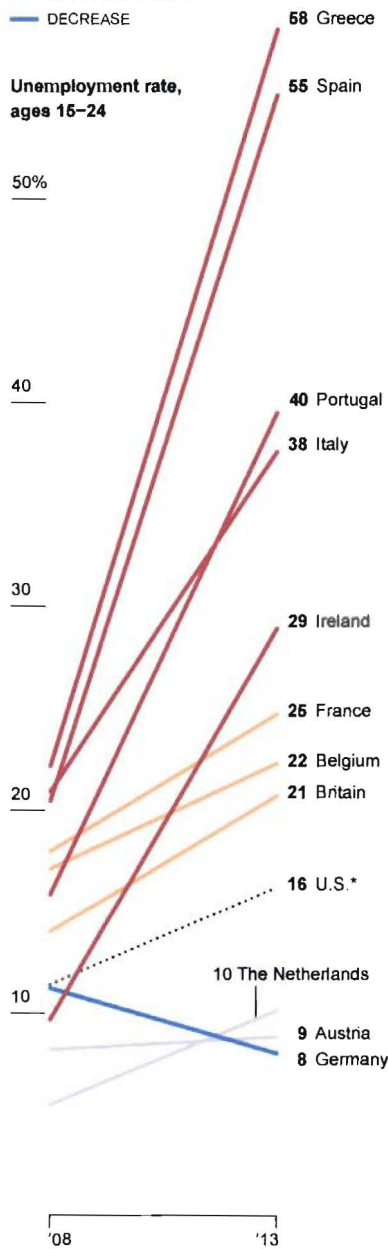


Young and Jobless Across Europe , *NY Times 11/15/13*

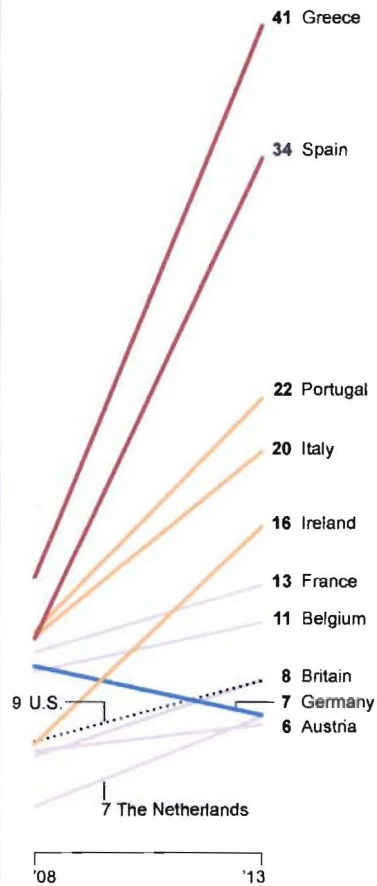
Change in youth unemployment from the year ended June 2008 to the year ended June 2013.

- INCREASE OF 15+ PERCENTAGE POINTS
- INCREASE OF 5 TO 15
- INCREASE OF 0 to 5
- DECREASE

Unemployment rate, ages 15-24



Unemployment rate, ages 25-29



A Confederacy of Xenophobes in Europe?

By Anthony Failoa. The Washington Post, April 13, 2014.

PARIS — From her nondescript offices in the Paris suburbs, -Marine Le Pen — the blond, hazel-eyed face of France’s far right — is leading the charge to build a new alliance of European nationalists, this time by blitzing the ballot box.

A 45-year-old lawyer who wants to halt immigration, Le Pen led France’s National Front to historic gains in local elections last month. She did it by destigmatizing the party co-founded by Jean-Marie Le Pen, her 85-year-old father, who once called the Nazi gas chambers a mere -“detail” of history and lost five bids for the French presidency.

In appearances across the country, the younger Le Pen is rolling out a more tempered brand of nationalism that has become a new model across Europe, rejecting her father’s overt racism and playing down the party’s former links to Nazi collaborators. All the while, she is tapping into the rising economic despair of a nation as well as a backlash against the European Union, the 28-country bloc headquartered in Brussels.

