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### Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe

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### Chapter

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## 2 From conceptualization to classification: which parties?

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Though formal definitions or derivations based on the history of ideas largely failed to provide a convincing concept for ‘right-wing extremism’, research work on political parties of the right has not had serious problems in selecting appropriate cases. (Von Beyme 1988: 3)

### 2.1 Introduction

Both the academic and public debate about the “extreme right” lends credence to Von Beyme’s assertion that we know *who* they are, even though we do not know exactly *what* they are. However, I fundamentally disagree with the belief that “the extreme right is easily recognizable” (Anastasakis 2000: 4). Practice certainly reveals that *we* do not know who *they* are (also Mudde 2000a): while there is consensus with regard to the inclusion of some parties in this category, the proper classification of many others remains contested. Indeed, there are some special circumstances that make the implications of this assumption especially problematic for this particular party family.

Some scholars consider the Scandinavian Progress Parties to be the first of the recent wave of “right-wing populist” parties (e.g. Decker 2004; Betz 1994), whereas others exclude them from their analysis on the grounds that they are not “extreme right” (e.g. Mudde 2000a). Similarly, while the Italian Lega Nord (Northern League, LN) is included in most comparative studies of the populist radical right party family, at least one prominent scholar (Ignazi 1992; 2003) has consistently excluded it. The confusion with respect to classifying the parties in Eastern Europe is even more striking. According to some observers the Hungarian Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége–Magyar Polgári Szövetség (Alliance of Young Democrats–Hungarian Civic Movement, FIDESz-MPS) is part of this family (e.g. Bohlen 2002; Jungwirth 2002a; Rupnik 2002), while others reject their inclusion and label the MIEP the only major populist radical right party in Hungary (e.g. Bernáth *et al.* 2005; Karsai 1999).

There are different reasons for this lack of taxonomical accord but the root of the problem seems to be less related to the plethora of concepts and definitions than to the limited attention paid to the classification of political parties. Few authors have established a clear method for categorizing political parties, i.e. to establish on the basis of which criteria certain parties should be classified as populist radical right, and others should not. This chapter will draw upon earlier work on party families (e.g. Mudde 2000a; Mair & Mudde 1998) to develop an effective method of classification and discuss the various problems involved in classifying individual parties.

## 2.2 How to study party ideology?

Given that we have defined the populist radical right party family exclusively on the basis of ideological features, it follows that individual parties should be classified purely on the basis of party ideology as well. However, this raises several important questions: who determines the ideology of a party, on what basis, and how should the representative source be studied?

### 2.2.1 *The classifier: parties vs. researchers*

The first question to be answered is who determines the ideology and thus the categorization of a party, the researcher or the party itself? There is undoubtedly much to be said for relying on the parties' self-classification; after all, who knows a party better than the party itself? This approach has the likely advantage of producing results very compatible with the general self-understanding of the parties. Moreover, it would be cost- and time-effective.

In the literature on party families, the two criteria employed most frequently in classification, party name and transnational federations (e.g. Gallagher *et al.* 2005; Mair & Mudde 1998), assume that parties know themselves best. Both criteria work relatively well for some party families, but are of little use for classifying members of the populist radical right party family.

The criterion of party name seems particularly suited for the Christian democratic, the socialist and social democratic, the communist, and the Green party families. In these families, most members have (part of) the family name in their party name. However, with regard to conservative, liberal, or ethnoregionalist parties this criterion is far less useful. How does one classify parties with names like Soldiers of Destiny (Fianna

Fáil), Alliance for a New Citizen (Aliancia nového občana, ANO), or People's Union (Volksunie, VU)?

Establishing ideological similarity through party names is possibly even more dubious in the case of the populist radical right. What do party names like Flemish Interest (Vlaams Belang, VB), League of Polish Families (Liga Polskich Rodzin, LPR), or National Front (NF) have in common? At first glance one could surmise that their common feature is a nativist ideology based on the fact that all party names refer to the (own) nation. But when one considers the fact that the names of virtually all political parties in Flanders or Slovakia share this reference, it is obvious that this is not a very robust conclusion. What then might one read in names such as Center Democrats (CD), The Republicans (REP), or Truth (Veritas)?

Some authors have identified the refusal of populist radical right parties to call themselves "party" because of their alleged antidemocratic or antiparty position as a reliable indicator of ideological similarity (e.g. Decker 2004; Heinisch 2003; Mény & Surel 2002b). This assertion is problematic on two counts. First, there are several populist radical right parties using the term "party" in their name, such as the British National Party (BNP), the Hungarian Justice and Life Party (MIÉP) or the Greater Romania Party (Partidul România Mare, PRM).<sup>1</sup> Second, many non-populist radical right parties, particularly on the (center-)right, do not have the term(s) of their party family in their name; examples include the Belgian Reform Movement (Mouvement Réformateur), the Norwegian Right (Høyre), and the Polish Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska).

The use of transnational federations as a criterion of classification assumes that political parties will align themselves cross-nationally with ideologically similar organizations. Consequently, all members of the Liberal International are counted as liberal parties, while all members of the Party of European Socialists are classified as socialist. Unfortunately, things are not that simple. The ideological diversity within transnational party federations is quite extensive, not just in global organizations like the Socialist International, but even within geographically more confined groups like the European People's Party. According to both academics and the organizations themselves, transnational parties may have a core of political parties sharing a common ideological heritage, but "their political identity is obfuscated by the inclusion of parties, and parts of parties, that do not belong to the same political family" (Andeweg 1995: 64; also

<sup>1</sup> Paradoxically, it is particularly in postcommunist Europe that populist radical right parties use the term "party" in their name, despite the fact that it has an even more negative connotation there because of the link with "the Party," i.e. the former ruling communist party.

Bardi 1994). In short, electoral and political relevance are sometimes more important criteria for inclusion in a transnational federation than ideology, particularly when a suitable ideological representative cannot be found in a (large) country.

But even if membership in transnational federations could be seen as an indication of ideological similarity, it is an even less useful criterion of classification than party name. Currently it is only relevant to the larger party families, as most smaller ones have either geographically limited transnational federations or none at all. In the case of the populist radical right, no transnational federation exists. Even in the European Parliament there have been few examples of a pure populist radical right faction. Some alleged populist radical right parties are part of groups with members of various party families, but most are nonaligned (see chapter 7).

A third method of letting the parties classify themselves is use of their self-identification. If different parties define themselves in a similar way, their common self-definition could be a relatively simple and efficient way of categorizing a given party. Leaving aside the problem of circularity, i.e. which parties you look at influences the character of the self-identification (see chapter 1), a quick overview of the self-identification of some (alleged) populist radical right parties presents a flurry of different terms and identities.

Not surprisingly, given the limited use of the term, and the negative connotation associated with nearly all of its components in most countries, no political party defines itself explicitly as populist radical right. Only a few smaller parties will define themselves as populist; for example, the self-identification of España-2000 (Spain-2000) is “populista, social y democrático” (populist, social and democratic) on its website ([www.espana2000.org](http://www.espana2000.org)), while the Bulgarska otechestvena partiya-Natsionalen suyuz (Bulgarian Fatherland Party–National Union) proclaimed that its “social policy has a populist character” (Mitev 1997: 81). In some cases populist radical right politicians have adopted the term “populism” as a *nom de guerre*. Jörg Haider, then leader of the Austrian FPÖ, said in an interview: “Populism is gladly used as a term of abuse for politicians who are close to the people (*volksverbundene Politiker*), whose success lies in raising their voice for the citizens and catching their mood. I have always considered this designation as a decoration” (in Worm 2005: 9). Similarly, FN-leader Jean-Marie Le Pen once claimed in an interview: “The FN is a national-populist movement . . . A populist movement takes care of people’s interests” (in Birenbaum & Villa 2003: 47).

