

The conflict between left and right on the policy of immigration

Dihan Chen *

Xi'an Gaoxin No.1 High School, Xian, China

*Corresponding author: 3180501029@caa.edu.cn

Abstract. Right-wing populism, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, has had notable impact on politicizing migration and immigration in Western Europe. In contrast to economic concerns about immigration, the far right's ethnocentric, anti-immigration identity politics became more prevalent in the early 2000s. This study investigates the extent to which the far right's exploitation of multiculturalism and ethnocentrism in Western European party systems remains unrelated to economic conflict. In nine Western European nations, party competition is structured by a more recent multiculturalism-ethnocentrism dimension, and we examine how it interacts with the traditional left-right economic dimension. In 1999, the positions of political parties on multiculturalism and economics were largely distinct; however, by 2009, the two dimensions had become highly correlated, and by 2014, the correlation had grown even stronger. Both the de facto adoption of rightist economic policies by the extreme right and the mainstream right's growing ethnocentrism have contributed to this shift. Some claim that the far right is driving this realignment, and the policy implications are discussed.

Keywords: immigration, European parties, left-wing and right-wing, extreme right parties (ERPs).

1. Introduction

Western Europe has seen an increase in immigration since the Second World War's conclusion. We discussed a wide range of immigration-related political implications in the section previously, including partisan electoral competition. Despite the fact that this list is not all-inclusive, immigration-related sociodemographic changes have been associated with the emergence of extreme right-wing groups. The structural implications of electoral reform parties (ERPs) on party systems, and particularly on the mainstream Right, have been extensively researched, as have ERPs and their support base. The subject of this investigation is individuals who back political parties that want electoral change. It is common to identify this group as the primary target of political discourse opposing immigrants. In Western Europe, an anti-immigrant tendency has become popular among some major right-wing parties for them to gain support and influence amid the conflict of ideas between social democrats and socialists. All around Western Europe, these incidents take place. But there hasn't been much thought given to how opposition from right-wing extremists has influenced the positions chosen by left-wing parties on immigration issues. The radical right, and the "mainstream left" which refers to the socialist and social democratic parties, saw disagreements over their opinions on the matters applying to social diversity. The "mainstream left" had strong ideological justification for doing so.

The fundamental goals of this study are twofold: first, to investigate the immigration-related election strategies of mainstream left parties; and second, to investigate the immigration-related behavior of mainstream parties both when electoral reform parties are present and when they are not (ERPs). According to the first premise of this thesis, the mainstream right, as well as the mainstream left, employed a passive sentiment on immigration, independent of competition among radical right-wing organizations within the party system. According to my second argument, when people on the mainstream right and/or extreme right start talking badly about immigrants, those on the mainstream left will likely become more critical of immigration concerns. Previous study on the effects of immigration on party competitiveness has mostly ignored the mainstream Left, which is examined in depth in this piece. My analysis is mostly concerned with describing things. I have no desire to explain the actions of party members. Rather, I investigate why it appears that major left-side parties are divided between theory and tactics when it appears into immigration, which frequently comes at the

expense of their commitment to socialist principles of internationalism. Immigration not only has its own political importance in these states in the context of postcolonialism, but decisions concerning immigration policy are increasingly being decided at the supranational level, influencing all party systems across Europe. Contagion and imitation effects are possible even when there are no ERPs and no historical ties to disease-bearing areas.

