

Marta Abelsen

Spanish Exceptionalism

A comparative case study of the contemporary
European radical right

Bachelor's thesis in European Studies

Supervisor: Anna Brigevidh

May 2022

Marta Abelsen

Spanish Exceptionalism

A comparative case study of the contemporary
European radical right

Bachelor's thesis in European Studies
Supervisor: Anna Brigevich
May 2022

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Historical Studies



Kunnskap for en bedre verden

Abstract

The populist radical right has become a significant force in the European political landscape in the 2000s. Surges in popularity have been seen particularly in the wake of crises. Spain endured a four-decade long dictatorship in the 20th century, which by scholars has been pointed at as a main reason why the radical right did not gain terrain in Spain until the 2010s. The young radical right party VOX now represents a significant political force in Spain. By conducting a comparative case study analysis using CHES data, I attempt to prove how VOX is based upon different principles than other European radical right parties. I anticipate and confirm how regionalism is the main cause in VOX's ideology, while it is a non-issue to the general European radical right party family. Immigration and nationalism are important to all, but in VOX, the latter has its origin in reasons different to the rest of the party family. This means a certain 'Spanish exceptionalism' still persists.

Sammendrag

Høyreekstremer populistiske partier har vokst og blitt en betydelig politisk makt i det europeiske politiske landskapet på 2000-tallet. Oppblomstringen i denne partifamiliens popularitet har i mange tilfeller skjedd etter kriser. Spania sto gjennom fire tiår med diktatur på 1900-tallet; dette har av flere eksperter blitt pekt på som en hovedgrunn til at det ytre høyre ikke fant grobunn i Spania før 2010-tallet. Det unge høyre-radikale partiet VOX representerer nå en betydelig politisk makt i Spania. Gjennom en komparativ case-analyse ved hjelp av CHES-data forsøker jeg å bevise hvordan VOX er basert på ulike prinsipper enn resten av den europeiske høyre-radikale partifamilien. Jeg antar, og bekrefter, at regionalisme er en grunnpilar i VOX's ideologi, mens dette er en ikke-sak i resten av det europeiske ytre høyre. Immigrasjon og nasjonalisme er viktige for alle høyreekstremer partier, men sistnevnte springer ut fra ulike årsaker for VOX, enn for resten av partifamilien. Dette indikerer at en viss 'spansk eksepsjonalisme' enda eksisterer.

Acknowledgements

I would like extend a special thanks to my supervisor, Anna Brigevich, for immeasurable guidance and motivational support through the process of writing this thesis. I appreciate your investment in this project and have enjoyed working with someone that shares my interest in this specific topic within European Studies.

Marta Abelsen

Trondheim, May 9th, 2022

Til pappa

Table of Contents

List of Figures	xi
List of Tables	xi
List of Abbreviations	xii
1 Introduction	1
2 The radical right of the 21 st century	3
3 VOX: the Spanish radical right.....	6
4 Hypotheses.....	8
5 Analyzing party positions	10
5.1 Data.....	10
5.2 Case selection	10
5.3 Evaluating party platforms	12
5.3.1 <i>Regionalism and decentralization</i>	12
5.3.2 <i>Economy</i>	14
5.3.3 <i>Immigration</i>	15
6 Conclusion	17
7 References.....	18

List of Figures

Figure 5.1: Party popularity in national assemblies in %. 2000-2021. Own elaboration.11

List of Tables

Table 5.1: Questions gauging party positions on decentralization, EU Cohesion policy and the people's say in political issues13

Table 5.2 Questions measuring party positions on economic issues.....15

Table 5.3 Questions measuring party positions on immigration and multiculturalism16

List of Abbreviations

PTV	Probability to vote
RN	Ressemblement National
PVV	Partij Voor der Frijhed
AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
RRPP	Radical right populist parties
EU	European Union
CHES	Chapel Hill Expert Survey
GAL	Green, Alternative, Liberal
TAN	Traditional, Authoritarian, Nationalist

1 Introduction

Despite enduring some of the harshest social and economic consequences of the recession, Spain remained free of the radical right (Turnbull-Dugarte, Rama, & Santana, 2020). While the recession and the Eurozone crisis led to the ascent of the radical right in the rest of Europe, it was not until 2018 that Spain got parliamentary representation of the radical right. VOX's main cause is, unlike most European radical right parties, not linked to immigration nor economy. Rather, the discourse that has taken VOX from being a marginal party to a significant political force, is that focused around the internal threats to national sovereignty. Since 2017, Spain has experienced a constitutional crisis based on the successionist movement in the autonomous region of Catalonia (Ferreira, 2019). Scholars point at this crisis as the most central explanation to VOX's rapid surge in popularity (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019).

In this thesis I seek to prove that VOX is a party with some specific features that makes it stand out from 'mainstream' radical right populist parties (RRPPs). In one of VOX's manifestos, curbing Catalan secessionism is the first point listed (Vox, 2021), indicating the importance of the issue to the party. I argue that there is still a certain 'Spanish exceptionalism' present, in that VOX, as the representation of the Spanish radical right, is centered around a traditionalist economic stance and political centralization – rather than typical issues such as immigration. Today's radical right in Europe is 'right-wing' mainly on the sociocultural aspect of the term (Rydgren, 2007). I anticipate that VOX will be right-wing on all issues – including economy. Immigration is, and has been, one of the most important issues to the traditional, as well as the 'new', radical right (Betz & Johnson, 2006). In this thesis, I anticipate that anti-decentralization trumps immigration as the more salient issue in VOX's ideology. I do so by testing the importance of decentralization, immigration and positions on economy.

In order to assess party positions and evaluate my hypotheses, I conduct a comparative case study analysis using party data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). I analyze party stances of VOX and three other parties I consider to be representatives of the European radical right – German Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), French Ressemblément National (RN) and the Dutch Partij Voor der Frijhed (PVV). As was expected, I find that political centralization is an issue far more salient in VOX than in other RRPPs. I also find that VOX is an exception in its radical right economic stance. Immigration is found to be a highly salient issue in all four parties evaluated.

This thesis contributes to literature on the European radical right by exploring the very intricate landscape of the Spanish radical right. It shows how the radical right ideology is indeed a patchwork of different components. This thesis finds that while regionalism is an engine driving the radical right in Spain, this does not necessarily replace the immigration factor – rather, they seem to be equally as important. Remembering that VOX has grown its constituency in the wake of the Catalan crisis, this cause has been more politicized than the 'typical' immigration discourse. While scholars believed that the radical right would not get a grip in countries with such recent, national trauma (Ferreira,

2019), the emergence of the radical right in Spain and Germany has proved otherwise. The radical right is a party family which changes according to the demand of society.

