Globalization and the (Re)Emergence of Europe's Far Right

*Matthew Dyck

Abstract

Against the backdrop of a global order in flux, two emerging phenomena are of particular importance in the 21st century: deepening globalization and the re-emergence of the far right in Europe. A nuanced understanding of how the former contributes to the latter is necessary to fully appreciate what is at stake in European politics. Although both concepts are well-studied and feature prominently in the literature, there continues to be debate over their exact meanings, manifestations, and implications. Responding to these concerns, this paper highlights the contested nature of these phenomena, establishes their historical roots, and outlines their unique contemporary nature. This background is then used to more fully explore the relationship between them through four case studies, ultimately suggesting that globalization – especially its cultural and economic dimensions – has contributed to the growth of far-right political parties in Europe by challenging the identities of voters and creating perceived 'winners and losers.' Finally, it identifies areas where future research is needed and offers several salient questions that are critical to fully understanding the relationship between these phenomena.

Keywords: Globalization, far right, politics, Europe, identity

*College of Arts and Science, University of Saskatchewan, 52 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.
Correspondence: **mdd934@usask.ca**

USURJ

University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Research Journal
Volume 8, Issue 2, 2022

Introduction

The process of globalization is featured prominently in academia, and its seemingly inescapable reach is hard to deny. Notably, thanks in part to recent advances in communications and transportation technology, it is possible to overcome the obstacles of distance and time to connect with people across the world in previously unimaginable ways – as the unfolding pandemic has tragically demonstrated. This process has coincided with another trend, which also carries with it significant implications. Across much of Europe, far-right political parties have gained significant electoral support in recent years.[1] This paper seeks to bridge the gap between these two phenomena, exploring how the former has contributed to the latter.

In doing so, this paper will argue that globalization, in its contemporary form, has been an important driver of electoral support for the far right in Europe due to the stress it places on identity and the unequal nature of its benefits. To accomplish this, the paper will be organized into five sections. First, it will outline the paper's scope conditions, clearly demarcating its conceptual boundaries. Second, it will examine the nature of contemporary globalization, identifying how it both mirrors and differs from its past iterations. Third, it will highlight the rise of the far right in Europe, focusing on brief case studies from France, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands, each of which exemplifies a key feature of Europe's far right. Fourth, it will bridge the gap between these two phenomena, with particular attention paid to the aforementioned case studies. Finally, it will conclude with a brief discussion of the implications of these findings and will offer several suggestions for further research.

Scope Conditions

This paper seeks to offer insight into how the contemporary form of globalization has fuelled the far right in Europe. In doing so, it is important to recognize the limitations of this analysis and consider other factors that have contributed to the rise of Europe's far right. Notably, given that globalization and the far right are elusive concepts, different definitions of each would inevitably lead to different findings regarding their relationship. Given this challenge, both terms are clearly defined in the following sections in such a way that their relationship can be tangibly examined. As a result, this paper demonstrates how a growing network of supraterritorial global linkages acts as a catalyst for the growth of the far right in Europe, while simultaneously inviting future studies to assess the nuances of this relationship and challenge the definitions used here.

Second, it is equally important to recognize that globalization alone cannot – and should not – be considered the sole driver of the growing far right, despite the relationship outlined throughout this paper. For example, in the context of the European far right it is especially critical to highlight the role of regionalism. While this paper highlights how the European Union is viewed as a symbol of globalism for far-right parties and their voters, it is equally a symbol of regionalism.[2] The Euroscepticism found in many far right parties in Europe is, therefore, not entirely due to globalization, but also to a rejection of the erosion of national sovereignty brought about by deepening regional integration.[3] Similarly, while other authors have considered how concepts such as racism and immigration have themselves contributed to the growth of the far right in Europe, this paper situates

[1] Daphne Halikiopoulou and Tim Vlandas, "What is new and what is nationalist about Europe's new nationalism? Explaining the rise of the far right in Europe," *Nations and Nationalism* 25, no. 2 (2019): 410.

[2] Marie Lechler, "Employment Shocks and Anti-EU Sentiment," *European Journal of Political Economy* 59 (2019): 266.

[3] Oliver Treib, "Euroscepticism is here to stay: what cleavage theory can teach us about the 2019 European Parliament elections," *Journal of European Public Policy* 28, no. 2 (2021): 185.

these factors within a broader discussion of globalization.[4]

This paper does not, therefore, claim to offer an encompassing view of the factors behind the rise of the far right, but instead highlights how globalization contributes to this trend. Moreover, it does so with the acknowledgement that globalization is not the only factor driving the far right in Europe, despite its important role. With this in mind, the relationship outlined in this paper between globalization and the rise of Europe's far right should not be mistakenly labelled as causal, but worthy of academic consideration.

Contemporary Globalization: A New Phenomenon?

What is Globalization?