2. Origin, history of the left and right

The terms "left party" and "right party" were first used in relation to the French Revolution, which took place in 1789. The individuals who were chosen to serve in the National Assembly were divided into two categories (M. Mignet). People who support the monarchy are sat to the president's immediate right, while people who support the revolution are located to the president's immediate left. Each part represents a different viewpoint on the king. Supporters of liberalism, also known as libertarianism, and supporters of conservatism, sometimes known as conservatism, can be loosely divided into two groups. To give a more detailed explanation of this expression, liberalism and democracy are both ideologies that support freedom and equality. The supporters of the king, however, preferred an aristocratic style of monarchy that was backed by the notion of authority and order, whilst the revolutionaries preferred a more libertarian type of democracy. As a result, those who favor democracy, liberalism, and equality are seen to be "to the political left" of those who favor monarchy, conservatism, and law. This is due to the fact that order, conservatism, and monarchy value equality more than equality. So, according to what we're told, it involves a dislike of force, authority, tradition, and a yearning for freedom, tolerance, individualism, and reason on the one hand. Alternatively, it implies "the concept of limited government, the rule of law, the avoidance of arbitrary or discretionary power, the sanctity of private property and freely entered into contracts, and individual responsibility for their own fates," which is complicated by "state involvement in the economy, democracy, welfare policies, and moral and cultural progress." Conservatism is a philosophical, cultural, and social movement that aims to preserve and protect long-standing societal institutions and traditions. Conservatism's fundamental ideals may alter depending on the culture and civilization from which it emerges. Conservatives in Western civilizations want to protect a number of institutions, such as parliamentary rule, property rights, and organized religion. Conservatives support institutions and practices that give stability and have evolved steadily. Conservatives typically reject progressivism and advocate for a return to traditional values. (A distinction between liberal and conservative ideology is made.)

Shortly after the left completely took over France during the revolution, The rise of two far-left groups is notable to us. The Girondins and the Jacobins, despite being far-left, were still to the right of the more radical-left Jacobins.

In the beginning, the Jacobins and Girondins worked together to topple the right-wing (also known as supporters of the monarchy). However, by the time the Jacobin Reign of Terror began, their relationship had become strained. The assassination of Jean-Paul Marat, a political writer on the Jacobin party's extreme left wing, was the spark that ignited the Jacobin Reign of Terror. The situation has become much more precarious. The more conservative organizations, such as the Girondins, were a cause for concern for the Jacobins when Robespierre was leading the charge. Between 25,000 and 40,000 people in France lost their heads when the guillotine was used to execute them during the reign of terror. The specific numbers appear to be 16,594 deaths by guillotine (2,639 in Paris alone), and approximately 25,000 executions by summary throughout France. Since the Jacobins meticulously documented everything and tried to maintain the law even while they were carrying out their horrific acts, the figures on the guillotine are probably fairly accurate.

In this instance, the Jacobins have consistently been upholders of liberal values and adherence to the law. Therefore, although they participated in far-right authoritarian activities such as beheading and lynching, they were, in essence, a far-left party. (M. Mignet) This can be seen in the fact that it not only sheds light on a significant period of political history but also explains the fundamentals of

the political left and right and appears to show that those concepts will always be comprehensible in both comparative and absolute terms. This is significant for several reasons, including the fact that it sheds light on a significant period of political history.

The aforementioned "left side" and "right side" can be condensed as follows: the Left, Liberals, and Democracies are inclined toward liberty and equality, while the Right, Conservatives, and Monarchies are inclined toward authority, order, and tradition. As a result, we are able to discover that those on the right are always members of the upper classes who maintain a protective viewpoint of royal sight and adhere to the conventional manner of doing things. The left wing of the political spectrum typically has a more progressive worldview and acts as a voice for those in lower social classes. They have a more open mind to new experiences and are more receptive to political change. The middle classes constitute the core of society. During the time of the French Revolution, those on the left were more likely to engage in radical political action, whereas those on the right maintained a more traditional approach to politics. This pattern is straightforward to comprehend given that they have not changed at all.

In today's society, the labels "left" and "right" retain their original meanings, with those who defend tradition and authority on the right and those who advocate for liberty and equality on the left. As globalization becomes increasingly widespread, those on the left who are more liberal are adopting numerous new concepts. In contrast, upper-class individuals are more prone to be conservative towards these new developments. Eventually, there will be an occurrence of conflict. To investigate this topic, we can stay in their country, Europe, and look at a specific case in current culture.

Large numbers of unauthorized immigrants from the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia tried between 2007 and 2011 to enter Europe through Turkey and Greece, but the construction of a border barrier between these two nations effectively shut the door to that path. Then, traveling by boat for migrants in search of a safer, more tranquil, and wealthier existence somewhere else became the main trend. Particularly in the months following the 2011 Libyan Revolution, it boosted the migrant migration from the Libyan coast across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy—considered the world's deadliest path.