First, I explain the characteristics of the European populist radical right. Second, I move on to explain the emergence of VOX in Spain, and its characteristics. I then move on to elaborate on my hypotheses, and I present the three parties I will use for my comparative analysis. I then go on to analyze CHES data section wise according to my hypotheses, which evaluate regionalism, economy and immigration, respectively. Finally, I conclude that my assumptions about regionalism and economy (H1 & H2) were confirmed, while I could not confirm my hypothesis on the immigration issue (H3).

2 The radical right of the 21st century

The radical rights' existence in the political arena in Europe is far from new. Since World War II, the populist radical right is the most successful party family in Europe (Mudde, 2013), most significantly after its entry in the 1980s (Betz & Johnson, 2006). Although a frequently discussed and debated subject, there is no consensus on one definition to describe this party family. As Mudde (2000, s. 7) states, "(...) we seem to know *who* they are even though we do not exactly know *what* they are". There exists a plethora of definitions by experts. Characteristics that tend to repeat themselves in literature when talking about the 'traditional' radical right are nationalism, racism, xenophobia, anti-democracy and authoritarianism (Mudde, 2000). A prominent characteristic particularly of the 'new' radical right is populism, which has been named *the* most defining characteristic of the radical right of the 21st century (Rydgren, 2007).

It is common to categorize a party as leftist or rightist based on its stance on the economic axis and the social/cultural axis. Traditionally, we can distinguish parties according to their positions on socioeconomic politics (degree of statal intervention in economy) or sociocultural politics (party stances on immigration, abortion, law and order). Today, when evaluating party positions, it is common to differentiate between the economic left-right axis, and placement on the socio-cultural (GAL-TAN) dimension (Polk, et al., 2017). The 'new' radical right is harder to pin down to the economic left-right axis and is primarily right-wing in the sociocultural aspect of the term (Rydgren, 2007). Some populist parties today are centrist, or even leftist, on the economic axis. On the sociocultural axis, immigration is often a key component of party ideologies (Bakker, Jolly, & Polk, 2020).

Nationalism is a persistent feature of radical right parties through decades (Hart, 2021). It has been defined as a "political doctrine that strives for the congruence of the cultural and the political unit" (Mudde, 2007, p. 16). This entails homogenization of the population to ensure a state consisting of exclusively people from one's own nation. Radical right parties want to strengthen the nation by 'returning to traditional values' and making it more ethnically homogenous (Rydgren, 2007). There is a clear distinction between the perceived 'us' and 'them'; this distinction is referred to as primordial identity construction (Risse, 2011, p. 27). In Europe, such distinctions are often seen when 'Christian Europeans' are pinned against 'Muslim immigrants', who presumably will never become 'true Europeans' (Risse, 2011, p. 27). This leads to tendencies such as racism and welfare chauvinism.

Issues with the welfare state are often pinned to immigration and plays into people's resentment towards immigrants (Betz & Johnson, 2006). Immigration is perhaps the most politicized case in 21st century politics, used as the prime catalyst for voters by most radical right parties. The percentage of immigrants among the population in European countries has more than tripled the past 50 years (Stockemer, 2016). As pointed out by Betz & Johnson (2006), RRPPs have, throughout the years, self-declared as the sole defenders of Western culture. Immigrants from Muslim countries have been

particularly called out for their incompatibility with perceived core values of Western societies – such as democracy, human rights and religious freedom.

Some (Betz & Johnson, 2006) claim that the emergence of this party family is due to the radical transformation of the socioeconomic -cultural structures in Europe.

Interconnected with the rise of the radical right is globalization. The term has been defined by social scientist David Held's:

“(...) First it suggests that many chains of political, economic and social activity are becoming world-wide in scope and, second, it suggests that there has been an intensification of levels of interaction and interconnectedness within and between states and societies.” (Mudde, 2007, p. 185)

For the economic aspect of it, it entails the rise of global capitalism and international actors and states. Populist radical parties are often critical of such globalization due to global economy facilitating foreign influx on national economies. To some, this is a threat towards national interest and linked with a sensation of 'losing control' (Mudde, 2007, p. 187). An increasingly globalized world has changed people's political preferences. The radical right has reaped the fruits of people's insecurities and alienation of the modern society. People who have become losers in the cosmopolitan European project and who remain wedded to their national identity are the main appeal of far-right parties (Roodujin, Bonikowski, & Parlevliet, 2021). Some, such as Bakker, Jolly and Polk (2020) suggest that the voter drain from mainstream parties is due to the complexity which arises when attempting to represent an increasingly diverse group of voters. Constituencies of RRPPs are often attracted to these parties in times of crisis, as was seen during and after the recession and Eurozone crisis (Hobolt & Tilley, 2016).

Populism is perhaps the most prominent characteristic of the new radical right. Hard to define in a short and concise manner, populism has been described as a "thin ideology most readily found in parties of the radical right and radical left (Polk, et al., 2017). Populism views society as split into two homogenous and antagonistic groups; the 'pure' people versus the corrupt elite (Rydgren, 2007; Taggart, 2004; Polk et. Al., 2017). Taggart (2004) names five characteristic features of populism: hostility towards representative politics; identifying with and as one of 'the people' (as opposed to a corrupt elite); lack of core values; being a reaction towards a (sense of) crisis; and finally; that by nature, populism is difficult to mobilize and sustain. Taggart also points out these parties' reliance on charismatic leaders, which help their 'one of the people' rhetoric, and helps them gain momentum quickly.

RRPPs have evidently been successful in portraying themselves as 'one of the people' against the elite. They accuse the elite of putting international questions above domestic issues, that way prioritizing the interests of the elite before those of the 'normal people' (Marcos-Marne & Plaza-Colodro, 2021). As Bakker, Jolly and Polk (2020) point out, political disaffection overall makes people more prone to vote for anti-elite parties – which helps explain the voter drain from mainstream parties. As is also seen in their analysis, those most likely to vote for anti-elite parties are "individuals with less optimism about the future of the economy's performance, men, younger people, and

those with less education". This relates to the 'globalization losers' theory mentioned by Rydgren (2007).

The European Union(EU), as a supra-national institution, is portrayed as "a plot intent on destroying the nations and the frame of the natural order" (Betz & Johnson, 2006). The EU as a supranational institution is an example of forces that challenge the 'old order'. The EU has become increasingly politicized throughout the 21st century by RRPPs. Populist Euroscepticism tends to see integration as an elitist project (Risse, 2011, p. 6). Eurosceptics often talk about the 'democratic deficit' and demand 'more representation and less integration' (Taggart, 2004). There are also concerns about the impact of free mobility of goods and people within the EU on the labor markets. This is mainly seen among blue-collar workers. Euroscepticism is found on both the left and right within politics, but is particularly elite-aimed in populist parties.

