

# Being intolerant of the intolerant. The exclusion of Western European anti-immigration parties and its consequences for party choice

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**Abstract** In various European countries established parties have responded quite differently to the recent rise of anti-immigration parties. In Italy and Austria these parties entered governing coalitions. In France and Belgium the established parties agreed never to collaborate in any way with anti-immigration parties. In this paper we aim to assess whether this strategy of exclusion affects the electoral support for anti-immigration parties. To answer the research questions, we link expert survey data to individual-level survey data and perform analyses across 11 parties and across 4 time points. We find that the effect of exclusion depends on the institutional context, in particular the threshold for entering parliament, and the influence of parliamentary opposition parties on policy-making. According to our estimates the former Flemish Bloc benefited from being excluded and the Northern League in Italy would have benefited if it had been excluded. The Danish Progress Party, on the other hand, would have been hurt if it had been excluded. The other parties in our analyses are hardly affected. To the extent that the exclusion of anti-immigration parties is meant to change electoral outcomes in favour of the established parties, its success is thus quite mixed.

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## Introduction

Since the 1980s, parties have emerged in various European countries that have been called ‘extreme right’, ‘right-wing populist’, ‘New Radical Right’ or ‘anti-immigration’. These parties are ideologically a mixed bag, but one core



element in the programmes of each of these parties is their strong emphasis on anti-immigration sentiments. In line with Fennema, we will therefore refer to these parties as ‘anti-immigration parties’ (Fennema, 1997). For well-known historical reasons these parties are often associated with fascism, and the fear of a right-wing backlash evoked different types of reactions from grass root organizations, the political establishment, as well as the state. In this paper we investigate the electoral consequences – at the national level<sup>1</sup> – of the strategies of established parties towards these anti-immigration parties.

These strategies have been quite diverse. In Italy, other right-wing parties treated the LN as a ‘normal’ party, even inviting it to join government coalitions in 1994, 2001 and 2008. The Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria and the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in the Netherlands have also been members of governing coalitions, while the Danish People’s Party (DF) supports the current (as of 2008) government without being a member. In other countries, established parties have responded very differently to the rise of anti-immigration parties. In France and Belgium established parties have made their disgust of anti-immigration parties most explicit by forming a *cordon sanitaire*, which was an agreement not to cooperate at all with any of these parties. Dutch (for example, the Centre Democrats) and German (for example, the Republicans) anti-immigration parties were also treated as political lepers by the establishment, even though the term *cordon sanitaire* is not used. This paper will address the question whether this strategy of exclusion of anti-immigration parties has an effect on their electoral support – and if so, which effect.

Little research exists on the electoral consequences of the various strategies of established parties against anti-immigration parties. We thus aim to provide a scientific contribution to the discussion on the merits of these strategies as ways to defend democracy from parties that are by some considered to constitute a danger to it.

## **Strategies Pursued to Deal with Anti-Immigration Parties**

Many scholars have argued that exclusion is an effective strategy for combating the extreme right (for example, Van Donselaar, 1995; De Witte, 1997; Janssens, 2000; Damen, 2001). Even though these observers have used various criteria to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, none of them studied electoral consequences. Meguid (2005), who assessed whether policy strategies of established parties affect the electoral performance of ‘niche parties’, has not addressed this particular issue either. This is because Meguid’s highly sophisticated study does not take into account the fact that some of the niche parties that she studies are heavily ostracized by their mainstream rivals,



whereas others are not. So, her study does not tell us what the (additional) effect is of the strategy to treat a party as a pariah. So far, only one study exists in which the electoral consequences of exclusion are studied systematically (Downs, 2002). In that paper, Downs aims to describe and classify alternative strategic responses to successful extremist parties and to draw inferences about the relative success of alternative anti-extremist strategies from the experiences of four Western European political systems. These systems are Flanders, Denmark, France and Norway. Downs detected no electoral effects from exclusion.