Also, some parties will identify themselves as “popular”; for instance, the Italian MS-FT describes itself in various pamphlets as the “alternative nazionalpopolare” (national-popular alternative). Very few will define themselves as radical, however, a still-contested term within the party

family. One of the few exceptions has been Miroslav Sládek, who at the founding party congress of February 1990 defined the new *Sdružení pro republiku–Republikánská strana Československa* (Association for the Republic–Republican Party of Czechoslovakia, SPR-RSČ) as a “radical right party.”

Even with regard to the broad categories of left and right, the self-identifications of individual populist radical right parties differ significantly. Whereas various parties identify themselves openly and unequivocally as right-wing (e.g. Croatian Party of Rights (HSP), Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS), Slovak National Party (SNS), VB), most members of the populist radical right party family reject a positioning in terms of left and right (e.g. CD, FPÖ, MIÉP, PRM, Slovene National Party (SNS)).<sup>2</sup> Finally, some parties will define themselves as part of different political families: for example, the Croatian *Hrvatska stranka prava* (Croatian Party of Rights, HSP) considers itself to be “neo-conservative” (HSP n.d.a), the Swiss *Schweizerische Volkspartei–Union démocratique du centre* (Swiss People’s Party, SVP) as “liberal conservative” (in Hennecke 2003: 159), while the Russian LDPR even calls itself the “liberal democratic” party of Russia.

In conclusion, while reliance upon self-classification by parties is appealing, if only for its efficiency, it presents many fundamental problems for categorizing populist radical right parties. Consequently, researchers must confront the task themselves. The question remains how. The first step toward a solution is determining what or who represents the (core) ideology of a political party.

### 2.2.2 *The data: what or who represents the (whole) political party?*

Some scholars have categorized populist radical right parties (partly) on the basis of the special characteristics of the party *electorates*. Two different approaches can be distinguished within this group. The first group of scholars works on the basis of the famous model of cleavage politics, in which political parties are primarily seen as representatives of specific social groups (Lipset & Rokkan 1967). Consequently, party families are defined on the basis of certain sociodemographic characteristics of their (core) electorates (e.g. Kitschelt & McGann 1995). The second group does categorize party families on the basis of ideology, but defines the ideology of individual parties (in part) on the basis of the attitudes of the *voters* of these parties (e.g. Ignazi 2003).

<sup>2</sup> For example, the FN used to consider itself as “*ni gauche, ni droite*” (not left, not right), while the FPÖ (still) sees itself as “*jenseits von rechts und links*” (beyond right and left).

There are several problems involved in these two approaches. First, electorates might and do change, irrespective of whether the parties do as well. Partly as a result of their electoral success, the electorates of many populist radical right parties transformed significantly in the 1990s. However, while the “proletarianization” (Betz 1994) of the party electorates was accompanied by a (slight) change in the socioeconomic policies of some parties, the latter change was rather superficial (see chapter 5). In other words, whereas the core electorate of populist radical right parties changed, their core ideology did not. Second, their electorates are far from homogeneous, which is true for different parties within the wider family, notably the more electorally successful ones (see further 9.5).

Another approach might be the categorization of political parties on the basis of the ideology of their *members* (e.g. Ivaldi 1996), but this method is also intrinsically flawed. According to John D. May’s famous “special law of curvilinear disparity,” rank-and-file members are the most ideologically extreme of all party supporters, compared to the voters, on the one side, and party leaders, on the other (e.g. May 1973; also Narud & Skare 1999; Kitschelt 1989). Furthermore, while the membership of a party is generally more stable than the electorate, the other problems listed above persist with this approach: party members often do not have a clear profile, and different parties will include various subgroups (the FN provides an excellent example; see 2.3).

Focusing exclusively on party membership would also give rise to some serious practical problems, most notably the lack of accurate data on the membership of these groups. The few studies that are available either have quite limited information on the members in question, or are based on a very small section of the membership, of which it is impossible to ascertain whether the selected portion is a representative sample (e.g. Klandermans & Mayer 2005; Orfali 1997).

Some studies have classified political parties on the basis of the ideological views of *party leaders*. A variety of different data and methods have been employed within this approach, including official speeches, published media interviews, or original interviews with party leaders (e.g. Fennema & Pollmann 1998; Gardberg 1993). Again, this approach has some important weaknesses. First, *who* speaks for the party? In other words, who are party leaders and how does one know that the views of the leaders are representative of the (whole) party?<sup>3</sup> Second, these

<sup>3</sup> A dramatic example can be found in the very original work of Annvi Gardberg (1993), who interviewed all but one (i.e. Franz Schönhuber) of the MEPs of the REP to study the ideology of that party. However, by the time he had finished his study, all but Schönhuber had left the REP and now represented the Deutsche Liga für Volk und Heimat (German League for Ethnic People and Homeland, DLVH).

data might not provide a very accurate picture. The manner in which an interview is (semi-)structured seriously influences the answers of the interviewee (e.g. Schuman & Presser 1981). Also, interviews and official speeches will almost certainly produce a socially acceptable picture, i.e. what Jaap Van Donselaar (1991) has referred to as the “front-stage” of the populist radical right.

While a political party is constituted of a collective of individuals, it is not limited to its leaders or those who claim membership. A political party is more than the mere collection of the individuals involved; it is an actor in its own right. Therefore, only the party can truly represent itself, which it does through the official party literature. Indeed, the (few) authors who have analyzed the party ideologies of populist radical right parties have acknowledged this and have generally focused on party literature as the definitive voice of the party rather than reducing the party to its leadership, voters or electorate (e.g. Kolovos 2003; Ivaldi & Swyngedouw 2001; Mudde 2000a, 1995b).

However, some important limitations have to be taken into account (see also Mudde 2000a: 20–2). First, only official party publications should be included, rather than publications by individuals or organizations “close to” the party (see also Spruyt 1995). Second, only publications from the national party should be studied. Obviously, local and other sub-national publications can provide important insights, but they cannot be considered representative of the national party. Third, the selected literature should entail both externally and internally oriented literature, so as to minimize the chance of catching only the “front-stage” of the party.

### 2.2.3 *The method: qualitative vs. quantitative*

Having established which data to use, only one question remains unanswered: which method is best suited for the study of party ideology? Most comparative research on party families is based on quantitative content analysis, most notably the ECPR-sponsored party manifesto project (on populist radical right parties, see Cole 2005; in general, see Budge *et al.* 1987). Huib Pellikaan recently developed an alternative method, based on a confrontational rather than a spatial approach (on populist radical right parties, see De Lange 2007a; in general, see Pellikaan *et al.* 2003). Leaving aside the exclusive use of election programs in these studies, which is a data rather than a method problem, neither approach is particularly well suited to the study of party *ideology*. Both approaches primarily code policy initiatives, which often translate only marginally to complex ideological features. Moreover, the strict coding scheme leads to conceptual rigidity, particularly when applied over time (a major weakness of the manifesto project).



Qualitative content analysis is a far more effective approach to studying phenomena like the core features of a party ideology. It provides the proximity to the data and flexibility in operationalization necessary for studying highly complex concepts such as nativism, authoritarianism, and populism. Moreover, the “causal chain approach” can separate core from secondary ideological features on a more accurate and logical basis than simplistic quantification (Mudde 2000a: 23–4). While qualitative content analysis of a broad range of party literature is admittedly labor-intensive, various studies have shown that it can create analyses that are useful in the comparative study of political parties (e.g. De Raad 2005; Kolovos 2005, 2003; Mudde 2000a; Jungerstam 1995).

#### 2.2.4 *The problems: factions, strategies, changes*

While qualitative content analysis of party literature is the best method for analyzing the ideology of an individual political party, there are nonetheless important problems with this approach to party classification that must be addressed. Political parties are aggregates of diverse yet intersecting factions (ideology- or interest-based) that are in dynamic relation to one another and to the larger political scene. Party literature may variously reflect or obscure the competing ideologies within a party as it addresses the party faithful or reaches beyond them to attract a broader audience. Consequently, we cannot always simply equate party with ideology nor ideology with party literature. This difficulty is not limited to analysis of the populist radical right but extends to the broader study of party politics. Unfortunately, this study can do little more than signal the problems and provide some provisional solutions.