Economy in radical right ideology makes for an interesting subject of study. As already established, the new radical right is said to be right-wing mainly on sociocultural matters. Which positions they take on the economic placement is more debated. The traditional right-wing was classified as neo-liberal, but studies now point towards an 'abandoning' of outlying economic positions in favor of the economic center (De Lange, 2007 in Rovny, 2013). Rovny (2013) finds that parties – particularly those on the radical right – have adopted a deliberate strategy of *position blurring*, a theory also supported by Rydgren (2005). Position blurring helps parties avoid taking clear positions on potentially conflicting issues, and that way, may help to broaden their constituencies. This explains why we can find an apparent variance of radical right economic placement when studying the radical right (Rovny, 2013).

3 VOX: the Spanish radical right

The Spanish political landscape represented an exception in European context for decades. The 'Spanish exceptionalism' – the absence of the radical right – lasted until 2013, year in which *VOX España* (from now on VOX) was founded. The party obtained parliamentary representation in the regional elections in Andalucía in 2018, where VOX got over 10% of the votes (Ferreira, 2019). VOX's ideology is based upon a mix of primarily nationalism and xenophobia, with focal causes such as the authoritarian state and law and order. It is to some degree Eurosceptic and populist, although there is some debate on to what degree it can be classified as populist (Marcos-Marne & Plaza-Colodro, 2021; Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). Nationalism is perhaps the main component of VOX's ideology, a characteristic it shares with most radical right parties in Europe, although not for the same reasons.

While nationalism has been an ideological engine promoting the rise of the far right in Europe, the term has not had the same grasp on Spanish people. This is believed to be due to its close association to Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975) (Ferreira, 2019). While many other radical right parties in Europe seek to defend the nation from external enemies, VOX's nationalism is oriented around internal threats. A major reason to this is the crisis in Catalonia in 2017, when the regional government declared independence from Spain following an unauthorized referendum. VOX views this as a coup d'état and has the limitation of Catalan autonomy, and regional autonomies overall, as one of its main causes (Vox, 2021). The Catalan issue will be elaborated on more towards the end of the chapter.

The fundamental project for VOX is protecting the state from any threat to Spanish sovereignty - in particular from regional autonomy. Supranational institutions such as the EU are also perceived as an outsourcing of national sovereignty and a threat to national identity, which is a common denominator to the European far right overall (Bakker, Jolly & Polk, 2006; Betz & Johnson, 2006; Risse, 2011). In Spain, people are, and have traditionally been, positive to the EU. This is related to its symbolic importance it represents to Spain after the dictatorship. The negative perspective on the EU in VOX is related to Spain as the southernmost border of 'fortress Europe', and due to dissatisfaction with some EU policies, such as regional policy. The EU empowers regions in a number of ways, and gives regions the chance to bypass their national governments and affect EU policy making in a more direct manner (Brigevich, 2012). This gives the regions bigger roles as political actors – causing fury within VOX.

Another issue with the EU to VOX is how the EU works to promote gender rights and secularism. This stands in contrast to VOX's conservative position on issues such as religion, family and gender roles. Catholicism is considered a 'national cultural heritage' of Spain and the party proposes ways to protect Catholic Spaniards against secular institutions (such as the EU) (Ferreira, 2019). The party openly attacks the feminist and LGBT movements, which they claim go against the traditional family structures. VOX opposes gender ideology, state financing of feminist organizations and denies female

discrimination (Fernández Suárez, 2021). In calling out the EU, the argument of the EU as a contributor to cluttering of traditional European ways is frequently used.

VOX is characterized by a liberal economic discourse which resembles that of the radical right parties founded in the 1980s and 1990s. In line with this stance, VOX has an economic agenda which focuses on market liberalism, cutbacks to the welfare state and less state intervention (Turnbull-Dugarte, Rama, & Santana, 2020). This way, the party ideology is easily placed on the far right in the traditional left-right economic dimension. This makes VOX distinctive from other far right parties, which have moved towards a conservative stance on economy, and which often blur their positions on the issue overall (Rovny, 2013).

A special VOX issue

The Franco dictatorship is still fairly fresh in many Spaniards' memory and is fundamental in order to comprehend the current Madrid-Catalonia conflict. To VOX, the conflict is of immense importance: some scholars argue that it is the very engine for VOX's foundation and popularity (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). The Franco regime consecrated the hegemony of a Catholic and traditionalist version of Spanish nationalism for decades. Catholic Spain under Franco was a Spain essentially identified with Castile – the region in which the capital Madrid lies (Núñez, 2001). Nationalization across the country was a deliberate strategy to promote the nation of Spain and the Castilian (Spanish) language. In the process, several languages – and peripheral nationalisms – of regions such as Galicia, the Basque Country and Catalonia were suppressed. The nationalism in VOX is closely tied up to Spanish identity, that is, 'Spanish' as opposed to regional identities such as Catalan, Valencian, and so on. In defending this Spanish identity, VOX seeks to strengthen the position of the state and rule the country from the national government – and limiting the powers of regional governments.

Catalan nationalism has its roots as far back as to the beginning of the 11th century (Guibernau, 2013), and culminated most recently in the Catalan 2017 referendum. The crisis occurred when a majority voted for independence for Catalonia and *Generalitat* president Carles Puigdemont declared independence shortly after (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). The referendum was not authorized by national authorities and led to Madrid suspending the Catalan government until new elections were held, and a number of Catalan politicians have undergone trials since then (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). This constitutes the very core of the ongoing conflict, which has contributed to the rapid surge in popularity for VOX. Several scholars point at this constitutional crisis as the decisive factor for VOX's quick rise in Spain (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019; Sánchez-Cuenca, 2018). Fernández Suárez (2021) claims the Catalan conflict was the more prominent factor in a series of favorable circumstances for VOX, fueling the part of the population in defense of political centralization.

4 Hypotheses

It has been found that VOX voters are mainly those who support reducing political independence of the country's autonomous communities. In Europe, support for the radical right normally comes from concerns over immigration, political disaffection, and voters from non-privileged socio-economic backgrounds (Turnbull-Dugarte, 2019). Recall that experts argue that VOX's electoral support is not the result of a sudden shift in long-term electoral preference of voters but rather, the result of VOX's ability to increase political saliency on the Catalan separatist issue.

With background in this, I hypothesize that

H(1) Political centralization is a key funding principle to VOX, as opposed to other RRPPs

Economy is a peculiar subject of study of the radical right. Initially, radical right-wing parties were adamant neoliberals promoting the liberal market. Since the 1990s, the radical right has adopted a more conservative approach with positions closer to the political center. The result is a liberal market on a domestic level, but opposition to supranational institutions. This development is often ascribed to the rise of the globalist economy, which fuels protectionist attitudes (Rydgren, 2007). Opposition to the EU is related to the same issue. The internal market represents the free flow of capital and goods, and some fear the consequences this may have on the national economy (Taggart, 2004).