In order to analyze the nature of contemporary globalization, it is necessary to first define the term. It first appeared in academia in the late 20th century, and has since been criticized as a buzzword due to the inability of scholars to pin down a precise definition – one author has even gone so far as to call it "*the* buzzword of our time."[5] This is the case for several reasons, notably including that the ideas underpinning globalization are themselves contested and misunderstood, as well as the notion that different authors have defined the term to fit within their own research agendas and fields of study.[6] In his attempt to establish a precise definition, prominent political scientist Jan Aart Scholte starts with a negative conception – what globalization is not.[7] According to Scholte, for the term to be meaningful, it needs to describe a new phenomenon.[8] Consequently, he suggests that while globalization contains strong elements of each, it should not be conflated with internationalisation (the intensification of inter-state transactions and interdependences); liberalization (the formation of a borderless world economy); universalisation (the dispersal of homogenous objects and experiences to people across the world); or westernisation (the universalisation of Western social structures).[9]

Instead, Scholte proposes a definition of globalization that depicts it as a "shift in the nature of social space."[10] His definition is echoed by other prominent globalization scholars, who similarly define globalization as the process through which the global arena is becoming increasingly linked across a number of networks – including cultural, social, political, and economic networks.[11] As Scholte notes, "[a] reconfiguration of social geography is intimately interlinked with shifts in patterns of production, governance, ecology, identity and knowledge. So, a transformation of social space – like large-scale globalisation – is enveloped in larger dynamics of social change."[12] As a result, this definition provides a useful framework to analyse the growth of Europe's far right, which is an example of social change.

4 For example, see: Owen Worth, "Globalization and the 'Far-Right' Turn in International Affairs," *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 28 (2017): 27.

5 Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 2; Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr, "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? (And So What?)" *Foreign Policy* 118 (Spring 2000): 104.

6 Graham Butt, "Globalization: A Brief Exploration of its Challenging, Contested, and Competing Concepts," *Geography* 102, no. 1 (2017):10.

7 Jan Aart Scholte, "Defining Globalization," *The World Economy* 31, no. 11 (2008): 1473-1478

8 Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1473.

9 Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1473-1477.

10 Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1478.

11 Keohane and Nye Jr, "Globalization," 105; Roland Robertson and Kathleen E. White, "What is Globalization?" in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, ed. George Ritzer (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 64; Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1471-1502.

12 Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1479.

History of Globalization

There is significant debate among scholars about how far back the process of globalization extends – thanks in part to the contested nature of the term discussed in the previous section. As Duncan Bell suggests, there are four general theses on the history of globalization: first, the "novelty thesis," which suggests that globalization is an entirely new phenomenon with no comparable historical precedent; second, the "thesis of return," which sees contemporary globalization as the revival of a pre-World War I state of affairs; third, the "continuity thesis," which proposes that globalization is neither novel, nor a return to past affairs; and fourth, the "transformation thesis," which argues that contemporary globalization is distinct from previous iterations, but not entirely ahistorical.[13] Given the definition offered in the previous section, this paper accepts the fourth thesis.

In terms of globalization's historical roots, societies have always been connected in some capacity. For example, the transcontinental spread of humans that can be traced back over a million years is considered by some to be an early example of globalization.[14] On a much larger scale, cross-continent exchanges of people, goods, and ideas via the Silk Road can be traced back to second century BCE, also exemplifying globalization in the historical context.[15] Similarly, the increased linkages that characterize globalization can be seen through the historical spread of religion across continents, which facilitated the spread of goods and ideas.[16] Regardless of how far back different authors decide to trace back these connections, these examples help illustrate that globalization is not an entirely new phenomenon.

Contemporary Globalization

Globalization is, therefore, not entirely unprecedented, but that is not to say that it is experienced the same way as it was in previous centuries, or even decades. Using the definition above – globalization as the expansion of global linkages – it is clear that globalization looks different today than it did in the past. Notably, these linkages have changed in terms of scale and intensity, thanks in large part to technological advances. For example, the spread of ideas across religious networks throughout history (such as through missionaries) pales in comparison to the spread of ideas that is possible today. Thanks to new technologies like the internet, ideas can reach almost all corners of the globe at unprecedented speeds. Writing this paper, the author has access to a nearly limitless database of information from around the world, accessible almost instantaneously. Moreover, while the Silk Road demonstrated the existence of economic linkages, the modern economy consists of much deeper linkages on a much greater scale. The implications of this are unfolding in real time, as the COVID-19 pandemic has painfully illustrated our reliance on global supply chains. These examples help illustrate the nature of contemporary globalization, which consists of deeper cultural, social, political, and economic linkages stretching to farther corners of the globe faster than ever before.