In total, EU countries provided protection to approximately 257,000 refugees in 2021. Is this a chance to save Europe's low fertility rate or a disaster for the European government? When we look at refugee electoral rights, we can see a fight between the left and the right. And how extremist right-wing parties play a role in these disputes. To be more specific, we look at the relationship between the classic economic left-right dimension and a more contemporary multiculturalism-ethnocentrism component, which are both used to frame party competition in nine Western European countries. The tendency is being driven by both the mainstream right's growing ethnocentrism and the extreme right's de facto adoption of rightist economic views. These two things are inextricably linked. The far right is thought to be the key actors responsible for this realignment, and the policy implications are being studied.

3. The left and right parties

3.1 left parties and their policy on immigration

As a direct result of the politics surrounding immigration, both the Socialist Party and the Social Democratic Party find themselves in an ideological and tactical bind. This is a result of the diverse policy preferences of the voter within the mainstream Left. These parties are likely to draw supporters with strong liberal sociocultural ideals, wealth, education, and a penchant for universalist (rather than nationalist) social equality and unity. On the other hand, these parties are popular with those who favor nationalist social equality and unity over universalist ones. On the other hand, the working class, who is thought to be the main beneficiary of redistribution and who is more likely to be badly impacted by the effects of economic globalization, supports these parties. The latter has enormous implications for the parties that make up the mainstream of the Left and severely limits how progressive these parties can be on immigration issues. Its importance cannot be overstated. Given

that the green and other minor parties were growing, the right's serious threat, and the splitting of their base, the Socialist Party and Social Democratic Party are in a particularly perilous position. They are in a very perilous situation as a result of all of these circumstances. The topic of immigration is also rising in importance on the national agenda.

The mainstream Left's choices are determined by the constituency that it prioritizes when immigration becomes a "hot" topic. Is it more concerned with keeping votes from lower socioeconomic classes from switching to mainstream or extreme right parties or with keeping liberal socioculturally inclined voters from switching to far-left parties? According to the tenets of spatial theories of party behavior, the Left's mainstream will strive to take a position that appeals to the majority of voters (Downs, 1957). If the right places a negative focus on immigration problems, the mainstream of the left will merge with the right on these issues. The Left will decide to disregard the subject at hand or, to put it another way, will decide to emphasize its own problems, according to the saliency theory of political rivalry. In other words, the Left will decide to emphasize their own problems.

3.2 The policy of immigration by right and extreme right political parties (ERPs)

Since the right's critical stance on these issues aligns with the views of the majority of people, immigration issues are seen to be the subject of political struggle for the right. Voters frequently see mainstream right parties as taking a harsher stance on immigration than their leftist counterparts, according to empirical studies. Right-wing manifestos seem to prioritize political solutions to immigration, particularly when it comes to law and order. This enables major right-wing parties to compete with mainstream left-wing parties in election programs that emphasize immigration, nationalism, and xenophobia.

The problem has changed with the introduction of ERPs into the political process. It is not always beneficial for the mainstream right to push for immigration, asylum, and racial issues because doing so may cost them adherents of the extreme right. On the other side, the mainstream right may profit from using the "immigrant card." These parties do far better than the mainstream Left, in Bale's opinion (2003). This is because ERPs prefer Conservatives and Christian Democrats to Socialists and Social Democrats. Several analysts have emphasized the importance of the small center-right and center-left parties. A partnership between these parties and the mainstream right is also probable, but if there are actual differences between them on social and cultural matters, they may switch to the left. The political mildness and ambitions to seek more say in the government of the center & center-right, as well as the extreme right's appeal to anti-immigrant sentiment, have imprisoned the mainstream right. These writers contend that in a number of Scandinavian nations, the extreme right defines its immigration-related policy agenda in relation to the center and center-right parties.

The emphasis on law and order, as well as ethno-nationalism, are two distinguishing features of European ERPs (Mudde, 1999). They use hyperbole to portray immigration as a threat to the nation's security and welfare, as well as a cultural invasion. When confronted with ERPs, established parties are forced to stress immigration in their political programs and move support to the far right (Evans et al., 2001; Meguid, 2008).