VOX is a particularly interesting case because although it does share commonalities with other RRPPs, such as scepticism to supranational institutions, it differs in its traditionalist approach (similar to traditional radical right). It promotes market liberalism, reduced state intervention and cutbacks to the welfare state (Turnbull-Dugarte, Rama, & Santana, 2020). Many radical right parties choose a deliberate strategy of position blurring on potentially conflicting issues (such as economy) in order to attract a larger constituency, but is not the case with VOX. My argument is that VOX's very indisputable, neoliberal position on economy is a major difference from other RRPPs.

Based on this, I hypothesize:

H(2) VOX represents a traditionalist radical right stance on economic issues, as opposed to other contemporary RRPPs

The third hypothesis posits that the importance of immigration is less in VOX's ideology than to other RRPP's. Anti-immigration is a common denominator for the majority of contemporary radical right parties, and has been a focal point for the traditional RRPPs (Rovny, 2013; Rydgren, 2007). Strict lines on immigration are defended with arguments like rise in crime rates, and unemployed immigrants straining the welfare system (Rydgren, 2007). Some parties, such as Dutch PVV, oppose Muslim immigration specifically, which is defended by arguments that such immigration is a 'deliberate strategy of Islamification' (Vossen, 2011).

VOX argues for criminalization of irregular immigration, greater immigration control measures, stricter requirements for obtaining Spanish nationality, and a preference for Ibero-American immigrants (Fernández Suárez, 2021). There is, as with the PVV, a certain Islamophobia present. Immigration is interestingly connected to crimes such as sexual violence against native Spanish women, and is used frequently in VOX's rhetoric to attract female voters to the party (Fernández Suárez, 2021). However, this is not the focal point of VOX ideology. As previously touched upon, Spanish exceptionalism was sustained up until the 2010s, and when the radical right did get a grip in Spain, it was not as a consequence of a sudden influx of immigrants. Rather, scholars emphasize the importance of Catalan secessionism as the main triggering factor for the surge of radical right in Spain. Knowing this, we expected immigration to be less salient in VOX. This is why the third hypothesis is as follows:

H(3) although in favor of restrictive immigration policy, immigration is not as salient in VOX as in other RRPPs.

5 Analyzing party positions

5.1 Data

This thesis will use the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) to measure party positions on a selected range of issues. CHES is one of the most widely used sources of party positions on the EU (Vasilopoulou, 2017). It is conducted every few years by experts from each country involved – this includes all EU members as well as Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and in the most recent round, Turkey (CHESDATA, 2022). CHES measures party positions and ideological stances on European integration overall, but also on specific EU policies, such as the cohesion policy (Vasilopoulou, 2017). Specifically, CHES measures parties on a general left-right axis, as well as on the economic and social left-right dimension. As such, the data generated gives experts a unique opportunity to monitor how parties change over time.

CHES as an expert survey gives several advantages. Experts, as opposed to the general public, are able to conduct in-depth inspection of parties by looking at a variety sources, ranging from party manifestos to television debates. Evidence shows that party positions provided by academic experts correlate with those of political actors. CHES evaluations are also found to converge with results from separately conducted surveys (Bakker, et al., 2012). Certain criticism has also been directed at CHES. Mudde (2016) argues that while CHES is useful in large cross-national research, it is better seen as a peer survey than an expert study. This is because it surveys country specialists who are not necessarily experts on each and every party or issue. Still, when dealing with complex objects of study such as party positions, there are phenomenon that cannot be observed objectively by the public. In these cases, relying on expert evaluation can give a more reliable outcome (Hooghe, et al., 2010). CHES gives a unique opportunity to study European parties' positions on a number of issues relevant to this thesis.

5.2 Case selection

In the following pages, I will perform an analysis of a number of CHES variables in order to compare VOX to other parties of the European radical right. In order to do so, I have selected three parties which I believe are representative examples of the European radical right today: the German *Alternative für Deutschland*, French *Ressement National*, and Dutch *Partij Voor De Vrijheid*. The development in these parties' popularity is illustrated in Figure 5.1, which shows the support obtained (in percentages) at the countries' respective national assembly elections from 2000-2021.

Ressement National (RN), formerly known as Front National, is a veteran in the plethora of new radical right parties. RN has pushed an anti-immigrant, anti-establishment and nationalist ideology since its establishment in the early 1970s (Stockemer & Barisione, 2017). The party rhetoric has changed some since Marine Le Pen took the lead of the party after her father Jean Marie Le Pen back in 2011. Ethnonationalism and anti-immigration were two pillars that characterized the party for

decades, and while these are still significant elements in the party program, they are not ends in themselves anymore. Marine Le Pen has 'rebranded' the party programme with a populist veil which is far more aimed against supranational organizations and the negative impact their policies have on domestic issues, such as the effect European policy has on immigration and economy, which is now RN's focal point. Le Pen is also, as many populist party leaders, a charismatic person who uses an anti-elite, simple and slogan-based discourse and statements in the name of 'the people' (Stockemer & Barisione, 2017). There is also a frequent use of personification of Le Pen, which portrays her as a 'crisis manager' and her battle against the corrupt political and social elites (Stockemer & Barisione, 2017).