Now she is training her sights on a larger prize. From Sweden to Austria, Britain to Italy, nationalist and far-right parties are poised to make record gains next month in elections for the European Parliament. Rather than see their power diluted, Le Pen is seeking to unite a variety of such parties into an extraordinary coalition of anti-E.U. nationalists.

Together, she said, they would work to turn back the clock on the integration and open borders that have defined post-World War II Europe. “You judge a tree by its fruit,” she said last week in her office, a statuette of the Greek goddess of justice resting on a shelf above her. “And the fruits of the E.U. are rotten.”

But these are, after all, nationalists, and forging an international alliance of xenophobes is proving to be just as hard as it sounds. On a continent riddled with old grudges and the ghosts of battles past, working together — for some, anyway — means setting aside centuries-old animosities.

Hungary's far-right Jobbik party, for instance, remains locked in a war of words with its counterparts in Romania and Slovakia over Hungarian-speaking regions in those countries that date to the breakup of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Far-right Italians, meanwhile, are at odds with Austria's Freedom Party over the fate of Alto Adige, a largely German-speaking enclave in northern Italy that has been the site of a political tug of war for years.

But there is also a lingering question about just how much certain parties have truly changed. Indeed, even as Le Pen and her European partners seek to shed their image as far-right extremists, their words have often seemed to undermine that effort.

Le Pen's closest ally, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, sparked outrage at home last month after fiercely promising his faithful that he would work toward having "fewer Moroccans" in the country. Last week, the Austrian Freedom Party's Andreas M \ddot{u} lzer pulled out of his campaign for reelection to the European Parliament after calling the diverse bloc "a conglomerate of Negroes" whose regulations were worse than Germany's Third Reich.

But unlike her father, who was accused of being anti-Semitic, Le Pen has been accused of espousing Islamophobia — a word she dismissed in an interview as "a creation of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Yet she has appeared to push the envelope recently, telling French radio that pork-free meals for Muslim and Jewish children would be banned in the cities and towns now controlled by her party. In an interview with *The Washington Post*, however, she seemed to backtrack, saying that both pork and non-pork meals would be offered in schools.

And although they agree on the fundamental issue of loosening the ties that bind the E.U., the parties remain deeply at odds over a host of issues, including same-sex marriage. The track record for cooperation among members of the far right also bodes ill. Such parties have repeatedly sought to build alliances in the European Parliament, only to see them fall apart because of infighting.

“Nationalists inherently disagree with each other,” said Simon Hix, a professor of comparative politics at the London School of Economics. “They’re all like, ‘My country is the best one in the world,’ and then the other one says, ‘No, my country is the best one in the world.’ And from there, they all end up fighting.”

But Le Pen insists that this time will be different, that she is gunning for a big win next month. A strong showing by the nationalists, which opinion polls in multiple countries suggest could happen, could effectively put some of the E.U.’s toughest opponents inside its gates.

Once viewed as a paper tiger, the European Parliament, based in Strasbourg, France, has continued to gain power. Even in the best-case scenario for Le Pen, any far-right alliance is unlikely to unseat Europe’s mainstream majorities on the center-right and center-left.

But the vote — over four days starting May 22 — could make the far right a stronger force on issues such as immigration legislation and rights of religious minorities. In the name of protecting domestic industries, far-right representatives would seek to bring free trade to a standstill — for example, opposing any attempt to ratify the sweeping E.U.-U.S. free-trade deal that is under negotiation. Analysts say a stronger far right could compel mainstream conservative parties to tow a harder right-wing line.

With France’s National Front the likely anchor of any nationalist coalition, it has been up to Le Pen to try to forge a legislative bloc. Success would mean winning at least 25 seats from seven countries. Though almost assured of enough seats, Le Pen appears to be at least one nation shy of the country threshold.