However, Downs only investigates four quite successful parties. So, the question arises what would have happened if he had selected unsuccessful parties as well. Downs's null-findings may possibly have been caused by the lack of variation in the dependent variable: electoral support. For instance, the German Republicans (REP), the Dutch Centre Democrats (CD) and the Walloon National Front (FN-NF) were excluded and they attracted very little electoral support. It is possible therefore that a similar study with a different selection of parties would have produced substantially different results. As Downs (2002) generously admits, more research is needed on the electoral consequences of exclusion.

Downs (2002) distinguishes a large repertoire of strategies for dealing with anti-immigration parties, such as ignoring them, isolating them (*de facto* and/or *de jure*), co-opting their programmes, collaborating with them in all sorts of ways (see also Downs, 2001). Some of these responses are mutually exclusive, others are not. For example, the 'disengage strategy' of 'blocking coalitions' excludes the possibility of the 'engage strategy' of 'collaboration in the executive arena', whereas the 'disengage strategy' of 'legal restrictions' can well coincide with the 'engage strategy' of 'co-opting policies'. Therefore, we prefer to distinguish the dimension of political collaboration *vs* exclusion.

Each established party can decide to collaborate with an anti-immigration party or to try to isolate it. Very seldom do parties react *en bloc* to newcomers. For example, whereas the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) renewed its politics of *Ausgrenzung* (marginalization) towards Haider's FPÖ in 1999, the Conservatives (ÖVP) invited the FPÖ to join a government coalition. Our framework should therefore take inter-party variation in responses into account.<sup>2</sup> We define ostracism as a party's systematic refusal to politically cooperate with a particular other party at a specific level and at a particular point in time.

Note that ostracism includes not only coalition building, but *all forms of political cooperation*. In accordance with this, Damen observes six manifestations of the ostracism of the former VB (Damen, 2001, p. 92), only one of which is the use of blocking coalitions. Apart from a refusal to build coalitions with a particular party, the ostracism of the VB includes a refusal to engage



in joint legislative activities with it, to refrain from asking support from the party for such activities, to refuse to support the party regarding such activities, to have no joint press releases or electoral alliances with it (2001, p. 92). The ostracism, as defined in this paper, encompasses all forms of political cooperation, and therefore all six manifestations.

Anti-immigration parties are commonly seen as right-wing parties. Anti-immigration parties only entered or supported right-wing government coalitions. Therefore, it seems safe to assume that the response of the mainstream right to the existence of the anti-immigration party is crucial. If the largest mainstream right-wing party rules out any cooperation with the anti-immigration party, this party is isolated, whatever the responses of the left are. Vice versa, if the anti-immigration party is treated as a 'normal' party by the largest established right-wing party, it is irrelevant for them that left-wing parties exclude the possibility of any collaboration. Anti-immigration parties normally do not want to collaborate with the left anyway. In order to study political exclusion, it is therefore sufficient to focus on the strategies of the largest established right party. An anti-immigration party is thus considered 'ostracized' if the largest other party at the right side of the political spectrum systematically rules out all political cooperation at the national level.<sup>3</sup>

## **Theoretical Framework: The Voter**

How does the voter make her or his choice in the polling booth? The field of electoral studies is dominated by three theoretical approaches to this question, a sociological, a social-psychological and a rational choice approach. The sociological approach lays emphasis on the voter's socio-economic background (Lazarsfeld *et al.*, 1948). The social-psychological strand of theory explains party choice on the basis of the notion of 'identification' with a specific party (Campbell *et al.*, 1960). Rational choice models view the vote in terms of perceived benefits for the voter from government actions (Downs, 1957). Kroh demonstrates that all three approaches have some merit in explaining party choice (Kroh, 2003). We therefore combine variables of the three approaches in this paper, as is common in empirical electoral research (for example, Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a; Van der Brug *et al.*, 2000). However, the effect of interest here only kicks in when it comes to expected benefits from activity by parties. The ostracism of a party will not influence the voter's socio-demographic background characteristics or party identification. It is, however, expected to affect the extent to which the party is able to influence the benefits mentioned before. The variables commonly associated with rational choice approaches are therefore of key importance in this paper.