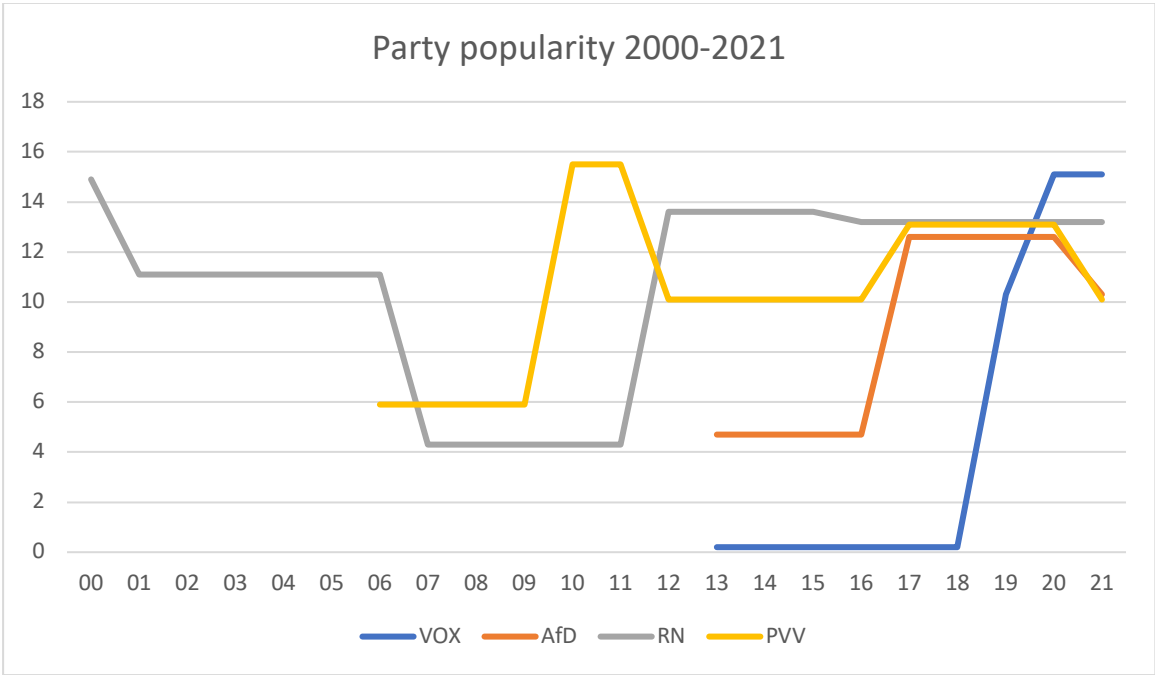


Figure 5.1: Party popularity in national assemblies in %. 2000-2021. Own elaboration.

Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) was, like VOX, founded as recently as 2013, and has also experience a fast surge of popularity since then (Jankowski, Schneider & Tepe, 2017; Gould, 2019). It is a party largely founded upon nationalism and initially neo-liberalism, although this has been replaced by a "new" nationalism based on *völkische* – i.e., racial principles. The party is considered radical right wing, populist, chauvinistic – and some go as far as denominating it the new Nazi party due to its biologically justified racism (Klikauer, 2020, Ch. 1). What makes AfD an interesting subject of comparison with VOX is how these seemingly ideologically similar parties from two different parts of the European continent have risen in two countries with a history of extreme-right or fascist rule. The horrors of the Nazi regime made people certain that such an ideology would not be embraced, nor tolerated, by Germany again (Kataeva, 2018). What more makes AfD interesting for a comparison to VOX is how the question of national identity is at the core of their ideologies (Gould, 2019). As pointed out by Gould (2019), a comparison between the two is a comparison of two very different countries which achieved stable democratic governments only after a period of extreme-right/fascist rule, and which now propagates similar right-wing views of national identity.

The Dutch Freedom Party - *Partij Voor De Vrijheid* (PVV) – is usually classified as national populist or radical right-wing populist. There is some debate among scholars regarding the populist classification of PVV (Lucardie, 2007, p. 181; Mudde, 2010; Vossen, 2011). National populist parties such as PVV are strictly opposed to immigration and supranational cooperation as these are perceived threats to national identity, and is also characterized by populist rhetoric in which politics is presented as a 'moral conflict between the corrupt elite and the virtuos people' (Vossen, 2011). The party is very much tainted and controlled by its leader, Geert Wilders. Wilders is particularly invested in a radical form of Islamophobia, based upon conspiracies on Islamification of Europe. The anti-immigrant stance is not only towards people from Muslim countries: Wilders also targets immigrants from countries such as Poland and Romania (Vossen, 2011). Despite Wilders' extreme stance and that he has been prosecuted for inciting hatred against Muslims, he has been successful in gathering public support and a significant number of seats in Parliament since the party's foundation in 2006 (Rooyackers & Verkuyten, 2012). Rather than identifying with the European party family, Wilders seeks out his political allies mainly in Israel and the United States, where the fight against Islamification is the main issue binding them together. Actively seeking non-European allies, and Wilders' interest for foreign policy are characteristics that distinguishes the PVV from the typical European radical right (Vossen, 2011).

5.3 Evaluating party platforms

I now turn to the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) in order to test the four European Radical Right parties' stance on three different issues asked in the most recent CHES.

5.3.1 Regionalism and decentralization

First, I turn to measure party positions on questions related to regionalism and decentralization in order to test for H1. The three chosen variables illustrate party positions on decentralization of political power, positions on EU Cohesion policy and positions on decision-making by the people VS by politicians (presented in table 5.1)

The regions variable describes each party's position on political decentralization to regions/localities on a scale from 0 (strongly in favor) to 10 (strongly opposed) (Jolly, et al., 2022). With background in Vox's hostility to decentralization, which is related to Catalan secessionism, we expect to see a strong or even extreme position on this point. As for AfD, RN and PVV, there are no findings in party ideology or rhetoric suggesting remotely as extreme positions on this issue as with VOX.

The second variable measures party positions on the EU cohesion policy on a scale from 1 (strongly opposed) to 7 (strongly favors). The cohesion policy, or the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was set up in order to help redress regional imbalances within the EU, its goal being strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion through financial contributions. This support is provided to Member States with a gross national income per capita below 90% of the EU-27 average (European Commission, 2021). The cohesion policy was intensified when Spain, Portugal and Greece joined the union (Maynou, Saez, Kyriacou, & Bacaria, 2016). Recalling that the EU and VOX clashes over regional policy, we can assume that VOX will take a hostile position on the Cohesion policy. At the same time, we know that Southern and Eastern European

countries are beneficiaries of this policy, which can cause VOX to take a positive stance on Cohesion policies overall (European Commission, 2016).

Finally, people VS elite is a variable measuring party positions on the people’s role in politics as opposed to the elected representatives. This is measured on a scale from 0 (elected representatives should make important decisions) to 10 (the people should make important decisions). Now, at first glance this is not a variable measuring positions on decentralization directly. It can, however, tell us something about how the party values the voice of the people in political matters. Some parties defend ‘the people’s right to decide on important political issues (e.g. through referendums), and this is a typical position of populist parties. Meanwhile, other parties argue for the elected representatives’ (e.g. politicians) right to do so, which is more of a characteristic of traditional, authoritarian parties. Remembering how one of VOX’s main causes is the centralization of political power due to fear of further fragmentation, we expect VOX to intake a position in favor of the elite’s priority in decision-making. Maintaining power in the hands of the elected representatives goes very much hand in hand with the authoritarianism that characterizes VOX.