The economic dimension of contemporary globalization, which is the focus of much scholarly attention,[17] cannot be fully understood without recognizing its relationship with neoliberalism. In their periodization of globalization, Philip G. Cerny et al. argue that economic globalization from the 1980s to the 1990s, and from the 1990s to the present, have been marked by periods of neoliberal revival and

[13] Duncan S.A. Bell, "Review: History and Globalization: Reflections on Temporality," *International Affairs* 79, no. 4 (2003): 802-806.

[14] Bryan S. Turner and Robert J. Holton, *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010), 472.

[15] Alan Chong and LMH Ling, "The Silk Roads: Globalization Before Neoliberalization," *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 3, no. 3 (2018): 189-190.

[16] Peter Byer, "Religion and Globalization," in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, ed. George Ritzer (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 449.

[17] Jean-Marc Coicaud, "Can Global Governance Make Globalization More Legitimate?" In *Regulating Globalization: Critical Approaches to Global Governance*, eds. Pierre de Senarclens and Ali Kazancigil (United Nations University Press, 2007), 250.

neoliberal hegemony, respectively.[18] During the former, several influential states and institutions sought to reinvigorate the world economy on the heels of global recession and widespread protectionism by prioritizing the free market.[19] As a result, both of these periods have seen the expansion of global investment and trade, driven by the distinctly neoliberal tenets of free trade, open markets, deregulation, and privatization.[20] The expansive global linkages along economic lines that we experience today cannot, therefore, be separated from neoliberalism, which carries significant implications. While this model has been touted as a successful driver of economic growth, it has also been highly criticized for the unequal nature of this growth – between states, social groups, regions, or otherwise.[21] Consequently, managing the inequalities and disruptions caused by contemporary globalization is a critical challenge, and is a core theme that re-emerges throughout this analysis.

The Rise of Europe's Far Right

Over the past few decades, a second noteworthy trend has (re)emerged in Western Europe: growing electoral support for the far right. Like globalization, the far right is neither clearly defined, nor a new phenomenon. Consequently, in order to fully understand its growth, it is necessary to first define the far right, highlight its rise in Europe, and provide a clear picture of its current prominence.

Defining the Far Right

Like globalization, the term 'far right' is contested in the literature and is similarly accused of being a buzzword. Even between far-right groups, there are differing conceptions of the term's exact meaning.[22] The vague and often confusing nature of the term has important practical implications, such as in Germany, where "extreme right" political groups can be banned, while "radical right" ones cannot, making the nuanced distinctions between definitions important.[23] In his comprehensive analysis of the existing literature, political scientist Cas Mudde identified the emergence of four overlapping themes that form the basis of the far right: nationalism, xenophobia, law and order, as well as welfare chauvinism (referring to the idea that the welfare state should only apply to certain groups within the state).[24] Although this definition is fairly broad and therefore fails to capture all of the nuances of the term, it provides one of the most comprehensive definitions available and is, therefore, a useful starting point to make sense of a difficult term. Consequently, it will be used to inform the following sections.

The (Re)Emergence of the Far Right in Europe

Like globalization, far-right politics is by no means a new phenomenon – especially in Europe. Notably, as recently as the 20th century, far-right ideologies were especially prevalent in Germany and Italy, the devastating effects of which led to the rhetoric of "never again" on the continent.[25] Yet, only a few decades later, the far right has once again emerged as the fastest growing party family in Europe, and has increasingly come into power, participated in coalition governments, and supported

[18] Philip G. Cerny et al., "Different Roads to Globalization: Neoliberalism, the Competition State, and Politics in a More Open World," in *Internalizing Globalization: The Rise of Neoliberalism and the Decline of National Varieties of Capitalism*, eds. Susanne Soederberg, Georg Menz, and Philip G. Cerny (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 7-8.
[19] Cerny et al., "Different Roads to Globalization," 9-10.
[20] Ibid; Robertson and White, "What is Globalization?" 56.
[21] Ziya Öniş and Ahmet Faruk Aysan, "Neoliberal Globalisation, the Nation-State and Financial Crises in the Semi-Periphery: A Comparative Analysis," *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2000): 120.
[22] Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2019), 64.
[23] Mudde, *The Far Right Today*, 26.
[24] Cas Mudde, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 179.
[25] Mudde, *The Far Right Today*, 37.

minority governments across Europe.[26] At the core of these parties' ideologies is a marriage of populism and nationalism, which manifests itself in an 'us versus them' rhetoric, as well as "an emphasis on national sovereignty, strict positions on immigration, the 'national preference,' scepticism of supranational institutions, and often anti-elitism."[27]

Examples of this can be seen across the continent. In Poland, Hungary, and Slovenia, far-right parties are in power; in Austria, a far-right party briefly rose to power in 2017; in Germany, Spain, France, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Greece, and several other countries, far-right parties hold seats in their respective parliaments.[28] Although each country's context is different, there are several common underlying themes. Notably, according to Mudde, the mainstreaming of the far right in Europe at the turn of the 21st century is related in part to several key events that provided political ammunition for far-right parties and led to growing electoral support: 9/11, the global recession of 2008, and a significant influx of refugees in 2015.[29] While this paper will not explore these specific events in greater detail, they begin to point to the links between globalization and the rise of the far right in Europe, which forms the basis for the next section.