The first problem with classifying political parties on the basis of their ideology is the internal heterogeneity of some political parties. Actually, this is the Achilles heel of most comparative research on political parties, which operates under the often implicit assumption that political parties are unitary actors. Only through this assumption can one speak of *the* party and classify *it* on the basis of *the* party ideology. However, as Maurice Duverger already noted over fifty years ago, “[a] party is not a community, but a collection of communities” (1954: 17). And as a general rule, one could say that the bigger the party, the larger the importance and number of these communities (better known as factions).<sup>4</sup>

The problem of heterogeneity might pose fewer difficulties for classifying the party on the basis of its *core* ideology, however. First of all, a

<sup>4</sup> In the late 1960s, Lipset and Rokkan noted: “Most of the parties aspiring to majority positions in the West are conglomerates of groups differing on wide ranges of issues, but still united in their greater hostility to their competitors in the other camps” (1990: 93–4).

political party is to some extent an amalgam rather than a mere sum of its internal factions. Secondly, the various factions may disagree on some issues, but will probably concur on (most) core ideological features. For example, the different factions within the FN all share a core populist radical right ideology, but each complements it with some additional, specific features (see 2.3).

Political parties that include both factions that share the populist radical right core ideology and factions that do not will still pose a challenge for definitive classification. My preferred solution is to exclude political parties that have significant ideological wings that are not populist radical right.<sup>5</sup> In other words, only parties with a populist radical right core ideology *and* without any significant alternative faction(s) are classified as members of the populist radical right party family.

The strategic employment of rhetoric by political parties can also present a challenge to accurate classification on the basis of ideology. Parties may appear schizophrenic if their rhetoric diverges from their ideology and the researcher is left with the dilemma of which image to trust. This problem will most often present itself as different ideological discourses in the internally and externally oriented literature. Particularly during election campaigns, political parties that do not have a populist radical right core ideology can adopt the rhetoric of the populist radical right in an attempt to win voters (e.g. Bale 2003). However, if this situation continues for a long time, it becomes increasingly difficult to decide what constitutes ideology, and what strategy. The causal chain approach (Mudde 2000a) can provide some answers by tracking the hierarchy of ideological features, but ambiguities will continue to exist.

The last two problems of categorizing political parties have been described vividly for the situation in Eastern Europe by Michael Minkenberg: "Studying the radical right in transformation countries in Central and Eastern Europe not only resembles shooting at a moving target but also shooting with clouded vision" (2002b: 361). While these problems might be more pronounced in Eastern Europe, they are certainly not limited to that part of the continent. Even with regard to various established political parties in Western Europe the problems of party change and limited information about their core ideological features create substantial hurdles in their categorization.

While parties are generally disinclined to change their ideological core, given the large potential costs involved (Downs 1957), it does happen. The development of the British Labour Party under Tony Blair (e.g.

<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Michael Minkenberg, who suggested this solution in a discussion at a conference in Geneva in 2004.

Ludlam 2000) or of the Flemish VU in the 1970s (e.g. De Winter 1998) is clear evidence that party ideology is not inalterable. Unfortunately, it is not always easy to pinpoint exactly when a party is in which party family. The process of change (sometimes back and forth) can go on for decades, often leading to sustained periods of ideological hybridization.

The party political situation has been even more volatile in Eastern Europe, particularly during the transition phase in the first decade of postcommunism. As many authors have noted, most postcommunist parties have so far been mere vehicles of small groups of elites, which sported diffuse and highly similar ideologies and held very weak links with social groups in society (e.g. Lewis 2000; Kopecký 1995). Ideological change bore little cost for a party that mainly served the political survival of the party leader(s). In this climate, various parties went through a populist radical right stage, particularly in the first years of postcommunism when nationalism seemed to be “the *sine qua non* for political success” in certain parts of Eastern Europe (Fischer-Galati 1993: 12).

Now that we have established the best method to ascertain the core ideology of a party family, and discussed the main problems involved in classifying (some) political parties on this basis, it is time to determine which political parties belong to the populist radical right party family, and which do not. However, as the list of political parties to be classified is almost limitless, attention will be paid, first and foremost, to the so-called “usual suspects”; i.e. those parties that most authors classify under the headings of “extreme right,” “radical right,” “right-wing populism,” etc. Obviously, all this is done within the severe limitations faced by any one researcher who studies such a broad range of parties (e.g. data, language, time).

### 2.3 Populist radical right parties

The most famous populist radical right party, the French Front national, considered the prototype by various scholars, was founded in 1972 (e.g. Davies 1999; Simmons 1996). Initially, the FN was not much more than a confederation of extreme and radical right *groupuscules* under the leadership of veteran radical right politician Jean-Marie Le Pen. While different and occasionally opposing factions continue to exist within the party, for example, the pagan nouvelle droite (new right) faction and the orthodox Catholic Chrétienté-Solidarité (Christian Solidarity) faction, they all share a populist radical right core ideology (e.g. DeClair 1999). The split in 1999 did not change this; rather, it added another populist radical right party to the French political system, the Mouvement national républicain

(National Republican Movement, MNR) of Bruno Mégret (e.g. Bastow 2000).

Almost equally famous is the Austrian Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ) and its former leader Jörg Haider. From its beginning in 1956, the party has been divided between a “national” and a “liberal” faction (e.g. Luther 1991; Riedlsperger 1998). The populist radical right takeover of the party is commonly considered to have taken place in 1986, when Haider was elected Bundesobmann (Federal Chairman) with the help of the national wing. While the FPÖ continued to include a nonpopulist radical right faction with prominent members like Heide Schmidt, at least until the split of the Liberales Forum (Liberal Forum) in 1993, Haider’s grip on the party was strong and within a few years he had transformed “his” FPÖ into a full-fledged populist radical right party (e.g. Luther 2003). In 2005 Haider and his most loyal supporters, including his sister (then FPÖ-leader) and the federal FPÖ-ministers and state secretaries, founded a new political party, the Bündnis Zukunft Österreichs (Alliance for Austria’s Future, BZÖ). The differences between the BZÖ and FPÖ are largely personal and strategic rather than ideological, and both parties are essentially populist radical right.

Despite its relatively poor electoral results, the German Die Republikaner (REP) is among the most well-known populist radical right parties in contemporary Europe. It originated as a national conservative split-off from the Bavarian Christlich Soziale Union (Christian Social Union, CSU) in 1983. After a short power struggle, Franz Schönhuber took the party in a populist radical right direction, inspired by the first electoral successes of the French FN (e.g. Mudde 2000a; Jaschke 1994). While the REP went through various ideological and leadership struggles, it remained loyal to its populist radical right core ideology. However, with the exception of the 1989 European election, the party has never been able to top the 5 percent hurdle in nationwide elections.

Belgium is home to two populist radical right parties, both strongly influenced by the French FN. The Front national (Belge) (National Front (Belgian), FNb) is the populist radical right in the French-speaking part of the country, contesting elections in Brussels and Wallonia (e.g. Coffé 2005; Alaluf 1998). Founded in 1985, it copied the name and logo from its successful French brother. This notwithstanding, the FNb is in many ways the opposite of the FN: it has no party organization to speak of and its leader, Daniel Féret, lacks the charisma of Le Pen. To the degree that the party has a developed ideology, it is populist radical right, with a nativism driven far more by xenophobia than Belgian state nationalism. Over the years the FNb has seen many splits, including the Front nouveau

de Belgique (New Front of Belgium, FNB), another populist radical right party in Brussels and Wallonia.