Party	Regions(decentralizaion) (0-10)	Eu cohesion policy (1-7)	People VS elite (0-10)
VOX	9,9	5,3	1,8
AfD	5,9	3	8,3
RN	4,6	2	7,8
PVV	7,3	1	9,3

Table 5.1: Questions gauging party positions on decentralization, EU Cohesion policy and the people’s say in political issues

In table 5.1 we can see how VOX is extremely opposed to political decentralization. This is according to what we expect, always remembering VOX’s position on the Catalan referendum, which was conducted by the regional government. As seen, a centralized, strong state to prevent strong regional governments is a central in VOX’s ideology. Furthermore, we can tell that AfD and PVV are also opposed to political decentralization, while RN is in favor. AfD and RN take neutral in-between positions to on this question, and the PVV is moderately opposed to decentralization. Now, such varied results must be seen in light of the structural organization of the countries in question. France is a unitary state in which successionist movements do not exist. A score of 4,6 for RN can point to the simple fact that decentralization is not a politicized issue in France. This is a contrast to Spain, which since centuries has been organized in autonomous regions, and in which the succession threat is indeed present. Germany is already organized in regions with high level of self-determination. It is reasonable to believe that a succession movement would not get a grasp in a small country such as the Netherlands, and the issue is likely not on the political agenda.

RN, AfD and particularly PVV are strongly opposed to the EU Cohesion policy. This does correspond with their hard Euroscepticism, rooted in a critical stance on supranationalism and threats to national sovereignty overall. What these countries have in common is that they are all wealthy Central European countries and are not beneficiaries of the Cohesion policy. VOX is quite in favor of the EU cohesion policy, which can be linked to the fact

that Spain is among the less wealthy countries in the EU. Although VOX adopts a soft Euroscepticism (Turnbull-Dugarte, Rama, & Santana, 2020), the benefits of these funds might prevail hard feelings against the EU. We know that for example Andalucía, one of the regions where VOX has the most support, is a recipient of Cohesion funds (European Commission, 2016).

When gauging the parties' positions on the people's role in politics vs the elected representatives (variable 'people VS elite'), the most prominent finding is how VOX is situated at the lower extreme, which very clearly distinguishes VOX from the three other parties. This indicates that VOX defends the elected representatives', or politicians', right to decide on important political issues. This is as expected with background in VOX's fierce defense of the authoritarian, sovereign state against. It is reasonable to ascribe this to the secessionist threat from the Catalan referendum, again; the focal point of VOX's ideology. Secessionism is a big potential issue to the sovereign Spanish state, and lending power to the people could fuel such a threat.

AfD, RN and particularly the PVV again share similar positions in favor of the people's right to decide. Their positions in favor of the people's right to decision-making coordinates well with their anti-elite, populist ideologies. Specifically for RN, its position can be ascribed to Le Pen's populist discourse, which Stockemer & Barisione (2017) accurately names a 'combination of people-centrism and anti-elitism'. Le Pen actively addresses those who feel left behind in the globalized post-materialist (e.g. 'globalization losers').

To summarize the findings, we can conclude that the hypothesis regarding the central/periphery issues' importance in VOX as contrary to other RRPPs is confirmed. This is observed in VOX's more extreme positions against decentralization, comparing to moderate or even positive stances among the three other parties. It is also seen in the defense of political decision-making in the hands of elected politicians, not the people. From VOX's positive stance on EU cohesion policy despite its Euroscepticism we can derive that VOX is ambivalent on its EU position.

5.3.2 Economy

I will now look at party positions related to economy by examining four variables, in order to test H2. These variables are presented in table 5.2. Variable one tests for the parties' ideological stance from the extreme right (10) to the extreme left(0), which is a simple way of placing each party on the left-right economic axis. Variable two tests blurriness on the ideological stance. Remembering that position blurring is found to be a deliberate strategy for RRPPs to attract larger constituencies (Rovny, 2013), we expect the populist parties to score high on this variable.

The economic intervention variable measures positions on statal economic intervention from 0 (in favor) to 10 (against). A high score would indicate a party in favor of a liberal market flow, such as is characteristic for the *traditional* radical right, but less so for the contemporary radical right. EU Budget authority is a variable measuring party positions on EU authority over member countries' economic and budgetary policies.

In terms of the parties' ideological stance on economic issues, all parties score a far-right position. It is evident though, that while AfD, RN and PVV all score evenly between a center stance (5) and an extreme right stance, VOX is very much extreme right on economic issues. This goes accompanied by a low score on party stance blurriness on economic issues, indicating that VOX's position on economic issues is very much clear

and indisputable. Meanwhile, RN, PVV and AfD hold a more moderate right ideological stance on economy. This corresponds well with what we know about the radical right becoming less radical and more conservative economic matters, moving towards the political center. The same three parties are also quite blurred on their economic positions, which also fits well with what we know about the populist radical right and position blurring.

Party	Ideological stance (0-10)	Ideological stance blurriness (0-10)	Economic intervention (0-10)	EU Budget authority (1-7)
VOX	9,3	2,1	8,5	3
AfD	7	6,7	6,3	1,4
RN	6,9	5,8	3,9	1
PVV	6,5	6,4	6,8	1,1

Table 5.2 Questions measuring party positions on economic issues

As for economic intervention, there are wide-ranging results: from 8,5 for VOX to 3,9 for RN, and the two remaining parties in between. RN's center-right ideological stance together with a favorable position on state intervention serves as an example on how a formerly extreme right, neoliberal party has shifted closer towards the center on economic issues, as existing literature indicates (Ivaldi, 2015). VOX's very low score is according to the expected and shows a liberal and more traditional radical right position on the economic axis.

Positions on EU authority over member states' economic and budgetary policies are also varied. RN's score of 1, together with its favorable position on state intervention, points to a strong preference for national authority over economic issues. Opposition to EU budget authority is in line with what we know about the protectionist stance the Eurosceptic radical right tends to take. VOX is also clearly against EU budget authority (although somewhat less than RN), which goes along with its overall liberal stance on economic intervention. AfD and PVV defend a more liberal economic position, and are both strictly against EU budget authority.

VOX's extreme right ideological stance on issues is stronger than those of the other parties in question. It is also more in favor of a liberal market flow without state intervention. These findings, combined with the indisputability of VOX's stance, explains us how VOX, as the traditional radical right, is an economically neoliberal party. It does not share the more central positions on economic issues and populist characteristic of position blurring as the 'new' populist radical right does – here illustrated by the cases of RN, PVV and AfD. This means we can confirm hypothesis two that VOX does indeed represent a traditionalist radical right stance on issues – different from other RRPPs today (H2).

5.3.3 Immigration

I now turn to assess party positions on immigration. I do so by analyzing results from four different variables (seen in table 5.3) measuring the immigration issue from different angles. The first variable measures whether the party generally favors liberal

immigration policies (0) or restrictive immigration policies (10). Knowing that anti-immigration ideology is a large part of most radical right parties, we expect all four parties to defend a restrictive immigration policy. Variable two examines party positions on multiculturalism from 0 (strongly in favor) to 10 (strongly against), which allow us to understand whether parties favor assimilation of asylum seekers and other immigrants or if they are open to multiculturalism. As with the first variable we expect an overall negative position among the parties.