That is partly because of the varying degrees of extremism tolerated by each party. Le Pen dismissed the notion of working with the black-clad ultranationalist members of Greece’s Golden Dawn, whom she described as “neo-Nazis.” She also ruled out collaborating with Hungary’s Jobbik party, one of whose leaders has called for a government list of Jews in the name of national security.

Meanwhile, one nationalist group, the United Kingdom Independence Party, has refused

to work with her. Like Le Pen, UKIP chief Nigel Farage has sought to position his party as sane moderates who happen to have an anti-E.U., anti-immigration bent. While he touts his party as mainstream, Le Pen's National Front, he insists, is just faking it. "Our view is that whatever Marine Le Pen is trying to do with the Front National, anti-Semitism is still imbedded in that party, and we're not going to work with them now or at any point in the future," Farage told Britain's Telegraph newspaper.

But even her critics concede that Le Pen has determinedly sought to distance herself from her controversial father and has made strides toward steering the party away from explicit racism. In October, the National Front ejected a mayoral candidate, Anne-Sophie Leclere, after she publicly compared France's French Guiana-born justice minister, Christiane Taubira, to a monkey.

In fact, Le Pen is portraying the party as the best ally French Jews could have against a common enemy.

"Not only am I not anti-Semitic, but I have explained to my Jewish compatriots that the movement most able to protect them is the Front National," she said. "For the greatest danger today is the rise of an anti-Semitism in the suburbs, stemming from Muslim fundamentalists."

November 8, 2013. The New York Times.

Right Wing's Surge in Europe Has the Establishment Rattled

By ANDREW HIGGINS

HVIDOVRE, Denmark — As right-wing populists surge across Europe, rattling established political parties with their hostility toward immigration, austerity and the European Union, Mikkel Dencker of the Danish People's Party has found yet another cause to stir public anger: pork meatballs missing from kindergartens.

A member of Denmark's Parliament and, he hopes, mayor of this commuter-belt town west of Copenhagen, Mr. Dencker is furious that some day care centers have removed meatballs, a staple of traditional Danish cuisine, from their cafeterias in deference to Islamic dietary rules. No matter that only a handful of kindergartens have actually done so. The missing meatballs, he said, are an example of how "Denmark is losing its identity" under pressure from outsiders.

The issue has become a headache for Mayor Helle Adelborg, whose center-left Social Democratic Party has controlled the town council since the 1920s but now faces an uphill struggle before municipal elections on Nov. 19. "It is very easy to exploit such themes to get votes," she said. "They take a lot of votes from my party. It is unfair."

It is also Europe's new reality. All over, established political forces are losing ground to politicians whom they scorn as fear-mongering populists. In France, according to a recent opinion poll, the far-right National Front has become the country's most popular party. In other countries — Austria, Britain, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland and the Netherlands — disruptive upstart groups are on a roll.

This phenomenon alarms not just national leaders but also officials in Brussels who fear that European Parliament elections next May could substantially tip the balance of power toward nationalists and forces intent on halting or reversing integration within the European Union.

"History reminds us that high unemployment and wrong policies like austerity are an extremely poisonous cocktail," said Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, a former Danish prime minister and a Social Democrat. "Populists are always there. In good times it is not easy for them to get votes, but in these bad times all their arguments, the easy solutions of populism and nationalism, are getting new ears and votes."

In some ways, this is Europe's Tea Party moment — a grass-roots insurgency fired by resentment against a political class that many Europeans see as out of touch. The main difference, however, is that Europe's populists want to strengthen, not shrink, government and see the welfare state as an integral part of their national identities.

The trend in Europe does not signal the return of fascist demons from the 1930s, except in Greece, where the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn has promoted openly racist beliefs, and perhaps in Hungary, where the far-right Jobbik party backs a brand of ethnic nationalism suffused with anti-Semitism.

But the soaring fortunes of groups like the Danish People's Party, which some popularity polls now rank ahead of the Social Democrats, point to a fundamental political shift toward nativist forces fed by a curious mix of right-wing identity politics and left-wing anxieties about the future of the welfare state.