We assume voters to act boundedly rationally (Simon, 1985) in this paper. As Simon (1985, p. 295) mentions, however, this assumption does not help us very much if we aim to predict a voter's choice. The assumption of bounded rationality in itself provides little basis for predicting human behaviour. We cannot predict beforehand where the boundaries of human rationality lie (Simon, 1985, p. 297). Simon (1985, p. 294) therefore states that 'to deduce the procedurally or boundedly rational choice in a situation, we must know the choosing organism's goals, the information and conceptualization it has of the situation, and its abilities to draw inferences from the information it possesses'. What can be assumed regarding a voter's goals? And, in the light of this paper's topic, what can be defined as relevant information at her or his disposal and the inferences (s)he can draw from it?

In accordance with the rational choice strand of the electoral studies literature (for example, Downs, 1957),<sup>4</sup> we assume that citizens vote with a view to having their favourite policies enacted. Several scholars have shown that policy preferences and ideological predispositions provide powerful explanations for party choice (for example, Franklin *et al.*, 1992; Van der Brug, 1997; Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a). Thus, we focus on instrumental accounts of rational voting (for example, Austen-Smith, 1983; Enelow and Hinich, 1984; Shepsle, 1991), while acknowledging that expressive accounts have explanatory power as well (for example, Brennan and Hamlin, 1998; Greene and Nelson, 2002). Although we do not deny the existence of expressive voting, or that there are voters who vote on the basis of their perceived identity, the effect of ostracism on the electoral support for targeted parties is expected to occur among voters who primarily vote in order to influence policy-making.

Among the relevant information that the voter is able to process, we assume, is the notion that a particular political party is systematically boycotted by other parties. We also assume that this information – through a learning process, see below – will reach a substantial share of the voters before they have the opportunity to vote for the party, or not to vote for it. A further assumption made is that the voter – through a similar learning process – is able to infer from this information that the ostracized party will probably be unable to enact the policies that (s)he favours. In the following we base our hypotheses concerning voting behaviour on this set of assumptions.

## Hypotheses

In this paper we formulate and empirically test four hypotheses. First of all, we expect the targeted party to be hurt by being ostracized. There are at least three reasons for this expectation, one direct and two indirect. Directly, where voters are rational actors who aim to have an influence on real-life policy outcomes,



they are expected not to vote for a party that will not be allowed to come to power, and that has fewer, or none, of the other parties to cooperate with politically. This is because this party will be unable to affect policy-making.

A more indirect reason for voters not to vote for the party is that an ostracized party will not attract many citizens as members, volunteers or candidates. The ostracism will impede the party's ability to wage professional electoral campaigns and select a capable party elite (see also Art, 2006, p. 168). In addition, the party will attract outcasts and political extremists instead (see also Schikhof, 1998, pp. 150–154). This will prevent voters who feel ideologically close to this party from voting for it, as it is unlikely to be effective in shaping policy outcomes under these conditions. In this indirect way, voters will thus be discouraged from voting for the party. After all, parties that are isolated to such an extent are unable to affect policy-making, and are therefore unattractive in the eyes of the policy-minded voter.

Van Donselaar (1995) mentions yet another reason as to why ostracism would hurt the targeted parties. When a party is ostracized, he claims, it will be divided on the issue of how to respond to the other parties' strategy.<sup>5</sup> The resulting internal divisions will damage the party in the electoral arena, according to Van Donselaar – and also according to reasoning based on the assumption that voters are boundedly rational actors who are concerned with policy outcomes. After all, such rational voters will, all other things being equal, prefer a party that is united to a divided, conflict-ridden party, as the former one can be expected to be more effective in policy-making than the latter.