In the Dutch-speaking part of Flanders, the Vlaams Belang (VB) is in many ways the antithesis of the FNb. It originated in 1978 as Vlaams Blok, an electoral cartel of two radical splits of the nationalist VU, and continues its radical push for Flemish independence against the Belgian state. After its beginning as an old-style radical right party, with some elitist elements, the VB developed into a well-organized populist radical right party in the 1980s, under the impetus of young leaders like Gerolf Annemans, Filip Dewinter and Frank Vanhecke (e.g. Mudde 2000a; Spruyt 1995). Convicted for inciting racial hatred in 2004, the party quickly changed its name, but so far not its ideology (e.g. Erk 2005).

In Denmark the populist radical right Dansk Folkeparti (DFP) is in many ways a special party. First of all, it is one of the few splits that have been able to fully overshadow its mother party. Second, the DFP was founded and is still led by a woman, Pia Kjaersgaard (see also chapter 4). Third, because of the Danish tradition of minority government, the DFP is one of the few populist radical right parties that are not formally part of the government, but that does officially weigh heavily on it. From the outset the party has been unequivocally populist radical right, despite keeping its distance from similar parties like the FN and VB (e.g. Rydgren 2004b; Hasselbach 2002; Widfeldt 2000).

While the usual suspects in Western Europe will have been well known to most readers, the situation in Eastern Europe might be less familiar. Given the few comparative sources on the populist radical right in postcommunist Europe (e.g. Mudde 2005a, 2000b; Minkenberg 2002b; Ramet 1999a), it seems a bit presumptuous to speak of “usual suspects” in this respect. This notwithstanding, all parties discussed below are identified by most authors and experts in the field as being unequivocally part of what is usually called the radical or extreme right.

The Croatian Hrvatska stranka prava (HSP) was founded in 1990 by former dissident Dobroslav Paraga and a group of associates living in- and outside of Croatia (e.g. Irvine 1997; Zakošek 1994). It presented itself as the direct continuation of the original HSP of Ante Starčević, founded in 1861. Starčević’s ideal of an independent Great Croatian state (including Bosnia-Herzegovina) had also inspired Ante Pavelić, the leader of the infamous *Ustaša* state (the fascist Croat puppet state during the Second World War). Initially, the “new” HSP moved between the populist radical right and the extreme right, in part because of the activities of its paramilitary arm, the Hrvatske obrambene snage (Croatian Defence Force, HOS). Under pressure from the Tuđman regime in 1992, the HSP was forced to moderate its actions and ideology and split: the pro-Tuđman

Table 2.1 *Main populist radical right parties in contemporary Europe*

Country	– Party	High Score (Year) <sup>a</sup>
Austria	– Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ)	26.9 (1999)
Belgium	– Front national (Belge) (FNb)	6.9 (1995)
	– Vlaams Belang (VB)	16.8 (2003)
Croatia	– Hrvatska stranka prava (HSP)	6.8 (1992)
Denmark	– Dansk Folkeparti (DFP)	13.2 (2005)
France	– Front national (FN)	14.9 (1997)
Germany	– Die Republikaner (REP)	2.1 (1990) <sup>b</sup>
Hungary	– Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (MIÉP)	5.5 (1998)
Poland	– Liga Polskich Rodzin (LPR)	8.0 (2005)
Romania	– Partidul România Mare (PRM)	19.5 (2000)
Russia	– Liberal'no-demokraticeskoi partii Rossii (LDPR)	22.9 (1993)
Slovakia	– Slovenská národná strana (SNS)	11.7 (2006)

Notes: <sup>a</sup> These are the national results in elections for (the lower house of) the parliament. In the case of the two Belgian parties this obscures their real strength, as they only contest national elections in certain parts of the country.

<sup>b</sup> The REP gained 7.1% in the (nationwide) European election of 1989.

faction of Ante Djapic got the official right to the party name, while the faction of the original leader founded the HSP-1861. In the end, both parties moderated their discourse somewhat, but still remained firmly within the populist radical right. But while the HSP was able to continue its parliamentary presence, although mainly through electoral coalitions with nonpopulist radical right parties, the HSP-1861 disappeared into political oblivion.

The Hungarian Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (MIÉP) was founded by István Csurka, a well-known populist playwright under communism and one of the founders and vice-presidents of the Magyar Demokrata Fórum (Hungarian Democratic Forum, MDF), the main opposition party at the end of the communist era and the clear winner of the first election in postcommunist Hungary (e.g. Bernáth *et al.* 2005; Szöcs 1998). After years of incidents, including various anti-Semitic statements and a challenge to the moderate MDF leadership, Csurka and several of his followers were expelled in 1993 and founded the MIÉP. The new party is unequivocally populist radical right, even if it does not have a particularly modern image and seems stuck in classic Hungarian radical right issues such as anti-Semitism and irredentism (Greater Hungary).

For a long time, ambitious Polish radical right politicians operated mainly within broader nationalist and right-wing electoral coalitions, such

as the Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność (Solidarity Electoral Action, AWS). Shortly before the 2001 parliamentary election, some AWS backbenchers founded the Liga Polskich Rodzin (LPR), which gained a surprising 8 percent of the votes (e.g. Kostrzębski 2005; Pankowski & Kornak 2005). Its initial election results were to a large extent the result of strong support from Father Tadeusz Rydzyk and his influential Catholic nationalist Radio Maryja (Maria) media empire. However, in recent years the LPR, a populist radical right party that combines Polish nativism with orthodox Catholicism, has been able to consolidate its electoral success, despite only lukewarm support by Rydzyk. In 2006, after several months of supporting the minority government of the national conservative Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice Party, PiS), the LPR joined a coalition government with PiS and the populist Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polski (Self-Defense of the Polish Republic), despite internal divisions.

One of the oldest and most successful populist radical right parties in Eastern Europe is the Partidul România Mare (PRM), founded in 1991 as the political arm of the România Mare magazine (e.g. Andreescu 2005; Shafir 2001, 2000). From the beginning the party has been led by the erratic and flamboyant Corneliu Vadim Tudor, who gained a shocking 30 percent of the votes in the second round of the 2000 presidential elections. The PRM is one of the more extreme populist radical right parties, having been a key player in the *coup d'état* of some radical miners in 1999. Its discourse regularly crosses into the realm of antidemocracy and racism, even if the core ideology remains within (nominally) democratic boundaries. Authoritarianism has become increasingly central in the election campaigns of the PRM and its leader, "Vadim the Righteous."<sup>6</sup>

Russia is home to undoubtedly the most eclectic and erratic of all populist radical right parties, the ill-named Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR).<sup>7</sup> This is largely because of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the democratically elected dictator of the party, who has been described in such unflattering terms as "political clown" (Wilkiewicz 2003: 173) and "buffoon" (Service 1998: 180). Notwithstanding the erratic behavior and bizarre statements of party leader Zhirinovskiy,<sup>8</sup> most analysts agree that the core ideology of the LDPR has remained relatively stable and populist

<sup>6</sup> In 2005 Tudor briefly stepped back as party leader and the party added the term "popular" to its name, becoming the Partidul Popular România Mare (Greater Romania Popular Party), in a feeble attempt to gain membership of the European People's Party (EPP).

<sup>7</sup> The LDPR was founded as the Liberal Democratic Party of the Soviet Union in 1989 and changed its name after the demise of the Soviet Union.

<sup>8</sup> One author has described Zhirinovskiy as "part fascist, part communist, part liberal, part imperialist, part fantasist" (e.g. Service 1998: 196). Zhirinovskiy himself has claimed, among many other things: "I shall not be linked to an ideological trend and I shall remain faithful to my voters" (Williams & Hanson 1999: 276).



radical right (e.g. Shenfield 2001; Service 1998; Umland 1997b). While the boundaries of its preferred state have changed over time, Russian nativism, authoritarianism and populism have always been core features of the party ideology.