The Far Right in Practice

The following section will outline what the 21st century European far right – characterized by nationalism, xenophobia, law and order, as well as welfare chauvinism – looks like in practice. In order to do so, it will begin to explore the links between globalization and the growing far right, integrating examples from specific far-right parties in several countries.

Nationalism

A first common feature of the far right is nationalism, or the desire for the state and nation to be congruous.[30] Nationalism is often tied to xenophobia in the sense that it is exclusionary, creating an ingroup and outgroup based on perceived differences.[31] It seems paradoxical that countries are increasingly looking inward as the world becomes more global in nature, but there are several important ways in which globalization is driving nationalism. According to Natalie Sabanadze, these reasons are fourfold: "1) as a defensive reaction; 2) as a form of resistance; 3) as a response to the intensified need of community, identity and belonging; and 4) as a source of meaning, providing for shared understandings and value systems."[32] In other words, the perceived homogenizing effect of globalization is viewed as a threat to national identity and culture, provoking a nationalist response.[33]

This is evident in France, where the *Rassemblement National* (formerly the *Front National*) has leaned heavily on nationalist rhetoric, notably calling for "national priority" for French citizens in terms of employment, housing, and welfare.[34] At the same time, it has established itself as firmly opposed to immigration, arguing that immigrants "threaten local and national cultural identities, take jobs from locals, put undue stress on the welfare state, and increase

[26] Matt Golder, "Far Right Parties in Europe," *Annual Review of Political Science* 19 (May 2016): *478*.
[27] Halikiopoulou and Vlandas, "What is new and what is nationalist," 411.
[28] "Europe and Right-Wing Nationalism: A Country-by-Country Guide," *BBC News*, November 13, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006.
[29] Mudde, *The Far Right Today*, 53.
[30] Golder, "Far Right Parties in Europe," 480.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Natalie Sabanadze, *Globalization and Nationalism: The Cases of Georgia and the Basque Country* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010), 28.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Gilles Ivaldi, "Populism in France," in *Populism Around the World: A Comparative Perspective*, ed. Daniel Stockemer (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019), 31.

crime and insecurity."[35] Moreover, the party is staunchly opposed to economic globalization, which largely informs its Eurosceptic and protectionist values.[36] This rhetoric exemplifies Sabanadze's links between globalization and nationalism. Notably, the *Rassemblement National* views globalization – especially in its economic and cultural forms – as a threat to France. Consequently, the party sees a need for a defensive reaction to resist the forces of globalization (prioritizing the nation and rejecting the European Union) and is trying to create a tighter national identity to deal with the perceived cultural threat of immigration. These ideas have significant overlap with the following section on xenophobia.

Xenophobia

The xenophobic nature of the far right builds off of the exclusionary nature of nationalism and is an especially important factor behind the rise of the European far right. For many of the reasons cited above, globalization has largely fuelled this xenophobia in Europe, as manifested in the prominence of Islamophobia. Notably, global flows of people, facilitated by the increased linkages brought about by globalization, have led to the nationalist, exclusionary rhetoric examined above, which has a distinctly xenophobic element. Dorian Bell captures this idea perfectly in a journal article on Islamophobia, which connects globalization to immigration, and immigration to the perceived loss of identity and economic opportunity, while also tying these themes to the supposed role of the European Union as a facilitator of this process:

> From within, globalization threatens a European order already McDonald's-ized by the culturally and economically leveling forces of neoliberalism. From without, immigration threatens to compound the influx of foreign goods and capital with an influx of foreign bodies. And on the beach where, for European sun-seekers, intracontinental freedom of movement might once have harmonized with neoliberalism's continental concentrations of wealth, extra-European immigration reveals itself as the apparent ultimate price paid by Europe for a globalization run amok.[37]

This excerpt reinforces the idea that the inequalities perpetuated by neoliberal globalization can threaten national identity, challenging what it means to be 'European' and fostering a xenophobic response. In turn, far-right parties have attempted to tap into this emotion.

Examples of xenophobia in European far-right parties are abundant. Notably, Italy's *Lega Nord* has focused on the exclusion of those perceived as the 'other,' on the basis that they pose a threat to Italian identity.[38] Consequently, the party has relied on an anti-globalization platform, which specifically cites global immigration as the central threat to the "authenticity and identity of northern Italians."[39] A recent study quantified the link between xenophobia and the electoral success of *Lega Nord*, finding that a 1% increase in immigration results in an increase in votes for *Lega Nord* by over 2%, which echoes the findings of other authors.[40] As a result, the large influx of immigrants to Europe in 2015 was heavily politicized by *Lega Nord*, allowing them to campaign successfully on the national level and come to

[35] Andrej Zaslove, "Exclusion, Community, and a Populist Political Economy: The Radical Right as an Anti-Globalization Movement," *Comparative European Politics* 6 (2008): 173.