Will this theoretically expected negative effect of ostracism on the targeted party's electoral support occur independently of the political context in which the party operates? There are reasons to assume that there are particular contextual traits that prevent parties from being hurt by ostracism. Where voters are primarily concerned about policies, it is important to understand the thresholds that any party should overcome in order to directly affect policy-making. First, a party has to gain representation in the national parliament. Second, it either has to be in government, or to have means of affecting policy outcomes while in opposition. In some countries, such as Belgium and Italy, parliamentary opposition parties have many ways to influence the policy-making process. This can be the case, for example, because much power is attributed to parliamentary committees with proportional representation of MPs and a rotating chair. It can also be because of the frequent occurrence of minority governments. This is because the parties that form a minority government have to ask other parties for support for policies that they wish to enact. In these countries, opposition influence is high (Strøm, 1990, p. 73). In other countries, particularly in the case of one-party majority governments, parliamentary parties are left without much power unless they



are in government. Opposition influence can be qualified as low in such countries (Ibid.). The expectation is that ostracism is not very effective in contexts where opposition influence on policy is high, as the pariah party can still court its voters by enacting their favourite policies. In other cases, ostracism will be effective to reduce a targeted party's electoral support.

In the light of the above, we state a first and second hypothesis on the consequences of the ostracism of political parties for their electoral support.

**Hypothesis 1:** Ostracism of an anti-immigration party has a negative effect on its electoral support.

**Hypothesis 2:** Being represented in a national parliament where opposition influence is large attenuates the negative effect of ostracism of an anti-immigration party on its electoral support.

The mechanism underlying the negative effect of the ostracism of a party on its electoral support relates to voters' interest in affecting policy outcomes. If a party is ostracized, it will gradually become less able to influence policies. As voters get to know this, these parties will therefore end up being of lesser and lesser importance to the voter relative to their non-ostracized rivals. Thus, *voters will tend to evaluate the party to a lesser extent on the basis of its ideologies* and more on the basis of other considerations, such as the voters' attitudes to the ostracism itself. That is, unless the party is represented in parliament in a setting where opposition influence is high, as has been discussed above. This brings us to the following additional observable implications of our theory – see Hypotheses 3 and 4.

**Hypothesis 3:** Ostracism of an anti-immigration party has a negative effect on the impact of ideology on its electoral support.

**Hypothesis 4:** Being represented in a national parliament where opposition influence is large attenuates the negative effect of ostracism of an anti-immigration party on the impact of ideology on its electoral support.

All hypotheses assume that voters are *aware* of the ostracism of particular parties by other parties. However, most voters are usually considered as 'rationally ignorant' about politics in general (Downs, 1957). Whether this concept is flawed (for example, Green and Shapiro, 1994, pp. 94–96) or not, it should make us suspicious about voter knowledge on inter-party strategy. Although in many empirically observed cases such as the Flemish Interest (VB) in Belgium or the Republicans in Germany, it seems nearly impossible that any voter would not notice the ostracizing strategies of the mainstream parties, we may still want to take the often incomplete knowledge of voters about inter-party strategies into account. The parties that participate in ostracism



have a stake in advertising the isolated position of the targeted party. It seems a plausible assertion that they eventually succeed in making voters aware of the ostracism. We therefore expect a learning effect, reflected in an increased reduction of electoral support for targeted parties over time (*Ceteris paribus*). What would determine the pace of this learning effect? Inter-party strategies such as the cordon sanitaire are not on each voter's mind every single day. Most voters obtain their political information through the media. Absent severe political or economic crises, the only time that a large share of the electorate pays a substantial amount of attention to political news and talks to others about politics is during campaign periods. During such periods, citizens are more exposed to cues from the political elite than at other times, and exposure to media coverage of political news increases knowledge about politics and campaign themes. This said, this is the case for national-level elections rather than for subnational or supranational elections. This is because national-level elections are 'first-order elections' (Reif and Schmitt 1980) and thus raise a lot of (media) attention. Second-order election campaigns are much less intense and are therefore not expected to have any effect that comes close to that of first-order ones. Thus, the speed of the learning effect is assumed to be a function of the number of national-level elections a party participates in while it is ostracized. We therefore expect that the effects of exclusion become stronger over time. Due to data limitations (see below), we cannot separately estimate the effects of 'ostracism' and 'duration of ostracism'. Therefore we will estimate one joint effect of the 'number of elections in which a party was ostracized'.