Slovakia is one of the few countries where the populist radical right has not only made it into government, but has even come out of government with additional votes. The Slovenská národná strana (Slovak National Party, SNS) was founded in postcommunist Czechoslovakia in April 1990. From the outset the party claimed to be the successor to the historical SNS (1871–1938), a nationalist party that later formed a coalition with the pro-fascist Hlinkova Slovenská ľudová strana (Hlinka's Slovak People's Party), the ruling party in the clerico-fascist Slovak State of the Second World War (e.g. Fried 1997; Kirschbaum 1996; Strahn & Daniel 1994). The party's historical ties were ambiguous, however, as internal divisions led it to claim the tradition of other pre-communist parties as well (i.e. the historical SNS and the national-conservative Agrarian Party).

After Slovakia achieved national independence, internal problems increasingly divided the party, culminating in a split in 1993. When the conservatives left and formed the Demokratická únia (Democratic Union), the SNS became a full-fledged populist radical right party. Under new leader Ján Slota it became a junior party in the third Měciar coalition (1994–98), almost doubling its electoral support along the way. However, relegated to the opposition benches because of the losses of its coalition partners, the SNS soon got entangled in a vicious leadership struggle between chairman Ján Slota and vice-chairwoman Anna Malíková. The party's internal strife led to splits and mergers, but most notably perhaps, to loss of parliamentary representation in 2002. However, after long negotiations a truce was signed between the two leaders and in the 2006 parliamentary elections the SNS reentered parliament with a stunning 11.7 percent of the vote.

## 2.4 Nonpopulist radical right parties

Having identified the most important populist radical right parties among the usual suspects, it is now time to turn our attention to those parties that are not included in the populist radical right party family. The discussion is limited mostly to political parties that are mentioned regularly in relation to the “extreme right” (and related terms), but some unsuspected parties will be discussed as well, mostly to clarify the boundaries between party families. As far as possible, the aim is not only to argue why these parties are not populist radical right, but also to determine their



party family. In most cases the party belongs to one of the families that border and partly overlap the populist radical right, as already discussed at a more general level in the previous chapter.

#### 2.4.1 *Nonradical right populists*

Most usual suspects that are excluded from the populist radical right party family belong to the larger and more diffuse category of populist parties. Two subgroups are most relevant in this respect: social populists and neoliberal populists. The latter category is most closely related to the populist radical right; together they form the loose category of right-wing populism. The core ideology of neoliberal populism, as defined in the previous chapter, is the combination of primarily economic liberalism and populism.

A good if somewhat extreme example of a neoliberal populist party is the Norwegian Fremskrittspartiet (FRP), whose status has always been debated within the field. Founded in 1973 as the *Anders Lange Parti til sterk nedsettelse av skatter, avgifter og offentlige inngrep* (Anders Lange Party for a Strong Reduction of Taxes, Duties and Public Intervention), the party changed its name a few years after the death of its founder. Under the leadership of Carl Ivar Hagen, the FRP has been erratic in its electoral results as well as its ideological positions. The party began as an antitax party, morphed into a neoliberal party in the 1980s, and then embraced an opportunistic populism in the 1990s (e.g. Lorenz 2003).<sup>9</sup> Notwithstanding the protean nature of the FRP, it is quite clear that nativism does not constitute part of its core ideology.<sup>10</sup> Despite its occasional highly xenophobic campaigns, or its more recent defense of welfare chauvinism, the FRP is best classified as a neoliberal populist party.

Among the parties most often confused with the populist radical right, the following parties are most accurately categorized as neoliberal populist: the Bulgarian *Balgarski biznes blok* (Bulgarian Business Bloc, BBB), the Danish *Fremskridtspartiet* (Progress Party, FPd), the Dutch *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (LPF), the German *Schill-Partei* and *Partei Rechtsstaatlicher Offensive* (Constitutional Offensive Party, PRO), the Italian *Forza Italia* (Go Italy, FI), the Polish *Unia Polityki Realnej* (Union

<sup>9</sup> Various authors have argued that opportunism is a key feature of (neoliberal) populist parties (e.g. Decker 2003; Lorenz 2003; Pissowotzki 2003; Mény & Surel 2002a). As we define party families exclusively on the basis of ideology, strategic features (however important for certain parties) cannot be considered in the classification.

<sup>10</sup> In fact, at various times in the existence of the FRP there have been struggles between nativists and the party leadership, notably Hagen, which mostly led to the nativists either leaving the party voluntarily or being expelled forcefully (e.g. Decker 2004: 106–7).

for Real Politics, UPR), the Swedish Ny Demokrati (New Democracy, ND), and the Swiss Schweizer Autopartei/Parti Suisse des automobilistes (Swiss Car Party, AP).<sup>11</sup> Though most of these parties have been linked to xenophobic campaigns, nativism is not central to their ideology.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, their xenophobic rhetoric is primarily informed by their liberalism.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, some parties are best classified as social populists. In the core, social populism combines socialism and populism, and is thus a form of left-wing populism rather than right-wing. One of the best-known examples of a social populist party is the Greek Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima (Panhellenic Socialist Movement, PASOK), at least under the leadership of Andreas Papandreou (e.g. Sotiropoulos 1996; Spourdalakis 1988). Among the more relevant contemporary representatives of this party group we find the Dutch Socialistische Partij (Socialist Party, SP), the German Die Linke. PDS (The Left.PDS), and the Scottish Socialist Party (SSP) (e.g. March & Mudde 2005).<sup>14</sup>

A party that seems better classified as social populist than populist radical right is the Polish Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polski. Founded in 1992, Samoobrona exists as both a political party and a (farmers') trade union annex social movement (e.g. Krok-Paszkowska 2003; Wilkiewicz 2003). Its diffuse ideological party program and complex organizational structure, as well as differences in the use of terminology between East and West, make any consensus on labeling the party impossible. The one thing most experts agree upon is that Samoobrona is a populist party; whether it is left- or right-wing is a matter of great dispute, however (Schuster 2005). More detailed and structured analysis of the party ideology is needed, but for the moment Samoobrona is best excluded from the populist radical right party family. Similarly, the Romanian Partidul

<sup>11</sup> It would be going too far to argue all these cases individually. For detailed analyses of the (core) ideologies of these parties, see Mitev (1997) on the BBB Gooskens (1994) on the FPD; Mudde (2007) and Lucardie & Voerman (2002) on the LPF; Decker (2003) and Hartleb (2004) on Schill and the PRO; Grassi & Rensmann (2005) and Pissowotzki (2003) on the FI; Pankowski & Kornak (2005) on the UPR; Taggart (1996) and Westlund (1996) on the ND; and Altermatt & Furrer (1994) on the AP.

<sup>12</sup> In this respect, Decker's (2004: 219–20) distinction between “opponents to” and “sceptics of” multicultural society can be useful, with the populist radical right belonging to the first category and the neoliberal populists to the second.

<sup>13</sup> Good examples are the Islamophobic remarks of Pim Fortuyn and Silvio Berlusconi, who have both criticized Islam (interpreted as Islamic fundamentalism) as being fundamentally opposed to liberal democracy; see Akkerman (2005) and Pissowotzki (2003), respectively.

<sup>14</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, the SP has been one of the first Dutch parties to militate against immigration, but on the basis of socialist rather than nativist grounds, i.e. to protect the Dutch workers against capitalist oppression. Similarly, the SSP has supported Scottish independence because the party believes this increases the chances for a socialist Scotland (which remains just a first step towards global socialism).

Socialist al Muncii (Socialist Labor Party, PSM) is better labeled social populist, despite its occasional nativist discourse (e.g. Shafir 2000).