Variable three measures the salience of anti-Islam rhetoric for the party from 0(not important at all) to 10(extremely important). The central European parties AfD, PVV and RN have all targeted Muslim immigrants specifically in their anti-immigrant discourse and perceive these as a larger threat to their culture than other immigrants; hence, we expect this issue to be important to these. Salience of the immigration issue overall in party discourse is measured in variable four (0 = no importance, 10 = great importance). Immigration is a highly politicized issue by the radical right and we do expect a high saliency on this. Remembering how immigration is important, but not necessarily *the* most prominent issue in VOX ideology, we expect anti-Islam rhetoric and the immigration issue to be less important to VOX than to the three other parties.

Looking at table 5.3, we can quickly establish that all parties are extremely restrictive on immigration policy. AfD, PVV and RN are entirely against multiculturalism, while VOX is slightly less opposed (8,6 out of 10). As for anti-Islam rhetoric, this is found to be very present in AfD, RN and PVV’s rhetoric, all with scores of >9,5. VOX stands some out with only a moderate score of 7 out of 10 on the importance of anti-Islam rhetoric. Muslim immigration has not been as politicized in Spain as in countries such as the Netherlands and France, which is why less salience of this issue is expected. A score of 7 does still indicates moderate importance of anti-Islam rhetoric.

The fourth variable on immigration salience shows that immigration is a subject of great importance to all parties. The results are according to our expectations for PVV, AfD and RN. VOX does have the lower score of 9,5 – but this is still a high score, indicating that immigration is indeed an issue as important to VOX as it is to other RRPPs. This result breaks with the expectation of lower salience of immigration for VOX.

Party	Immigration policy (0-10)	Multiculturalism (0-10)	Anti-Islam rhetoric (0-10)	Immigration Salience
VOX	9,8	8,6	7	9,5
AfD	9,9	9,9	9,5	9,8
RN	9,8	10	9,5	9,9
PVV	9,9	9,9	9,9	9,9

Table 5.3 Questions measuring party positions on immigration and multiculturalism

All results indicate that anti-immigration and assimilation are important issues to all four parties. VOX is slightly less opposed to multiculturalism than PVV, RN and AfD, but is still opposed to it. We have also uncovered that anti-Islam rhetoric is less important to VOX than it is to the three other parties. Immigration is highly salient in all four parties’ ideology, including VOX. This means that VOX does not stand notably out, and hypothesis three has not been proven.

6 Conclusion

This thesis has compared the Spanish radical right party VOX to three other parties from the same party family in Europe. The purpose was to prove that VOX is ideologically different from two older radical right parties – the PVV and RN – and another young one; the AfD. I expected Vox to be notably more invested in the decentralization issue, neoliberal on economic issues, and its discourse to be less immigration oriented. In analyzing CHES results on relevant questions, I have uncovered that VOX is indeed different than its party family members.

VOX's radical right positioning on the economic left-right axis and low score on position blurring speaks about a party which stays wedded to the traditionalist economic stance of the radical right. It fills a gap in representing the radical right both on the social, cultural and economic axes. This differs from the rest of the 'new' radical right in Europe, which is attempting to 'rebrand' itself as less extreme and more socially acceptable than former radical discourse. This does not mean the ideology of the radical right has changed overall, but rather how it brands itself. They blur their positions on conflicting issues, in order to attract a larger constituency. This is not the case with VOX.

Decentralization is indeed a far more salient issue in VOX's ideology than in the other three parties', which can be explained by historical and structural differences. The Spanish radical right only mobilized when the unity of the Spanish nation was threatened during and after the succession crisis in Catalonia, not by economic or immigration crises. In analyzing decentralization, I have also uncovered that VOX is not a typical populist party. This was proven in its preference for the elected representatives' right to decision-making above that of the people. This is different from the very typical populist discourse in favor of the people, as opposed to the 'elite'. This is also supported by arguments by scholars that VOX's populist trait is ambivalent. Immigration was found to be close to as important to VOX as to the rest of the parties analyzed, meaning that we cannot claim that this is not a very important issue to VOX's ideology and rhetoric.

This thesis bases its analysis on solely data from CHES. It is based on classifications and assessments by experts at a certain point in time. While it is quite evident that the Catalan crisis has played an important role in the foundation of VOX, it would be interesting to see future studies on what makes VOX sustain its popularity, as the crisis settles. Using public opinion banks could be nice to get a better understanding of what makes people prone to vote for this party.

7 References

- Bakker, R., Jolly, S., & Polk, J. (2020). Multidimensional incongruence, political disaffection, and support for anti-establishment parties. *Review of European Public Policy*, 27(2), 292-309 DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2019.1701534.
- Bakker, R., Vries, d., C., E. E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., Marks, G., . . . & Vachudova, M. A. (2012). Measuring party positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill expert survey trend file, 1999–2010. *Party Politics*, 21(1), 143-152
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068812462931>.
- Betz, H. G., & Johnson, C. (2006). Against the current - stemming the tide: the nostalgic ideology of the contemporary radical populist right. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 9(3), 311-327 <https://doi.org/10.1080/1356931042000263546>.
- Brigevich, A. (2012). Peeling Back the Layers: Territorial Identity and EU Support in Spain. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 22(2), 205-230
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2012.668136> .
- CHESDATA. (2022). Retrieved March 28th 2022 from Chapel Hill Expert Survey:
<https://www.chesdata.eu/ches-europe>
- European Commission. (2016). Retrieved May 2nd 2022, from European Structural and Investment Funds:
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/policy/what/investment-policy/esif-country-factsheet/esi_funds_country_factsheet_es_en.pdf
- European Commission. (2021). Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund. *Official Journal of the European Union*, Retrieved April 25th 2022, from EUR-Lex: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32021R1058>
- Fernández Suárez, B. (2021). Gender and immigration in Vox. The discourse of the radical right in Spain. *Migraciones*(51), 241-268 DOI: mig.i51y2021.009.
- Ferreira, C. (2019). Vox como representante de la derecha radical en España: un estudio sobre su ideología. *Revista Española de Ciencia Política*, 51, 73-98
<https://doi.org/10.21308/recp.51.03>.
- Gould, R. (2019). Vox España and Alternative für Deutschland: Propagating the Crisis of National Identity. *Genealogy*, 3(64), doi:10.3390/genealogy3040064.
- Guibernau, M. (2013). Prospects for an Independent Catalonia. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, 27(1), 5-23 DOI:10.1007/s10767-013-9165-4.
- Hart, A. (2021). Right-Wing Waves: Applying the Four Waves Theory to Transnational and Transhistorical Right-Wing Threat Trends. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, DOI: 10.1080/09546553.2020.1856818.