[36] Ivaldi, "Populism in France," 32.

[37] Dorian Bell, "Europe's 'New Jews': France, Islamophobia, and Antisemitism in the Era of Mass Migration," *Jewish History* 32 (2018): 75.

[38] Dwayne Woods, "Pockets of Resistance to Globalization: The Case of the *Lega Nord*," *Patterns of Prejudice* 43, no. 2 (2009): 161.

[39] Woods, "Pockets of Resistance," 163.

[40] Gabriele Abbondanza and Francesco Bailo, "The Electoral Payoff of Immigration Flows for Anti-Immigration Parties: The Case of *Lega Nord*," *Centre for International Security Studies* 17, no. 3 (2017): 391; Mauro Caselli, Andrea Fracasso, and Silvio Traverso, "Globalization and electoral outcomes: Evidence from Italy," *Economics and Politics* 32 (2019): 68-103.

dominate Italy's centre-right coalition.[41] This is a tangible example of the link between globalization and the rise of the far right in Europe.

Law and Order

A third key aspect of the European far right is rhetoric around law and order. As alluded to in the previous sections, the far right has largely emerged as a response to politics of fear, insecurity, and vulnerability.[42] In other words, like nationalism and xenophobia, the far-right rhetoric of law and order is a reaction to disruptive societal change.[43] This is linked to globalization in several important ways, notably including the potential erosion of state sovereignty and culture that it brings. For example, the far right has capitalized on rhetoric suggesting that "the rapidly advancing information, communication and transportation technologies that are driving economic globalization and propelling international migration are also fostering transnational crime."[44] This excerpt identifies how law and order is used by the far right, largely in response to economic globalization and immigration once again.

A prominent example of this is *Vlaams Belang* (formerly *Vlaams Blok*), which is a far-right party in Belgium. Its platform notably relies on strong law and order rhetoric, using the following language on their campaign website: "[t]he soft approach has only resulted in hard crime."[45] At the centre of this approach is a link between crime and the increasing salience of immigration in the region.[46] As a result, the party's rise in the early 21st century was highly linked to the perceived transnational-ization of crime brought about by globalization, which largely manifested itself in overt racism. Voters were mobilized by what they saw as a growing threat to their way of life.

Welfare Chauvinism

A final key feature of the far right in Europe is welfare chauvinism, which is the idea that the benefits of state welfare should only apply to certain groups within a country. Notably, this has become increasingly important due to the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent Eurozone crisis, which exemplified the danger of the deep linkages brought about by economic globalization. These crises have contributed to a reconceptualization of the "welfare state, immigration, national belonging and racism" in Europe.[47] In other words, as the benefits of the welfare state became more important, so too became the "politics of belonging" that decided how those benefits would be divided.[48] Consequently, with these crises as a backdrop, there have been growing questions surrounding who should have access to the welfare state, and who should not – something that has been capitalized on by Europe's far right. Consequently, welfare chauvinism is closely related to nationalism, xenophobia, and law and order in the sense that it is exclusionary in nature.

One such example can be found in the Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid*, whose platform features notable examples of welfare chauvinism. Among the most extreme examples are calls for migrants with poor Dutch language skills and women wearing burkas to

[41] James Dennison and Andrew Geddes, "The Centre No Longer Holds The *Lega,* Matteo Salvini, and the Remaking of Italian Immigration Politics," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2021): 16.

[42] Catarina Kinnvall, "Fear, Insecurity and the (Re)Emergence of the Far Right in Europe," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Political Psychology,* ed. Paul Nesbitt-Larking, Catarina Kinnvall, and Tereza Capelos (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 317.

[43] Kinnvall, "Fear," 323.

[44] Rey Koslowski, "Personal Security and State Sovereignty in a Uniting Europe," in *Controlling a New Migration World,* ed. Virginie Guiraudon and Christian Joppke (London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2001), 106-107.

[45] "Program: Tackling Crime," Vlaams Belang, accessed December 1, 2021, https://www.vlaamsbelang.org/programma/.

[46] Mudde, *The Ideology of the Extreme Right*, 107-108.

[47] Suvi Keskinen, Ov Christian Norocel, and Martin Bak Jørgensen, "The Politics and Policies of Welfare Chauvinism Under the Economic Crisis," *Critical Social Policy* 36, no. 3 (2016): 321.