#### 2.4.2 *Nonpopulist right*

This study draws a clear line between populist radical right parties and various forms of the extreme right, including neofascism and neo-Nazism. Most importantly, extreme right parties are undemocratic, and often elitist, whereas populist radical right parties are (nominally) democratic and populist. This means the exclusion of many of the parties that Ignazi has called “traditional” (2003) or “old” (1992) extreme right, such as the Austrian Nationaldemokratische Partei (National Democratic Party, NDP), the German NPD, or the Greek Ethniki Politiki Enosis (National Political Union, EPEN) – but not others, which do meet the definition of populist radical right, such as the British National Party (BNP) and the Dutch Centrumpartij ’86 (CP’86).<sup>15</sup>

In Eastern Europe various smaller organizations are more accurately defined as extreme right. This includes political parties like the Czech Prává Alternativa (Right Alternative), the Polish Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski (National Rebirth of Poland, NOP), the Romanian Miscarea pentru România (Movement for Romania), the Russian Russkoe natsionalnoe edinstvo (Russian National Unity, RNE) and Natsionalbolshrevistskaya partiya (National Bolshevik Party, NBP), and the Ukrainian Ukrainska natsionalna assembleya–Ukrainska natsionalna samooborona (Ukrainian National Assembly–Ukrainian People’s Self-Defense, UNA-UNSO).<sup>16</sup>

There are also some parties that are radical right but not populist. While this combination used to be quite common, the experience of semi-permanent opposition and the current populist *Zeitgeist* (Mudde 2004) have brought most radical right parties to adopt populism. Good examples of such transformations are the Belgian VB and the French FN, which both originated as nonpopulist radical right parties in the 1970s.

One of the few relevant contemporary examples of a radical right party that is not populist is the Turkish Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Action Party, MHP). Founded in 1965 as the Cumhuriyetçi Köylü

<sup>15</sup> Again, these decisions are made on the basis of various primary and secondary sources and cannot be discussed here in detail. As an indication, the following literature can be mentioned: Mudde (1995b) on the NDP, Flemming (2004) and Mudde (1995b) on the NPD, Kolovos (2003) on EPEN, Eatwell (2000) on the BNP, and Mudde (2000a) on the CP’86.

<sup>16</sup> All extreme right political parties are marginal in both electoral and political terms. On the post-Soviet parties, see, among others, Umland (2005), Shenfield (2001) and Solchanyk (1999); on the Central and East European parties, see the various country chapters in Mudde (2005a) and Ramet (1999a).

Millet Partisi (Republican Peasant National Party), it changed its name in 1969 and remained relatively marginal until its surprise achievement of 18 percent in the 1999 parliamentary election and the consequent stint in government (e.g. Yavuz 2002; Aras & Bacik 2000). While the core ideology of the MHP includes both authoritarianism and nativism, the party does not simply follow the *vox populi*. In fact, it has strong elitist and statist beliefs: “The MHP always sides with the state when there is a tension between state and society” (Yavuz 2002: 211).

#### 2.4.3 *Conservatives*

Conservatism has many permutations, some closer to the populist radical right than others. The neoconservatism that developed in Britain and the US in the 1980s in particular has been linked to the populist radical right (e.g. Ignazi 1992). Indeed, Kitschelt and McGann’s famous “winning formula” (1995) better defines neoconservatism than the (populist) radical right. Crucially, while the two share authoritarianism and a concern for the national interest, nativism and populism are not core features of conservatism, while neoliberal economics is not a core feature of the populist radical right.

The obvious differences between the two political ideologies notwithstanding, much confusion remains with regard to various individual parties. For example, in an article on “the new populism,” Ian Hall and Magali Perrault (2000) collapse some usual populist radical right suspects, like the Austrian FPÖ and the Slovak SNS, together with parties that are normally labeled conservative (liberal), such as the Czech Občanská demokratická strana (Civic Democratic Party, ODS) and the Hungarian FIDESZ-MPS. This is not completely without reason, as several authors have pointed out nativist and populist statements by leading members of these latter parties (e.g. Segert 2005a; Hanley 2004; Kiss 2002). Still, while populist radical right sentiments at times play an important role in electoral campaigns of some conservative (liberal) parties, they do not constitute their core ideology. Consequently, parties like the British Conservative Party, the Czech ODS, and the Dutch Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD) are excluded from the populist radical right party family.

#### 2.4.4 *Ethnoregionalists*

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the ethnoregionalist party family is quite diffuse in terms of the terminology used to designate criteria for membership and the resulting variety of parties it includes. While

exclusion of some populist radical right parties from this family is pretty straightforward, in other cases the differences are far less obvious and significant. The key distinction within this diffuse party family is between the regionalists and the nationalists (see 1.6.2).

Regionalists can be clearly distinguished from nationalists (including the populist radical right) given the concern of the former group with autonomy for a region within a larger state structure. Consequently, various political parties can be excluded from the populist radical right party family: notably those parties that primarily call for regional autonomy to increase the power of an ethnic minority, such as the Dutch *Frysk nasjonale partij* (Frisian National Party), the Polish *Ruch Autonomii Slaska* (Movement for Silesian Autonomy), the Slovak *Magyar Koalíció Pártja-Strana maďarskej koalície* (Party of Hungarian Coalition), and the Spanish *Convergència u Unió* (Convergence and Union).

The second distinction between “nationalists” and the populist radical right is more difficult. Do parties like the pan-Irish *Sinn Féin* (We Ourselves, SF) and the Spanish *Herri Batasuna* (People Unity, HB) belong in a different party family than, say, the Italian *LN* and the Belgian *VB*? The former parties would definitely claim so, even though substantial sympathy exists for them within the latter parties. Most authors seem to share the opinion that the parties should not be grouped together, as they do not even explicitly address their omission of parties like the SF and HB from the populist radical right.

The separation of these parties from the populist radical right seems mainly based on the socioeconomic left–right distinction: the “nationalist” parties are believed to be on the left, favoring strong state intervention (including nationalizations and elaborate welfare policies), whereas the populist radical right are said to be on the right, defending a dominant market model (i.e. neoliberalism). This distinction is highly overstated: not all nationalist parties are socioeconomically on the left, while many populist radical right parties are not really on the right. Moreover, it separates nationalist parties on the basis of a secondary aspect of their party ideology (see chapter 5).

Obviously, not all nationalists are populist radical rightists. Some nationalist parties are not fundamentally populist, such as the Belgian *Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie* (New-Flemish Alliance) or the Albanian monarchist *Partia Lëvizja e Legalitetit* (Movement of Legality Party). In fact, some self-proclaimed nationalist parties are not even truly nationalist. For example, the Scottish National Party (SNP) is better described as separatist than as nationalist. In the words of the party chronicler, “[s]elf-government/independence for Scotland has always been its fundamental aim not self-government/independence for Scots” (Lynch 2002:

Table 2.2 *Some borderline parties that are not populist radical right*

Party name	Core populist radical right ideological features*			
	nationalism	xenophobia	authoritarianism	populism
AP			+	+
FRP			(-)	+
LPF		(+)	(-)	+
MHP	+	+	+	(-)
NPD	+	+	+	(-)
N-VA	+		(+)	
Samoobrona			+	+
Schill/PRO		(+)	+	+
SF	+		+	+
VVD			+	

Note: \*+ = core, (+) = present, not core, (-) = opposite present, but not core  
 For the sake of clarity, the separate features of nationalism and xenophobia, rather than the integrated feature of nativism, are included here (although they are not identical).

4).<sup>17</sup> This has also become true for Plaid Cymru (The Party of Wales), the main political representative of Welsh nationalism (e.g. Christiansen 1998; McAllister 1998).

Most problematic is the categorization of the SF, the political arm of the terrorist Irish Republican Army (IRA), which contests elections both in the Republic of Ireland and in (British) Northern Ireland (e.g. Maillot 2004; Feeney 2002). SF has traditionally been strongly nationalist, populist, and authoritarian – the latter both ideologically, in terms of law and order, and practically, in support for IRA actions and structure.<sup>18</sup> The party does not seem to be xenophobic, although nativist strands are present within the organization (mostly against English and Protestants). Paradoxically, SF presents an extremely open position regarding immigrants, notably in its highly pro-multicultural policy paper *Many Voices One Country: Cherishing All the Children of the Nation Equally. Towards an Anti-Racist Ireland* (SF 2001). As this makes the SF nationalist but not nativist, the party will not be included in the category of the populist radical right, despite its satisfaction of many other criteria.