- Hobolt, S., & Tilley, J. (2016). Fleeing the centre: the rise of challenger parties in the aftermath of the Euro crisis. *West European Politics*, 39(5), 971–91.
- Hooghe, L., Bakker, R., Brigevid, A., de Vries, C., Edwards, E., Marks, G., & A., V. M. (2010). Reliability and Validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill Expert Surveys on Party Positioning. *European Journal of Political Research*, 49(4), 687-703 HAL Id: hal-02182423.
- Ivaldi, G. (2015). Towards the median economic crisis voter? The new leftist economic agenda of the Front National in France. *French Politics*, 13(4), 346-369 DOI:10.1057/fp.2015.17.
- Jankowski, M., Schneider, S., & Tepe, M. (2017). Ideological alternative? Analyzing Alternative für Deutschland candidates' ideal points via black box scaling. *Party Politics*, 23(6), 704-716 DOI: 10.1177/1354068815625230.
- Jolly, S., Bakker, R., Hooghe, L., Marks, G., Polk, J., Rovny, J., . . . Vachudova, M. A. (2022). *1999-2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) trend file*. Retrieved February 22nd 2022 fra chesdata.eu: <https://www.chesdata.eu/1999-2019chestrend>
- Kataeva, M. (2018). *The Rise of German Right Radical Movements*. (2 (3)) Retrieved April 4th 2022 fra Mgimo University: <https://sgpjournal.mgimo.ru/2018/2018-3/the-rise-of-german-right>
- Klikauer, T. (2020). *Alternative für Deutschland - The AfD: Germany's New Nazis or Another Populist Party?* Sussex Academic Press. Retrieved April 15th from <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2406781&site=ehost-live>.
- Lucardie, A. (2007). Rechts-extremisme, populisme of democratisch patriottisme? Opmerkingen over de politieke plaatsbepaling van de Partij voor de Vrijheid en Trots op Nederland. *Jaarboek 2007 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen*.
- Marcos-Marne, H., & Plaza-Colodro, C. (2021). Populism and new radical-right parties: The case of VOX. *Politics*, 1-15 <https://doi.org/10.1177/02633957211019587>.
- Maynou, L., Saez, M., Kyriacou, A., & Bacaria, J. (2016). The Impact of Structural and Cohesion Funds on Eurozone Convergence, 1990-2010. *Regional Studies*, 50(7), 1127-1139 DOI: 10.1080/00343404.2014.965137.
- Mudde, C. (2000). *The Ideology of the Extreme Right*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2010). *The Geert Wilders Enigma*. Retrieved April 5th 2022 from Open Democracy: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/geert-wilders-enigma/>
- Mudde, C. (2013). Three Decades of populist radical right parties in Western Europe: So what? *European Journal of Political Research*, 52, 1-19, doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6765.2012.02065.x.

- Mudde, C. (2016). The Study of Populist Radical Right Parties: Towards a Fourth Wave. *C-REX Working Paper(1)*, Retrieved March 27th from <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/publications/c-rex-working-paper-series/Cas%20Mudde:%20The%20Study%20of%20Populist%20Radical%20Right%20Parties.pdf>.
- Núñez, X.-M. (2001). What is Spanish nationalism today? From legitimacy crisis to unfulfilled renovation (1975-2000). *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(5), 719-752 DOI: 10.1080/01419870120063954.
- Polk, J., Rovny, J., Bakker, R., Edwards, E., Hooghe, L., Jolly, S., & ...Zilovic, M. (2017). Explaining the salience of anti-elitism and reducing political corruption for political parties in Europe with the 2014 Chapel Hill Expert Survey data. *Research & Politics*, 4(1), 1-9 <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168016686915>.
- Risse, T. (2011). *A Community of Europeans? Transnational Identities and Public Spheres*. (P. E. Central, Ed.) Cornell University Press.
- Roodujin, M., Bonikowski, B., & Parlevliet, J. (2021). Populist and nativist attitudes: Does ingroup-outgroup thinking spill over across domains? *European Union Politics*, 22(2), 248-265 DOI: 10.1177/1465116521992876.
- Rooyackers, I. N., & Verkuyten, M. (2012). Mobilizing support for the extreme right: A discursive analysis of minority leadership. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 51, 130-148 DOI:10.1111/j.2044-8309.2010.02008.x.
- Rovny, J. (2013). Where do radical right parties stand? Position blurring in multidimensional competition. *European Political Science Review*, 5(1), 1-26 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773911000282>.
- Rydgren, J. (2005). Is extreme right-wing populism contagious? Explaining the emergence of a new party family. *European Journal of Political Research*, 44(3), 413-437 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2005.00233.x>.
- Rydgren, J. (2007). The Sociology of the Radical Right. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33, 241-262 <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.33.040406.131752>.
- Santana, A., Zagórski, P., & Rama, J. (2020). At odds with Europe: explaining populist radical right voting in Central and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics*, 36(2), 288-309 <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2020.1737523>.
- Stockemer, D. (2016). Structural Data on Immigration or Immigration Perceptions? What Accounts for the Electoral Success of the Radical Right in Europe? *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54(4), 999-1016 DOI: 10.1111/jcms.12341.
- Stockemer, D., & Barisione, M. (2017). The 'new' discourse of the Front National under Marine Le Pen: A slight change with a big impact. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 100-115 DOI: 10.1177/0267323116680132.
- Taggart, P. (2004). Populism and representative politics in contemporary Europe. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 9(3), 269-288 DOI: 10.1080/1356931042000263528.
- Turnbull-Dugarte, S. J. (2019). Explaining the end of Spanish exceptionalism and electoral support for Vox. *Research and Politics* 6(2), 1-8 <https://doi.org/10.1177/2053168019851680>.

- Turnbull-Dugarte, S. J., Rama, J., & Santana, A. (2020). The Baskerville's dog suddenly started barking: voting for VOX in the 2019 Spanish general elections. *Political Research Exchange*, 2(1), DOI: 10.1080/2474736X.2020.1781543.
- Vasilopoulou, S. (2017). Theory, concepts and research design in the study of Euroscepticism. In B. Leruth, N. Startin, & S. Usherwood, *The Routledge Handbook of Euroscepticism* (pp. 22-35). Routledge.
- Verhaegen, S. (2018). What to expect from European identity? Explaining support for solidarity in times of crisis. *Comparative European Politics*, 16(5), 871-904 DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/s41295-017-0106-x>.
- Vossen, K. (2011). Classifying Wilders: The Ideological Development of Geert Wilders and His Party for Freedom. *Politics*, 31(3), 179-189 Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1467-9256.2011.01417.x>.
- Vox. (2021). *100 medidas para la España Viva*. Retrieved March 26th from Vox España: <https://www.voxespana.es/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/VOX-100-medidas-corregidas.pdf>