"This is the new normal," said Flemming Rose, the foreign editor at the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten. "It is a nightmare for traditional political elites and also for Brussels."

The platform of France's National Front promotes traditional right-wing causes like law and order and tight controls on immigration but reads in parts like a leftist manifesto. It accuses "big bosses" of promoting open borders so they can import cheap labor to drive down wages. It rails against globalization as a threat to French language and culture, and it opposes any rise in the retirement age or cuts in pensions.

Similarly, in the Netherlands, Geert Wilders, the anti-Islam leader of the Party for Freedom, has mixed attacks on immigration with promises to defend welfare entitlements. "He is the only one who says we don't have to cut anything," said Chris Aalberts, a scholar at Erasmus University in Rotterdam and author of a book based on interviews with Mr. Wilders's supporters. "This is a popular message."

Mr. Wilders, who has police protection because of death threats from Muslim extremists, is best known for his attacks on Islam and demands that the Quran be banned. These issues, Mr. Aalberts said, "are not a big vote winner," but they help set him apart from deeply unpopular centrist politicians who talk mainly about budget cuts. The success of populist parties, Mr. Aalberts added, "is more about the collapse of the center than the attractiveness of the alternatives."

Pia Kjaersgaard, the pioneer of a trend now being felt across Europe, set up the Danish People's Party in 1995 and began shaping what critics dismissed as a rabble of misfits and racists into a highly disciplined, effective and even mainstream political force.

Ms. Kjaersgaard, a former social worker who led the party until last year, said she rigorously screened membership lists, weeding out anyone with views that might comfort critics who see her party as extremist. She said she had urged a similar cleansing of the ranks in Sweden's anti-immigration and anti-Brussels movement, the Swedish Democrats, whose early leaders included a former activist in the Nordic Reich Party.

Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's National Front, has embarked on a similar makeover, rebranding her party as a responsible force untainted by the anti-Semitism and homophobia of its previous leader, her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who once described Nazi gas chambers as a "detail of history." Ms. Le Pen has endorsed several gay activists as candidates for French municipal elections next March.

But a whiff of extremism still lingers, and the Danish People's Party wants nothing to do with Ms. Le Pen and her followers.

Built on the ruins of a chaotic antitax movement, the Danish People's Party has evolved into a defender of the welfare state, at least for native Danes. It pioneered "welfare chauvinism," a cause now embraced by many of Europe's surging populists, who play on fears that freeloading foreigners are draining pensions and other benefits.

"We always thought the People's Party was a temporary phenomenon, that they would have their time and then go away," said Jens Jonatan Steen, a researcher at Cevea, a policy research group affiliated with the Social Democrats. "But they have come to stay."

"They are politically incorrect and are not accepted by many as part of the mainstream," he added. "But if you have support from 20 percent of the public, you are mainstream."

In a recent meeting in the northern Danish town of Skorping, the new leader of the Danish People's Party, Kristian Thulesen Dahl, criticized Prime Minister Helle

Thorning-Schmidt, of the Social Democrats, whose government is trying to trim the welfare system, and spoke about the need to protect the elderly.

The Danish People's Party and similar political groups, according to Mr. Rasmussen, the former prime minister, benefit from making promises that they do not have to worry about paying for, allowing them to steal welfare policies previously promoted by the left. "This is a new populism that takes on the coat of Social Democratic policies," he said.

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In Hvidovre, Mr. Dencker, the Danish People's Party mayoral candidate, wants the government in, not out of, people's lives. Beyond pushing authorities to make meatballs mandatory in public institutions, he has attacked proposals to cut housekeeping services for the elderly and criticized the mayor for canceling one of the two Christmas trees the city usually puts up each December. Instead, he says, it should put up five Christmas trees.

Right-wing political extremism in the Great Depression

Alan de Bromhead, Barry Eichengreen, Kevin H O'Rourke, 27 February 2012

[Online at <http://www.voxeu.org/article/right-wing-political-extremism-great-depression>.