<sup>17</sup> Consequently, the SNP openly campaigns for an independent yet multicultural Scotland. For example, party leader John Swinney said in his 2003 address to the National Council: “I take pride in the SNP’s belief in a multicultural, inclusive Scotland.”

<sup>18</sup> There are also striking parallels with the populist radical right in the fierce antidrug campaigns of the SF (see Maillot 2004: 90–4).

## 2.5 Residual cases

Having classified the so-called usual suspects, largely either as populist radical right or as neoliberal populist, two important categories of residual parties remain to be discussed: unusual suspects and borderline cases. The former are political parties not normally associated with the populist radical right, or that do not feature commonly with usual suspects like the FN and FPÖ in the literature, but that do hold a populist radical right core ideology. In the first subsection we will identify a few key cases, which actually belong(ed) to the most relevant populist radical right parties in Europe.

Borderline cases are political parties that defy unequivocal classification in terms of the populist radical right. This is not so much the result of flaws in the method of classification chosen, but rather reflects the various problems involved in studying political parties (see 2.2.4). Some parties are coalitions of highly diverse ideological factions, which fight over party domination with different levels of success over time. In other parties, significant discrepancies exist between the externally oriented party discourse, and sometimes even implemented policies, and the core ideology of the internally oriented literature. Finally, some parties have been developing in a populist radical right direction over the past decade or so, but cannot yet be considered full-fledged populist radical right parties.

### 2.5.1 *Unusual suspects*

While many authors have described Eastern Europe as a hotbed of nationalism in the early postcommunist years (e.g. Bogdanor 1995; Fischer-Galati 1993), very few have linked it explicitly to the radical right (e.g. Tismaneanu 1998). Consequently, while state politics from the Baltics to the Balkans were described as authoritarian, nativist and populist, the qualification “radical right” was normally limited to the more marginal usual suspects (e.g. Ramet 1999a). Unfortunately, few empirical studies of party ideologies at that time are available, so it is hard to classify the leading parties of that period unequivocally. This notwithstanding, it does not seem far-fetched to argue that at least some Eastern European parties, which are nonradical now, started out as populist radical right.

This was probably most pronounced in the Baltic states, specifically in Estonia and Latvia. Both newly independent states started their process of state- and nation-building confronted with a huge Russian-speaking

population within their borders and a hostile Russian state just beyond them (see further 6.2.2). Particularly in the early 1990s this led to polarization between a self-conscious, nativist Estonian/Latvian parties block, on the one hand, and a marginalized and nostalgic Russophone parties block, on the other. The nativist idea of a “Latvian Latvia,” combined with “anticolonization” rhetoric, was common to virtually all Latvian parties, most notably the *Latvijas Nacionālās neatkarības kustība* (Latvian National Independence Movement, LNNK) and the *Tēvzeme un Brīvībai* (Fatherland and Freedom, TB), which later merged (see Kalnina 1998). However, from the mid 1990s onward nativism became less pronounced and in both countries the main party discourses and policies slowly but steadily accepted a multicultural state (e.g. Kelley 2004).

A similar development could be noted in Yugoslavia and its main components, Serbia and Croatia. One of the first openly nativist parties in Serbia was the *Srpski pokret obnove* (Serbian Renewal Movement, SPO) of the later Foreign Minister Vuk Drašković. The SPO was founded in 1990 as a populist radical right party struggling for a Serbian Greater Serbia. Drašković was a fierce critic of Slobodan Milošević, whom he accused of being too soft on anti-Serbian forces (i.e. Albanian, Croatian and Slovene separatists). As a consequence of the various wars and the increased repression by the Milošević regime, Drašković moderated his authoritarian and nativist positions. While the SPO still voices nationalist and populist positions at times, these features have lost their prominence since the party became part of the pro-Western coalition after the fall of Milošević in 2000 (e.g. Bieber 2005).

Despite its dubious reputation, and well-documented links to the extreme and radical right, the Croatian *Hrvatska demokratska zajed* (Croatian Democratic Movement, HDZ) is seldom classified as populist radical right. It has been more common to describe the HDZ as a conservative nationalist umbrella party with an “extreme right faction” (e.g. Grdešić 1999; Irvine 1997; Zakošek 1994). But analyses of the official party literature show that it was fundamentally a populist radical right party; this was also evident in the actions of its single-party governments (e.g. Malešević 2002; Uzelak 1998).<sup>19</sup> Since the death of its founder, the late President Franjo Tuđman, and the party’s consequent relegation to the opposition in 2000, the HDZ seems to have transformed into a truly conservative party (e.g. Buric 2002).

<sup>19</sup> Indeed, in terms of its revisionist views on the period of the Second World War, the HDZ even closely resembles some extreme right organizations (e.g. Drakulic 2002; Goldstein & Goldstein 2002; Milentijevic 1994).



This process was strengthened by several expulsions and splits of radical individuals and factions, among them a group around Miroslav Tuđman, whose new party, Hrvatski istinski preporod (Croatian Integrity and Prosperity), remains loyal to the populist radical right legacy of the HDZ of his father. The Hrvatska demokratska zajednica Bosne i Hercegovine, originally the Bosnian branch of the party, has become more independent and radical than its Croatian mother party since the death of Tuđman (see Kasch 2002). Both parties are therefore (still) included in the populist radical right party family.

A striking, unusual case is the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) of the infamous Reverend Ian Paisley, the nemesis of SF in Northern Ireland. Founded in 1971, the DUP is to a large extent *sui generis*: while having only a regionalist basis, contesting elections only in Northern Ireland (or Ulster), its nativism is not restricted to this regional territory. The DUP defends a British nationalism that is virulently xenophobic (notably against Catholics, but also against homosexuals and other “deviants”). Furthermore it is fundamentally authoritarian and populist. However, unlike most other populist radical right parties in Europe, the DUP is also religious fundamentalist. Its fundamentalist Protestantism makes the party somewhat similar to the Christian Right in the US, rather than to the orthodox Catholic LPR in Poland.

### 2.5.2 *Borderline cases*

In Hungary the radical right originated within the broader national conservative anticommunist movement MDF (see 2.3). However, even after the expulsion of the Csurka-group and the consequent foundation of MIÉP, populist radical right forces remained active within the national conservative camp. Since the late 1990s the previously liberal FIDESz-MPS has filled the space left by the imploded MDF, a process accompanied by increasing populist radical right rhetoric. While the boundaries between ideology and strategy have become more and more blurred (e.g. Bayer 2005), in line with the dominant literature FIDESz-MPS will still be regarded as essentially (national) conservative for the moment (e.g. Enyedi 2005; Oltay 2003).

For obvious reasons, postwar Italy has always been linked to strong “extreme right” parties. According to Ignazi (1992), the MSI was the defining party of the whole “extreme right” party family before the 1980s. While this might be true, the party very much stood for an old-fashioned extreme right, which was both antidemocratic and elitist. Even if one focuses more on the practice of the party, i.e. acceptance of democratic practice, it is at best a radical right party, lacking the core feature of

populism.<sup>20</sup> The MSI is therefore not included in the populist radical right party family.

The Alleanza nazionale (National Alliance, AN), MSI's main legal successor, is similarly excluded from the populist radical right family but for different reasons. After some initial ambivalence, the AN transformed itself into a conservative party, in which neither nativism nor populism is prominent (e.g. Ignazi 2005; Tarchi 2003; Griffin 1996). This is not the case for the MS-FT, which claims to have remained loyal to the "fascist heritage" of the MSI but is in fact both nativist and populist. The MS-FT is therefore included in the populist radical right party family.