ERPs' emergence has an equal impact on all major parties due to their cross-class appeal. However, during the 1990s, the Left has faced particularly serious electoral challenges. Working-class anti-immigrant activists and middle-class neoliberal sympathizers formed the "winning formula" of the ERPs, which has increased interest in "welfare chauvinism," the advocacy of limiting benefit to foreign residents while extending it to local inhabitants. Working-class voters' anti-immigrant sentiment creates a political chasm that ERPs may exploit. As a result, they have essentially abandoned their neoliberal ideology in order to focus on the socioeconomic issues surrounding party competition. ERPs have attracted members of the Socialist and Social Democratic parties since the late 1980s.

According to some analysts, major left-wing parties can succeed by adopting a conservative stance on social and cultural problems. Previous studies have shown that in order to entice members of the

mainstream right to join extremist right-wing parties (ERPs), the mainstream left has continuously backed the anti-immigrant viewpoints of ERPs. For Social Democrats, this was the scenario in Austria, Germany, and France

According to (Meguid 2008), this is a "adversarial method" in which the mainstream Left advances in the opposite way as its ERP opponents, keeping pro-immigration policies and preventing left-libertarian votes from defecting to minor parties. In the 1980s, the French Socialists employed this tactic. Although it may bring short-term electoral benefits, it is unlikely to provide long-term benefits to the mainstream Left.

4. Discussion

According to the findings of our research, issues concerning immigration have been given a greater amount of weight on the policy agendas of Western Europe's parties ever since the middle of the 1970s. This is the case regardless of whether or not ERPs are active in the political arenas of national governments. In point of fact, the mainstream Right has successfully taken control of these issues in regions where such groups have very little influence in the political process. The globalization of government and the Europeanization of government are two factors that are likely to have contributed to an increase in the significance of immigration concerns in the majority of the West European countries that were investigated, with the effects of dispersion and imitation possibly completing the process. As a direct consequence of this, ERPs will be unable to stop mainstream parties on the left and right from becoming more radical in their immigration policies. In a number of nations, we can observe that shifts in the positions held by mainstream parties have been followed by the establishment of opposition parties that are able to win elections (ERPs).

The paper aims to show that perspectives on the immigration issue are not entirely in agreement with one another. Instead, there has been a growing divide between left-leaning and right-leaning political parties across the board, with the exception of Germany and Austria. Both countries, which do not have a conservative party, have seen the rise of socialists and Christian Democrats in combination with the lack of a conservative party. Our findings provide credence to assertion that the polarization of opinions held by major political parties about immigration may make it easier for ERPs to coalesce.

The field of competition widens and the mainstream parties eventually lose significant amounts of support as new issues emerge that are legitimately supported by smaller parties on the new left and extreme right. It became evident throughout our discussion on immigration-related issues how much more limited the left's alternatives are in comparison to the right's. On the other hand, the rise of new leftist parties that favor capitalism and liberal ideologies may pose a socioeconomic danger to the right. Conservative right-wingers, on the other hand, find it very difficult to accept any threat brought on by the left-wing parties' actions. They will ultimately differ on issues pertaining to immigration.

5. Conclusion

According to my study, Western European countries' political parties have been more motivated by immigration-related concerns since the middle of the 1970s. This is true regardless of whether or not electoral reform parties are involved in regional or federal politics. In areas where these groups have little influence on electoral politics, the mainstream Right has successfully absorbed these concerns in practice. Policies have been amended following the trend of Europeanization and globalization, which is going to boost the awareness of immigration challenges in the majority of the West European nations surveyed; diffusion and imitation effects may have been the remaining variables. Therefore, without having to worry about ERP opposition, mainstream parties on the left and right may radicalize their immigration policies. Following the adoption of new positions by the nation's most powerful political parties, I have seen the emergence of electorally significant alternative political parties (ERPS) in a few countries. This does not mean that individuals on the

extreme right have no impact on the election process; they do. However, it has a greater impact on Left-leaning individuals than it does on traditionalist right-leaning individuals. My analysis of party systems using ERPs reveals two key trends: first, the mainstream Left's "anti-immigrant turn" throughout the 1990s correlated with a shift in ERPs on the socioeconomic dimension of electoral competition, making it easier for the two sides to disagree on these issues. Both of these tendencies may be present in party systems that employ ERP. In summary, if the country's dominant left-wing party has a pertinent ERP that promotes a more welfare chauvinism mentality, it is likely to become more outspoken and anti-immigration. This is due to the connection between ERPs and welfare chauvinism. Finally, the findings of our poll show that there are divergent perspectives toward the immigration problem. Instead, with the exception of Germany and Austria, every region of the world has become more and more split between the left and the right. In both countries, which do not have a Conservative Party, socialists and Christian Democrats have united. The supporters of socialism and the social democrats come from two different sociocultural groups. There are two of them that are battling the impacts of economic globalization: the conservative working class and the progressive upper middle class. The challenges posed by economic globalization affect both of these classes. When the former is given priority over the latter, the latter suffers, and vice versa.

