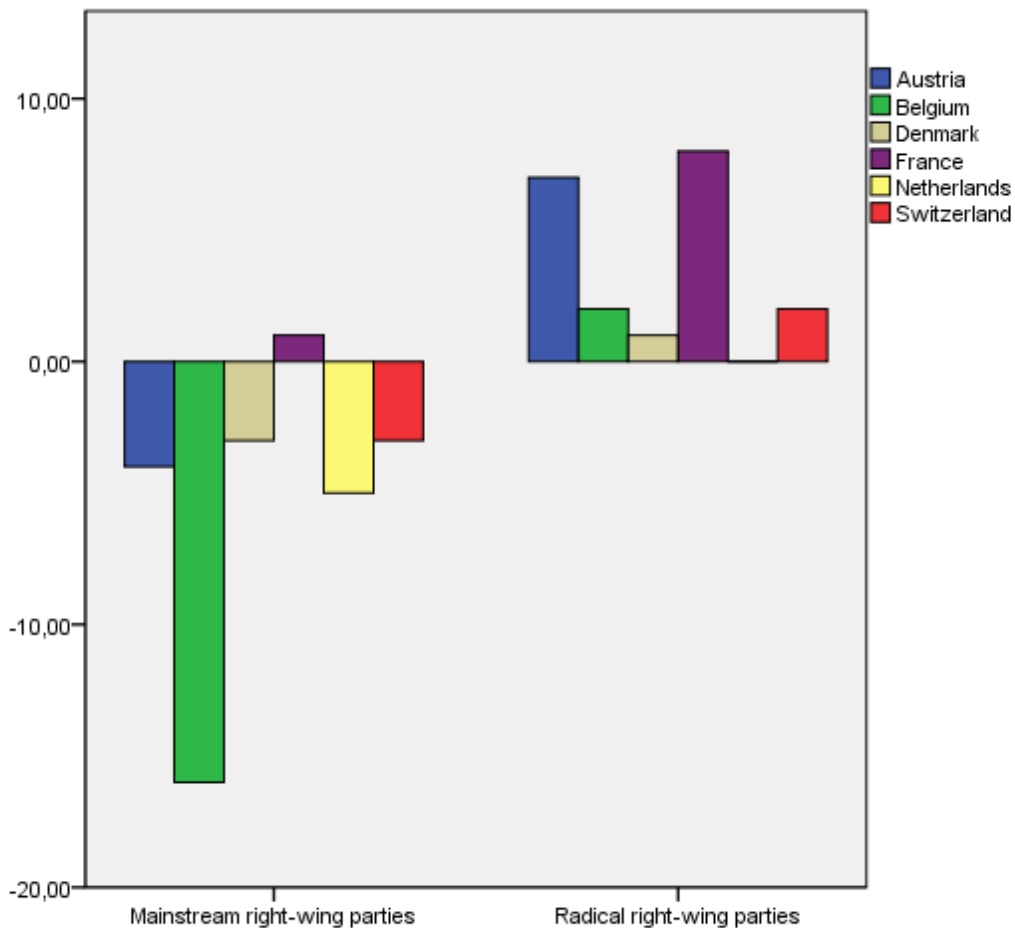
Other issues on which parties roughly share positions: anti-regulation and bureaucracy, Eurosceptic, gender traditional

Two main gender equality positions

- Neotraditionalist or modernized traditional
 - Valuing family life and the traditional family: women are portrayed as mothers
 - At the same time: often in favour of women participating in the economy, the PRR roughly accepts the status quo in countries
 - ‘Freedom of choice’ for women, equality is good and has been reached
 - In particular on LGBT issue opinions differ more and are dependent on with the national context (status quo again)
- Liberal rhetoric on immigration and integration
 - Defend liberal gender equality *which has been reached* in the West
 - Restrictive policies towards migrants and migrant women
 - e.g. Forbidding head scarves and marriage migration in the name of liberal equality
 - e.g. blame violence against LGBT people on migrant and Muslim people

Gender as secondary issue

More traditional than other mainstream conservative parties



Source: contribution Akkerman to special issue (eds Spierings & Zaslove)

Fig. 3 Comparison of populist radical right parties and mainstream conservative parties

Note: The mainstream right-wing parties are: ÖVP (Austria), CD&V (Belgium), DKF (Denmark), UMP (France), CDA (Netherlands), CVP (Switzerland)

Gender as secondary issue

Secondary issues in government negotiation

- Gender equality is not a core issue
 - Immigration and integration policies are what PRR parties want to have an influence on
 - This includes gendered integration issues (veiling, marriage migration)
 - Traditionalist gender (in)equality policies will be sacrificed if necessary
 - Regarding LGBT policies, PRR parties' position depend on how immigration discourses are queered and whether legal discrimination exists
- Crucial are the governing partners
 - Parties on the right: generally less equality focused, but clear differences exist
 - Conservative liberals DK: Venstre; NL: VVD;
 - Christian democrats AU: ÖVP; IT: PdL; NL: CDA; *NO: H*
 - Christian orthodox NL: SGP, CU

PRR a danger for emancipatory gender policies?

- PRR parties have influenced and gendered immigration policies
 - Directly through government; indirectly through pulling other parties to the right and changing the discourse
 - Policies include restrictive measures for immigrant women; some feminists would argue this supports gender equality, others would argue it inhibits the empowerment of migrant and Muslim women
 - Immigrant women are forced into a defensive position
- PRR parties help the conservative right to secure majorities
 - Take votes from social-democrats
 - Right-wing government do not further emancipatory gender policies, some breakdown emancipation bodies
 - PRR parties do not take initiative much on these issues despite relatively traditionalist positions
 - PRR parties work together with orthodox Christians, leading to stricter abortion policies (Netherlands)
- Some PRR parties have made LGBT emancipatory policies possible
 - LGBT position are racialized
 - Positions depends on political culture