## Data and Methods Used

In order to estimate the effect of exclusion, we compare political contexts that differ in terms of the duration of the ostracism (if any) of anti-immigration parties. The strategy of exclusion is expected to affect the preferences, attitudes and behaviours of individual citizens.<sup>6</sup> To assess the consequences of ostracism, we need individual-level data of preferences for various anti-immigration parties. Moreover, we need to measure whether these parties were confronted by exclusion, and if so, for how long.

### The surveys

Individual-level data come from cross-section surveys fielded after elections to the European Parliament held in all countries of the European Union in 1989, 1994, 1999 and 2004: the European Election Studies 1989–2004. For the research question at hand, the fact that the surveys were originally conceived as





European election studies is irrelevant, since none of the survey items used in this study refer to European elections. All items pertain to voting in national elections. The occasion of European elections provides an excellent opportunity to interview samples of citizens from different EU countries in a way that allows for comparative research.

The EES surveys contain data from all EU-member states regarding citizen preferences for the political parties that compete for their support. These data can be readily linked to measures of exclusion in the various countries surveyed. These surveys provide detailed information about preferences for the selected parties.<sup>7</sup> Fennema (1997) defines anti-immigration parties as parties that employ the immigration issue as their core political concern in electoral campaigns, or are considered by elites of other political parties to do so.

We carefully classified all the parties included in the questionnaires of the four EES surveys as anti-immigration or not anti-immigration on the basis of three criteria. The first criterion for a party to be categorized as an anti-immigration party is that it should have a position on the immigration issue that is more restrictive than that of any party founded before the issue became salient in the late 1960s. Party positioning on the immigration issue can be found in an expert survey conducted in 2000 (Lubbers, 2001). Second, only parties that attach more importance to the issue than any party founded before the late 1960s are taken into account. Data on the importance of the immigration issue to the party can be derived from the results of a recently conducted expert survey (Benoit and Laver, 2006). Third, when a party does not attract support on the basis of its immigration stance, it is not classified as an anti-immigration party. For this third criterion, we based our coding on published research about voters for these parties (for example, Van der Brug *et al.*, 2000; Ivarsson, 2005).

On the basis of these three criteria, 11 parties in nine political systems were classified as anti-immigration. These are the former Flemish Bloc (VB) in Flanders, the Walloon FN-NF, the Danish Progress Party (FrP) and DF, the French National Front (FN), the REP, the Italian LN, the Dutch CD and LPF, the True Finns (PS) and the Austrian FPÖ. Other parties either do not meet the criteria outlined above (for example, the National Alliance in Italy) or are not included in any of the EES questionnaires (for example, the British National Party).

The parties that are the largest, in terms of votes, of those that are (also) positioned to the right of the commonly used left–right scale are classified as the anti-immigration parties' 'largest mainstream competitors'. In order to study the electoral effects of the largest mainstream competitors' political responses to the existence of the 11 anti-immigration parties, we select all the country/year combinations in which at least one of these parties was present. Within these 26 contexts, we investigate party preferences for a total of 21 507



individuals, generally about 1000 individuals per context though with smaller samples for the two Belgian subsystems,<sup>8</sup> for Austria in 1999 and Germany in 2004, and larger samples in Italy in 1999 and 2004 and in the Netherlands in 2004.<sup>9</sup>

## **Ostracism: Measurement**

The ostracism of an anti-immigration party is defined as the systematically ruling out of all political cooperation at the national level by its largest other party at the right side of the political spectrum. Whether each of the parties was confronted with exclusion or not was measured in two ways – by means of an expert survey, and by way of a literature review. We will first discuss the results of the review of the literature.

A well-known case of exclusion concerns the former VB in Flanders, where the leaders of all the other Flemish parties represented in the federal parliament committed themselves to make no political arrangements with the VB. According to the parties involved, the reason they signed the Protocol was that the VB did not acknowledge fundamental democratic principles and human rights (Damen, 1999, pp. 6–7).