[48] Nira Yuval-Davis, "Belonging and the Politics of Belonging," *Patterns of Prejudice* 40, no. 3 (2006): 197-214.

be ineligible to receive benefits.[49] Similarly, they have called for the elimination of immigrants' claims to benefits for their first 10 years in the country, and for the elimination of temporary residents' claims to benefits outright.[50] As these examples show, the party's welfare chauvinism has a distinctly racist tendency. Even its less extreme measures of welfare chauvinism have indirect anti-immigrant implications. For example, the party argues that benefits should only apply to families' first two children, which would have a disproportionately large impact on immigrant families.[51]

Bridging the Gap Between Globalization and the Far Right in Europe

The previous analysis has highlighted several crucial ways in which globalization (especially its economic and cultural dimensions) is linked to the rise of Europe's far right. Notably, two key themes emerge: challenges to voters' identities, and the inherently divisive nature of globalization, each of which will be outlined below.

Challenges to Identity

A common thread that emerged from the above analysis is the way in which globalization is linked to a loss of identity – real or perceived. This is due in large part to cultural globalization, manifested as a greater influx of immigrants and the spread of culture across borders. In Europe, the far right has successfully moved this issue to the centre of political discourse and, by presenting it as a threat to European identity, has gained electoral support.[52] According to a study exploring the success of the far right in Europe, no far-right populist party in the region achieved electoral success around the time of the study without mobilizing grievances towards immigration.[53] Moreover, the study found that the immigration issue is the sole factor uniting all successful far-right populist parties in Europe.[54]

This is especially apparent in the cases of France and Italy. In France, the *Rassemblement National*'s nationalism has benefitted from the perceived loss of cultural identity, primarily brought about by immigration. Similarly, in Italy, the *Lega Nord* has portrayed immigration and cultural globalization as a threat to the northern Italian identity, resulting in greater electoral support. This speaks to a key question at the heart of globalization: is it a culturally homogenizing process, or does it leave room for cultural diversity? This question is a salient one for Europe, which is increasingly faced with this question due to the growing incidence of immigration across the continent, and its increasing prominence in political discourse.[55]

The Inequality of Globalization

A second important theme that links globalization to the far right in each of the cases outlined above is the idea that globalization is not a neutral process. Instead, it benefits some groups more than others, especially in economic and cultural terms. As Hanspeter Kreisi et al. point out,

[49] Laurenz Ennser-Jedenastik, "Welfare Chauvinism in Populist Radical Right Platforms: The Role of Redistributive Justice Principles," *Social Policy and Administration* 52, no. 1 (January 2018): 302.

[50] Ennser-Jedenastik, "Welfare Chauvinism," 306.

[51] Ennser-Jedenastik, "Welfare Chauvinism," 305.

[52] Ferruh Yilmaz, "Right-wing hegemony and immigration: How the populist far-right achieved hegemony through the immigration debate in Europe," *Current Sociology* 60, no. 3 (2012): 368-381; Francesca Romana Ammaturo, "Europe and whiteness: Challenges to European identity and European citizenship in light of Brexit and the 'refugees/migrants crisis'," *European Journal of Social Theory* 22, no. 4 (2019):548-566.

[53] Elisabeth Ivarsflaten, "What Unites Right-Wing Populists in Western Europe?" *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 1 (2008): 3-23.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Lewis Davis and Sumit S. Deole, "Immigration and the Rise of Far-Right Parties in Europe," *IFO DICE Report* 15, no. 4 (2017): 10-15.

> the likely winners [from the process of globalization] include entrepreneurs and qualified employees in sectors open to international competition as well as all kinds of cosmopolitan citizens. The expected losers, by contrast, include entrepreneurs and qualified employees in traditionally protected sectors, all unqualified employees and citizens who strongly identify themselves with their national community.[56]

This excerpt speaks to the view held by much of the European far right, which sees globalization as a process that benefits a segment of society at the expense of the rest of the nation. Continuing with the example of immigration, which symbolizes these fears of globalization, the media has helped fuel the far right by framing immigration in such a way that citizens feel threatened in terms of job security, as well as access to education and housing.[57] In other words, there is a perception that globalization, as embodied by immigration, produces economic winners and losers in society. This, too, presents an important question for Europe. If globalization is viewed as a process that deepens inequality, how can its benefits be more equally distributed?

The Dutch *Partij voor de Vrijheid*'s welfare chauvinism perfectly captures this argument. The party proclaims that it speaks for the perceived 'losers' of globalization (the native Dutch population), who feel that they carry a disproportionate burden of the welfare system with the arrival of immigrants, who the party sees as the 'winners' of globalization. This deep ideological conflict helps link globalization with the growing European far right – as a recent study points out, in all European countries a higher degree of globalization is positively associated with communitarianism and negatively associated with cosmopolitanism.[58] This suggests that globalization has made European nations retreat inwards instead of outwards, which speaks to the far-right tendencies discussed previously.