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The enduring global crisis is giving rise to fears that economic hard times will feed political extremism, as it did in the 1930s. This column suggests that the danger of political polarisation and extremism is greatest in countries with relatively recent histories of democracy, with existing right-wing extremist parties, and with electoral systems that create low hurdles to parliamentary representation of new parties. But above all, it is greatest where depressed economic conditions are allowed to persist.

The impact of the global crisis has been more than just economic.

- In both parliamentary and presidential democracies, governments have been ousted.
- Hard economic times have bred support for nationalist and right-wing political parties, including some that are actively hostile to the prevailing political system.

All this gives rise to fears that economic hard times will feed political extremism, as it did in the 1930s.

Memories of the 1930s inform much contemporary political commentary, just as they have informed recent economic commentary (eg [Mian et al 2010](#), [Giuliano and Spilimbergo 2009](#)). But how exactly did the interwar Depression and economic crisis affect political outcomes and the rise of right-wing anti-system parties? The question has not been systematically studied.

This led us to analyse the elections between WWI and WWII with respect to support for anti-system parties – defined as parties that explicitly advocate the overthrow of a country's political system ([de Bromhead et al 2012](#)). We focus on right- rather than left-wing anti-system parties since it was right-wing parties that made visible and troubling electoral progress in the 1930s. And it is again right-wing extremist parties that have seemingly made the greatest gains in response to recent economic hard times (Fukayama 2012).

Theories

Explanations for political extremism in this period fall into five broad categories.

- First, support for extremist parties and the instability of democratic systems have been linked to the difficult economic conditions of the interwar years (Frey and Weck 1983, Payne 1996).

A second set of explanations emphasises social differentiation.

- Ethnolinguistic, religious, and class cleavages are fault lines complicating the development of social consensus and hindering the adoption of a concerted response to economic crisis (Gerrits and Wolfram 2005, Luebbert 1987).

This line of argument features prominently in the literature on post-WWI Europe, where new nations were created with little regard for ethnic and religious considerations.

- Third, the legacy of WWI receives considerable attention as a factor shaping the interwar political landscape (Holzer 2002).
- Fourth, certain political and constitutional systems created more scope for anti-system parties to gain influence.

Lijphart (1994), for example, argued that the openness of the political system to new or small parties, whether due to the proportionality of the electoral system or to the effective threshold defined in terms of the share of total votes that a party had to attract in order to win parliamentary representation, was an important determinant of support for extremist parties.

- Finally, an influential tradition associated with Almond and Verba (1989) argues that political culture is an important determinant of the durability of the party system.

The 'civic culture' which for these authors is a crucial ingredient of democratic stability is transmitted between generations in the household, in schools, and in the broader society, in part as a result of the exposure of people to the democratic system itself. More recently Persson and Tabellini (2009) have argued that countries with longer histories of democracy accumulate democratic capital, which increases the probability of continuing support for the prevailing party system. These analyses suggest that extremists could have benefitted more from the Depression in countries without a well-developed political tradition and poorly endowed with democratic capital.

Findings

Our data covers 171 elections in 28 countries between 1919 and 1939. While the sample is weighted towards Europe, since interwar elections were disproportionately European, we also include observations for North America, Latin America, Australia, and New Zealand (all elections for which we could obtain information). Anti-system parties are defined, following Sartori (1976), as parties that "would change, if it could, not the government, but the system of government". Right-wing parties classified as anti-system range from obvious cases like the

NSDAP in Germany to the Arrow Cross in Hungary and the Iron Guard in Romania.

Our major interest is the impact of the Depression on voting patterns and hence how voting shares changed after 1929. Our statistical results (see Annex for details) show that the Depression was good for fascists. It was especially good for fascists in countries that had not enjoyed democracy before 1914; where fascist parties already had a parliamentary base; in countries on the losing side in WWI; and in countries that experienced boundary changes after 1918.