In Wallonia, the other parties also opted for a ‘firm ostracism’ (Ignazi, 2003, p. 130) after the electoral breakthrough of the FN-NF in 1991. Two years later, the exclusion of the party was formalized by a ‘Democratic Charter’ signed by the leaders of the four largest Walloon parties (Delwit, and De Waele, 1998, pp. 238–239).

Likewise, all the German established parties have consistently refused any cooperation with the Republicans, publicly associating them with Fascism (Van Donselaar, 1995, pp. 106, 286). Although a few mainstream right-wing party members called for a coalition with them in early 1989 (Backes and Mudde, 2000, p. 459), the largest mainstream right party, the CDU, ruled out any coalition-building with the party at any level in July 1989, after which even the more conservative counterpart of the CDU, the CSU, ‘did not let itself be outdone by the left-wing opposition in its propagandistic rejection of the REP’ (Backes and Mudde, 2000, p. 466).

Although the French mainstream right is largely sheltered from competition with small parties as a result of the high effective electoral threshold, it has nevertheless excluded the FN at the national level (Hainsworth, 2000, pp. 19–20). This exclusion strategy, called the ‘republican quarantaine’ (Villalba, 1998, p. 214; Ignazi, 2003, pp. 99, 106), has been enforced by national-level leaders of the mainstream right-wing RPR/UMP (Villalba, 1998, pp. 214–216; Minkenberg and Schain, 2003, p. 182; Kestel and Godmer, 2004, p. 145).



In the Netherlands, the CD were denounced and boycotted since their foundation in 1984 by all other politicians, including those of the mainstream right-wing VVD (Husbands, 1992, pp. 113–114; Lucardie, 1998, p. 121; Mudde and van Holsteyn, 2000, p. 163). When Hans Janmaat, the only leader the CD ever had, was elected MP for the first time in 1982, all other parties represented in the national parliament made arrangements to boycott him in every possible way – for example, by leaving the chamber in protest whenever Janmaat stepped up to the microphone in parliament (Van Donselaar, 1995, p. 50). So, we may conclude that the VB, FN in Wallonia, FN in France, the Republikeners and the CD were all ostracized by the other parties. We now turn to the ones that were not excluded.

When former sociology professor Fortuyn made the immigration issue his core concern in the 2002 national election campaign, the party leader and other important representatives of the main right-wing party, the VVD, warned voters against him (Van Praag, 2005). After the murder of Fortuyn, however, the attitude of the VVD towards the LPF radically changed and it invited the LPF to join a government coalition.

In Austria, the main right party (ÖVP) has never fully adopted an *Ausgrenzung* strategy against the FPÖ (Art, 2006). Indeed, the ÖVP often threatened to break up its ‘grand coalition’ with the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and switch to the FPÖ instead (Art, 2006), which actually happened in 2000.

In Denmark, the former FrP was allowed to support a government coalition in the late 1980s, notwithstanding its isolationist stance (Kritzinger *et al*, 2004, p. 17). When the centre-right coalition needed the FrP votes, a meeting with FrP MPs was arranged and it was publicly stated that their votes were welcome (Ignazi, 2003, p. 143).

When the DF split off from the FrP in 1995, it benefited from the relatively permissive political environment in Denmark (Rydgren, 2004, p. 497). Both Givens and Rydgren report that the main right-wing party, the Liberal Party (V), expressed on several occasions in 1999–2001 their willingness to form a coalition with the DF (Rydgren, 2004, p. 496; Givens, 2005, pp. 146–147), after which the DF agreed to support a centre-right minority government.

The Finnish Rural Party (SMP), predecessor to the anti-immigration party PS, entered a government coalition in 1983 (Sundberg and Wilhelmsson, 2004, p. 5). Although the PS, founded by former SMP members in 1995 (Kestilä, 2006, p. 174), is represented in parliament and its leader Soini received 3.4 per cent of the vote in the 2006 presidential elections with a fierce anti-EU and anti-immigration campaign, there is no indication that the party is ostracized by the mainstream right (KOK) in Finland.