Conclusion

This paper argues that the scale and intensity of 21st century globalization has played an important role in the re-emergence of Europe's far right. This is demonstrated through several prominent far-right parties, including France's *Rassemblement National*, Italy's *Lega Nord*, Belgium's *Vlaams Belang*, and the Netherland's *Partij voor de Vrijheid*. These case studies exemplify the core features of Europe's growing far right – nationalism, xenophobia, law and order, and welfare chauvinism, respectively. In doing so, they also highlight several of the ways in which globalization drives voters towards far-right parties in Europe. This notably includes the ways in which voters see their identities as increasingly challenged by cultural globalization, which most commonly emerges in anti-immigration rhetoric and policy. Second, globalization has an inherently divisive characteristic based on the fact that its economic benefits are not equally distributed. This, too, drives voters to support the far right, by offering an alternative for those perceived as the 'losers' of this process.

These findings, therefore, offer insight into the re-emergence of the far right into the mainstream of European politics, placing it within the wider context of the increasing scale and intensity of global linkages. However, it recognizes that globalization alone cannot be regarded as the sole architect of the far right in Europe, but rather should be seen as playing an important role in this process alongside other factors including deepening regionalism, racism, and anti-multiculturalism. In addition to these findings, this paper also points to areas where further research is needed. For example, if the growing far right is related to the ways in which globalization challenges

[56] Hanspeter Kriesi et al., "Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45, no. 6 (2006): 922.

[57] Alessandra Buonfino, "Between Unity and Plurality: The Politicization and Securitization of the Discourse of Immigration in Europe," *New Political Science* 26, no. 1 (March 2004): 33.

[58] Céline Teney, Onawa Promise Lacewell, and Pieter de Wilde, "Winners and Losers of Globalization in Europe: Attitudes and Ideologies," *European Political Science Review* 6, no. 4 (2014): 575.

identity and creates winners and losers – as this paper has suggested – it, therefore, follows that future research should assess these factors. These findings also raise key questions about the inherent nature of globalization: is it an inherently homogenizing process, or does it leave room for groups to retain their own identities?[59] How can we redistribute the benefits of globalization in a more equitable way in order to satisfy those who see themselves as the losers of this process? Lastly, it should be asked whether this relationship is unique to the rise of the far right, or whether globalization has been appropriated by populists of all bents as a means of securing electoral support.[60] A deeper understanding of these complex questions should be the starting point for more comprehensive research on this topic.

[59] For an example of a study that partially seeks to address this question, see: Scholte, "Defining Globalization," 1471-1502.

[60] For examples of studies that have tackled this question, see: Andreas Bergh and Anders Kärnä, "Globalization and Populism in Europe," *Public Choice* 189 (2021): 51-70; Dani Rodrik, "Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism," *Annual Review of Economics* 13, no. 1 (2021): 133-170.

Bibliography

"Europe and Right-Wing Nationalism: A Country-by-Country Guide." *BBC News*, November 13, 2019. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006

Abbondanza, Gabriele, and Francesco Bailo. "The Electoral Payoff of Immigration Flows for Anti-Immigration Parties: The Case of *Lega Nord*." *Centre for International Security Studies* 17, no. 3 (2017): 378-403.

Ammaturo, Francesca Romana. "Europe and whiteness: Challenges to European identity and European citizenship in light of Brexit and the 'refugees/migrants crisis'." *European Journal of Social Theory* 22, no. 4 (2019):548-566.

Bell, Dorian. "Europe's 'New Jews': France, Islamophobia, and Antisemitism in the Era of Mass Migration," *Jewish History* 32 (2018): 65-76.

Bell, Duncan S.A. "Review: History and Globalization: Reflections on Temporality." *International Affairs* 79, no. 4 (2003): 801-814.

Bergh, Andreas and Anders Kärnä. "Globalization and Populism in Europe." *Public Choice* 189 (2021): 51-70.

Buonfino, Alessandra. "Between Unity and Plurality: The Politicization and Securitization of the Discourse of Immigration in Europe." *New Political Science* 26, no. 1 (March 2004): 23-49.

Butt, Graham. "Globalization: A Brief Exploration of its Challenging, Contested, and Competing Concepts," *Geography* 102, no. 1 (2017): 10-17.

Byer, Peter. "Religion and Globalization." In *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, edited by George Ritzer. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

Caselli, Mauro, Andrea Fracasso, and Silvio Traverso. "Globalization and electoral outcomes: Evidence from Italy." *Economics and Politics* 32 (2019): 68-103.

Cerny, Philip G., Georg Menz, and Susanne Soederberg. "Different Roads to Globalization: Neoliberalism, the Competition State, and Politics in a More Open World." In *Internalizing Globalization: The Rise of Neoliberalism and the Decline of National Varieties of Capitalism*, edited by Susanne Soederberg, Georg Menz, and Philip G. Cerny, 1-32. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

Chong, Alan and LMH Ling. "The Silk Roads: Globalization Before Neoliberalization." *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 3, no. 3 (2018): 189-193.