The classification of the Lega Nord (LN), which originated in 1991 as a coalition of regionalist "leagues" in the north of Italy (e.g. Tarchi 2002; Cento Bull & Gilbert 2001; Betz 1998; Visentini 1993), is more contested and problematic. Many scholars have included the party (initially) in the "(ethno)regionalist" rather than the "extreme right" party family (e.g. Hix & Lord 1997; Gallagher *et al.* 1995; Ignazi 1992). Moreover, while populism has always been a core feature of the LN and its dominant leader Umberto Bossi, authoritarianism and nativism have not. As some skeptical observers have noted, "[t]he Lega is too politically opportunistic to be ideologically coherent, hence its relatively chaotic ideological references" (Fieschi *et al.* 1996: 241).

The League started out as a fairly liberal party, both in terms of economics and rights, but became increasingly authoritarian in the 1990s. And while nativism has been present throughout its existence,<sup>21</sup> the party has often been torn between regionalism and nationalism. In conclusion, the LN might not (always) be a perfect example of the populist radical right, but it is too similar to be excluded from the party family.

The same cannot be argued for the Lega dei Ticinesi (League of Ticino, LdT), which contests elections in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino in Switzerland (e.g. Albertazzi 2006). Although this one-man party, built around the "president for life" Giuliano Bignasca, clearly tried to skim off the success of its Italian neighbors to the south, the LdT differs from the LN in some important aspects. Most notably, the LdT has steadily maintained a regionalist stance, never aspiring to independence for the Italian Swiss. In addition, unlike the LN the Swiss League is not authoritarian. In the words of one of its foremost experts, Daniele Albertazzi, "on issues

<sup>20</sup> In his more recent work, Ignazi (2003) has qualified his thesis, labeling the MSI as the defining party of only one subtype of extreme right parties, the traditional.

<sup>21</sup> Originally, the LN directed its nativist sentiments mainly against *terroni*, which literally means "those of the land," a derogatory term for people from the south of Italy. In the mid 1990s the party also started targeting immigrants, and became the most vocal anti-immigrant party in Italy.

such as homosexuality, women's rights and alternative lifestyles, the LDT has little in common with the radical right, with which it is often confused" (2006: 137). The LdT will therefore be excluded from the group of populist radical right parties.

The Serbian Socijalistička partija Srbije (Socialist Party of Serbia, SPS) is sometimes linked to the populist radical right, mostly because of the actions and speeches of its (former) party leader, Slobodan Milošević (e.g. Markotich 2000). The conclusions to be drawn from the behavior of Milošević, however, are open to debate. Looking at his political career, Milošević seems better classified as a "radical opportunist" than a "radical nationalist" (Stojanović 2003: 60).<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, there is a methodological problem with accepting the party's designation as populist radical right. Parties are classified here exclusively on the basis of their core ideology, which in this case is best understood as social populist (e.g. Bieber 2005). Thus, the SPS is not included in the populist radical right party family.

A similar conclusion should be drawn with regard to the Slovak Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko (HZDS)<sup>23</sup> and its party leader Vladimír Mečiar. While some authors have classified this party as part of the populist radical right family (e.g. Kneuer 2005), this overstates both the importance of certain party figures and speeches, and the coherence of the party and its ideology. Despite attempts to develop an integrated political party with a consistent ideology, the HZDS has always remained a diffuse and opportunistic alliance of various factions, including a populist radical right one, under the towering dominance of party leader Mečiar (e.g. Thanei 2002; Haughton 2001).

The most problematic party to classify is the Schweizerische Volkspartei–Union démocratique du centre (SVP), which originated as an agrarian party in the German Protestant cantons of Switzerland. In recent decades the SVP has changed in terms of both its ideological profile and its electoral and geographical support basis. However, as Swiss politics is first and foremost cantonal, it is not always easy to speak of truly national parties (e.g. Kriesi 1998). In theory, and sometimes even in practice, political parties can hold very distinct ideologies in different cantons.

Ideological diffusion at the cantonal level has existed within the SVP for much of the 1980s and 1990s (e.g. Kriesi *et al.* 2005a; Altermatt

<sup>22</sup> In the words of Takis Pappas, "Milošević must be seen as a political entrepreneur who recognized the importance of 'cultural identity' to the Serbian nation and used it as a political resource in his bid for power" (2005: 193).

<sup>23</sup> In 2003 the HZDS added the prefix *Ludová strana* (People's Party), becoming the LS-HZDS.

& Skenderovic 1999). There are two very important cantonal branches in Switzerland in general, and within the SVP in particular: Berne and Zurich. In the canton of Berne, the capital of Switzerland, the SVP has always been a centrist governmental party with a strong liberal character. In sharp contrast, in the financially and economically strong canton of Zurich, the party has developed a more conservative and oppositional character since the mid 1970s, particularly under the leadership of Christoph Blocher. During the 1990s the Zurich branch slowly but steadily took over the national SVP, in part through the founding of various new cantonal branches loyal to Blocher (see Skenderovic 2005).

For decades the SVP has been considered as either an agrarian/center party (e.g. Gallagher *et al.* 2001; Müller-Rommel 1993) or a conservative (liberal) party (e.g. Helms 1997). Still, there is no doubt that the party has radicalized under the leadership of Blocher. The main question today seems to be whether the SVP is (neo or national) conservative, as some scholars and the party itself claim (e.g. Hennecke 2003), or populist radical right, as the new consensus asserts (e.g. Geden 2005; Betz 2004; Husbands 2000). Although classification has been hindered by the decentralized structure of Swiss politics, and the prominent position of the Berne faction, at least since 2005 the SVP has to be put in the category of the populist radical right. With the entrance of Blocher into the Swiss government that year, the moderate Berne faction lost its ability to counterbalance the populist radical right rest of the party (see, in particular, Skenderovic 2005).

## 2.6 Conclusion

Many debates on the populist radical right party family base the often implicit classification of individual political parties on the age-old common wisdom: if it walks like a duck, talks like a duck, and looks like a duck, it is a duck. At the very least, this chapter should have raised serious doubts about this “method.” Despite the logistical and conceptual difficulties it entails, party family scholars will have to take the issue of categorization and classification more seriously. This chapter has taken a first step by identifying the best data and method to employ, and by presenting a provisional classification of most parties linked to this party family.

The classification of the usual suspects has led to some unexpected outcomes. To stay in the terminology of animal metaphors, we have found some wolves in sheep’s clothing, i.e. populist radical right parties that are not recognized as such (e.g. DUP, HDZ), but even more sheep in wolves’ clothing, i.e. nonpopulist radical right parties that are often perceived as

populist radical right (e.g. AN, HZDS, LPF). Most of the latter belong to a separate, if somewhat overlapping, party family, that of neoliberal populism (e.g. FI, PRO, UPR). In addition, some parties within the conservative (e.g. FIDESZ-MPS, ODS, VVD) and (ethno)regionalist families (e.g. HB, SF) show striking similarities to the populist radical right, but are in essence, i.e. in their core ideology, not part of this party family.

Some remarkable observations can be made regarding the group of correctly classified populist radical right parties, too. First, several of the key parties did not originate as populist radical right; some started as clearly nonradical right (e.g. REP, SVP), as nonpopulist radical right (e.g. FN, VB), or as diffuse with a populist radical right faction (e.g. FPÖ, SNS). Second, a number of parties that originated as populist radical right have since transformed, mostly into conservative parties (e.g. HDZ, LNNK, SPO). This does not automatically mean that “the radical right has proven to be considerably more flexible and fluid than rigid classification schemes allow for” (Betz 1999: 305). Rather, it reminds us that classifications can only be valid temporarily, as political parties and ideologies can and sometimes do change over time.

This chapter has discussed only the most important and well-known parties. A more comprehensive list of populist radical right parties in contemporary Europe is presented in appendix A. In most cases only parties that have independently gained over 1 percent in the parliamentary elections at least once since the 1980s are included. In certain cases even smaller parties have been included, mostly because they will be referred to in the following chapters. Obviously, this list is very tentative, as much more work will have to be done on many individual parties to establish a correct and comprehensive classification of the whole populist radical right party family.