From a strategic standpoint, the growth of meaningful little parties in both the extreme Left and the extreme Right all at once is the worst-case scenario for the mainstream Left. As a result, understanding the ERP danger to the conventional Left requires first examining the role of the new Left. The two poles of a post-materialist world, in which mass parties are unable to compete successfully, are symbolized by these two dimensions of political competition. The expansion of European party systems following the age of mass parties is a further area of research that is relevant to this issue. The number of contenders is growing as new issues gain electoral importance and are legally handled by extreme Right and new Left small parties. While at the same time, the traditional political parties are rapidly losing support from the public.

I was able to demonstrate how much less room for adjustment there is on the Left than there is on the Right via my discussion of immigration-related concerns. New leftist parties with market-liberal goals, however, might constitute a socioeconomic danger to the Right. There is little doubt that the problems that established mainstream parties are confronting are more pressing than the increasing competition from the extreme right.

References

- [1] Graeber, John. "Parties on the Left, Parties on the Right: Electoral Competition and Citizenship Policy Change in Europe." *British Journal of Political Science*, 17 Nov. 2020, pp. 1–19, www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-political-science/article/abs/parties-on-the-left-parties-on-the-right-electoral-competition-and-citizenship-policy-change-in-europe/816C4482713E224E2C82D5558007C8DD, 10.1017/s0007123420000368. Accessed 26 Nov. 2020.
- [2] Alexander, James. "The Major Ideologies of Liberalism, Socialism and Conservatism." *Political Studies*, vol. 63, no. 5, 2 June 2014, pp. 980–994, 10.1111/1467-9248.12136.
- [3] Hanley, Seán. "Origin, Ideology and Transformation of Political Parties: East-Central and Western Europe Compared." *Party Politics*, vol. 18, no. 5, 21 Aug. 2012, pp. 793–795, 10.1177/1354068812451390. Accessed 18 Apr. 2020.
- [4] Green-Pedersen, Christopher and Jesper Krogstrup (2008) 'Immigration as a Political Issue in Denmark and Sweden', *European Journal of Political Research* 47: 610–34.
- [5] Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth (2005) 'The Vulnerable Populist Right Parties', *European Journal of Political Research* 44: 465–92.
- [6] Arzheimer, Kai (2009) 'Contextual Factors and the Extreme Right Vote in Western Europe, 1980–2002', *American Journal of Political Science* 53: 259–75.

- [10] Arzheimer, Kai and Elisabeth Carter (2006) 'Political Opportunity Structures and Right-Wing Extremist Party Success', *European Journal of Political Research* 45: 419–43.
- [11] Bale, Tim (2003) 'Cinderella and her Ugly Sisters: The Mainstream and Extreme Right in
- [12] Europe's Bipolarizing Party Systems', *West European Politics* 26: 67–90.
- [13] Budge, Ian, David Robertson and Derek Hearl (1987) *Ideology, Strategy, and Party Change: Spatial*
- [14] *Analyses of Post-war Election Programmes in 19 Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge
- [15] University Press.
- [16] Downs, Anthony (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.
- [17] Downs, William (2001) 'Pariahs in their Midst: Belgian and Norwegian Parties react to Extremist
- [18] Threats', *West European Politics* 24: 23–42.
- [19] Eatwell, Roger and Cas Mudde (eds) (2004) *Western Democracies and the New Extreme Right*
- [20] *Challenge*. London: Routledge.
- [21] Mudde, Cas (1999) 'The Single-Issue Party Thesis: Extreme Right Parties and the Immigration
- [22] Issue', *West European Politics* 22: 182–97.
- [23] M Mignet. *History of the French Revolution from 1789 to 1814*. 1896.
- [24] Robert Morrison Maciver. *The Web of Government*. New York, The Free Press, 1965.