Since Germany ticks each of these boxes and saw a particularly large increase in the fascist vote, one may ask whether these interaction effects are driven by the German experience alone. The answer is that they are not.

Importantly, it shows that what mattered was not the current growth of the economy but cumulative growth or, more to the point, the depth of the cumulative recession. One year of contraction was not enough to significantly boost extremism, in other words, but a depression that persisted for years was.

The results stand up to the inclusion of control variables, including period dummies, the urbanisation rate, and the effective electoral threshold, and to alternative econometric specifications. In other regressions, we again find that the impact of poor growth was greater in countries where fascists were already represented in parliament and in countries with shorter histories of democracy. Our results are thus consistent with the claim of authors such as Almond and Verba (1989) that political culture mattered, and with the argument of Persson and Tabellini (2009) that countries with a longer history of democracy accumulate social and political capital that increases the probability that they will be able to resist threats to the prevailing political system.

Finally, we find that the electoral success of right-wing anti-system parties was shaped by the structure of the electoral system. A higher minimum share of the vote needed in order for a party to gain parliamentary representation made it more difficult for fringe parties to translate votes into seats and lowered fascist electoral gains.

Conclusions

Our analysis suggests that the danger of political polarisation and extremism is greater in some national circumstances than others. It is greatest in countries:

- With relatively recent histories of democracy,
- With existing right-wing extremist parties, and
- With electoral systems that create low hurdles to parliamentary representation of new parties.

Above all, it is greatest where depressed economic conditions are allowed to persist.

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Annex

Table 1 presents the results of a series of difference-in-difference analyses in which voting shares are regressed on a post-1929 dummy, country characteristics (one per column), and the interaction between these two variables. In all regressions, the post-1929 dummy variable is positive, and it is usually statistically significant suggesting that depression boosted the electoral fortunes of anti-system parties.

Source: see text. Robust standard errors clustered by country in parentheses. ***

Table 1. Determinants of anti-system party vote share, 1919–39

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Country characteristic	Pre-war democracy	Pre-1929 fascist seats	Pre-war agricultural elite	Religious divide	Ethno-linguistic divide	WW1 loser	WW1 boundary changes
Country characteristic	-1.078** (0.523)	2.213** (0.959)	0.208 (0.536)	-0.393 (0.522)	-0.626 (0.472)	0.544 (0.646)	1.012* (0.494)
Post-1929	10.58** (4.718)	1.345* (0.770)	2.717 (1.668)	4.131** (1.609)	5.698 (3.405)	2.512* (1.277)	2.251 (1.655)
Post-1929 * country characteristic	-9.184* (4.801)	12.30** (5.946)	5.845 (5.134)	2.582 (5.725)	-1.711 (3.893)	17.78* (8.796)	6.179 (4.666)
Constant	1.078** (0.523)	0.01000 (0.01000)	0.440 (0.452)	0.706 (0.429)	0.791* (0.447)	0.439 (0.305)	-0 (6.30e-08)
Observations	159	159	159	159	159	159	159
R-squared	0.299	0.438	0.175	0.119	0.121	0.420	0.207

*p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.

Note: Table 2 shows that the relationship between growth and extremism continues to hold when we estimate fixed effects tobit regressions, using both the Honoré (1992) semi-parametric estimator and the MLE discussed in Greene (2004).

Table 2. Determinants of right-wing anti-system vote share, 1919–39

Period	1 Year	1 Year	2 Years	2 Years	3 Years	3 Years
Method	Semi-Parametric	MLE	Semi-Parametric	MLE	Semi-Parametric	MLE
Growth	-58.79** (27.37)	-21.72 (23.26)	-63.39 (50.08)	-17.66 (19.66)	-109.6*** (39.95)	-37.08** (13.25)
Observations	148	148	136	136	125	125

Source: see text. Fixed effects panel Tobit estimators. Fixed effects not estimated by semi-parametric estimator, and not reported for MLE. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$. Marginal effects estimated at means of the independent variables and fixed effects.