Coicaud, Jean-Marc. "Can Global Governance Make Globalization More Legitimate?" In *Regulating Globalization: Critical Approaches to Global Governance*. Edited by Pierre de Senarclens and Ali Kazancigil, 249-274. United Nations University Press, 2007.

Davis, Lewis, and Sumit S. Deole. "Immigration and the Rise of Far-Right Parties in Europe." *IFO DICE Report* 15, no. 4 (2017): 10-15.

Dennison, James, and Andrew Geddes. "The Centre No Longer Holds The *Lega,* Matteo Salvini, and the Remaking of Italian Immigration Politics." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* (2021): 1-20.

Ennser-Jedenastik, Laurenz. "Welfare Chauvinism in Populist Radical Right Platforms: The Role of Redistributive Justice Principles." *Social Policy and Administration* 52, no. 1 (January 2018): 293-314.

Golder, Matt. "Far Right Parties in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19 (May 2016): 477-497.

Halikiopoulou, Daphne, and Tim Vlandas. "What is new and what is nationalist about Europe's new nationalism? Explaining the rise of the far right in Europe." *Nations and Nationalism* 25, no. 2 (2019): 409-434.

Ivaldi, Gilles. "Populism in France." In *Populism Around the World: A Comparative Perspective*, edited by Daniel Stockemer, 27-48. Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019.

Ivarsflaten, Elisabeth. "What Unites Right-Wing Populists in Western Europe?" *Comparative Political Studies* 41, no. 1 (2008): 3-23.

Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye Jr. "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? (And So What?)" *Foreign Policy* 118 (Spring 2000): 104-119.

Keskinen, Suvi, Ov Christian Norocel, and Martin Bak Jørgensen. "The Politics and Policies of Welfare Chauvinism Under the Economic Crisis." *Critical Social Policy* 36, no. 3 (2016): 321-329.

Kinnvall, Catarina. "Fear, Insecurity and the (Re)Emergence of the Far Right in Europe." in *The Palgrave Handbook of Global Political Psychology,* edited by Paul Nesbitt-Larking, Catarina Kinnvall, and Tereza Capelos, 316-335. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Koslowski, Rey. "Personal Security and State Sovereignty in a Uniting Europe." in *Controlling a New Migration World,* edited by Virginie Guiraudon and Christian Joppke, 99-120. London: Taylor and Francis Group, 2001.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier, and Timotheos Frey. "Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared." *European Journal of Political Research* 45, no. 6 (2006): 921-956.

Lechler, Marie. "Employment Shocks and Anti-EU Sentiment." *European Journal of Political Economy* 59 (2019): 266-295.

Mudde, Cas. *The Far Right Today*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2019.

Mudde, Cas. *The Ideology of the Extreme Right.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Robertson, Roland, and Kathleen E. White. "What is Globalization?" In *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, edited by George Ritzer, 54-66. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

Rodrik, Dani. "Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism." *Annual Review of Economics* 13, no. 1 (2021): 133-170.

Sabanadze, Natalie. *Globalization and Nationalism: The Cases of Georgia and the Basque Country*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2010.

Scholte, Jan Aart. "Defining Globalization." *The World Economy* 31, no. 11 (2008): 1471-1502.

Steger, Manfred B. *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Teney, Céline, Onawa Promise Lacewell, and Pieter de Wilde. "Winners and Losers of Globalization in Europe: Attitudes and Ideologies." *European Political Science Review* 6, no. 4 (2014): 575-595.

Treib, Oliver. "Euroscepticism is here to stay: what cleavage theory can teach us about the 2019 European Parliament elections." *Journal of European Public Policy* 28, no. 2 (2021): 174-189.

Turner, Bryan S., and Robert J. Holton. *The Routledge International Handbook of Globalization Studies*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2010, 472.

Öniş, Ziya, and Ahmet Faruk Aysan. "Neoliberal Globalisation, the Nation-State and Financial Crises in the Semi-Periphery: A Comparative Analysis." *Third World Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (2000): 119-139.

Vlaams Belang. "Program: Tackling Crime." Accessed December 1, 2021. https://www.vlaamsbelang.org/programma/.

Woods, Dwayne. "Pockets of Resistance to Globalization: The Case of the *Lega Nord*." *Patterns of Prejudice* 43, no. 2 (2009): *161-177*.

Worth, Owen. "Globalization and the 'Far-Right' Turn in International Affairs." *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 28 (2017): 19-28.

Yilmaz, Ferruh. "Right-wing hegemony and immigration: How the populist far-right achieved hegemony through the immigration debate in Europe." *Current Sociology* 60, no. 3 (2012): 368-381.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. "Belonging and the Politics of Belonging." *Patterns of Prejudice* 40, no. 3 (2006): 197-214.

Zaslove, Andrej. "Exclusion, Community, and a Populist Political Economy: The Radical Right as an Anti-Globalization Movement." *Comparative European Politics* 6 (2008): 169-189.