In Italy, the LN has not been confronted with strict isolation by the other parties either. In 1993, the LN gave up its self-inflicted isolation (Bull and Newell, 1995, p. 83; Betz, 1998, p. 53), and right-wing party leader Berlusconi



invited the party to join a coalition government in 1994. Although LN party leader Bossi destroyed the coalition that same year (Betz, 1998, pp. 54–55), Berlusconi nevertheless joined forces with LN again in 2001.

In sum, the literature review suggests that five of the selected parties were excluded – the Flemish VB (since 1989), Walloon FN-NF (since 1991), French FN (since 1988), German REP (since 1989) and Dutch CD (since its foundation in 1984). The six other parties, the Italian LN, Danish FrP and DF, Dutch LPF, Finnish PS and Austrian FPÖ, were not.

The results of the literature review were cross-validated by way of an expert survey.<sup>10</sup> A participation request was sent to 295 political scientists working in the field of party politics in the 9 polities under study. They were carefully selected on the basis of the web sites of universities and academic institutions worldwide. The overall response rate of 39 per cent was comparable to similar expert surveys conducted before by Huber and Inglehart (1995) and Lubbers (2001). In the expert survey, the operationalization of ‘exclusion’ mentioned above was stated, after which experts were asked to classify the attitude of the largest mainstream competitor towards the relevant anti-immigration party in their country as exclusion or not at the national level in June 2004.

The results of the expert survey were in accordance with the literature review discussed above in each case. As there is an even distribution of cases of exclusion (five) and no exclusion (six), our selection of parties provides a good basis for a cross-country assessment of effects of exclusion. In addition, there is a large variation in the time that the exclusion had been in effect – ranging from 1 to 4 national-level elections, see Table 1 – so that we may assess the consequences of exclusion over time as well. See Table 1 for an overview of the anti-immigration parties under study, their largest mainstream competitors, and the ostracism of the anti-immigration parties.

## Research design

All of the countries involved in this study have a multiparty system, with 4–9 parties represented in Parliament. The most commonly used methods to analyse party choice in these contexts are conditional logit and multinomial logit. These methods are not well suited for comparative research, however, because the dependent variable consists of a different set of parties in each country. It is also not possible to conduct nine separate country studies, because the responses of other parties to the anti-immigration party would then be a constant. In order to model the effect of exclusion on the vote for anti-immigration parties, we thus need a research design that allows us to analyse party choice simultaneously in these 26 contexts. The common practice is to redefine the dependent variable into a dummy, which

**Table 1:** The 11 anti-immigration parties and the responses by their largest mainstream competitors

<i>Country</i>	<i>Anti-immigration party</i>	<i>Largest mainstream competitor</i>	<i>Exclusion (duration)</i>	<i>No exclusion</i>
Austria	FPÖ	ÖVP	—	1999; 2004
Belgium – Flanders	VB	PVV/VLD	1994 (1); 1999 (3)	—
Belgium – Wallonia	FN-NF	PRL/MR	1994 (1); 1999 (3)	—
Denmark	DF	V	—	1999; 2004
Denmark	FrP	C, V	—	1989; 1994; 1999
Finland	PS	KOK	—	2004
France	FN	RPR/UMP	1989 (1); 1994 (2); 1999 (3); 2004 (4)	—
Germany	REP	CDU-CSU	1994 (1); 1999 (3); 2004 (4)	1989
Italy	LN	FI	—	1994; 1999; 2004
The Netherlands	CD	VVD	1994 (3); 1999 (4)	—
The Netherlands	LPF	VVD	—	2004

The years in the table refer to the years in which the survey data were collected.



distinguishes voters for an anti-immigration party from voters for any other parties (for example, Lubbers *et al.*, 2002). Obviously, this dependent variable does not represent the choice options voters are confronted with. Elsewhere it has been shown that such re-definitions of the dependent variable may cause biases in the estimators of unknown magnitude (Van der Eijk and Kroh, 2002).

An additional complication is that some of the anti-immigration parties that we study are very unsuccessful, so that our data set contains only few respondents who voted for them (Dutch CD, Walloon FN). Under these circumstances, analysis by the usual logit/probit methods is problematic because the small number of votes for some parties renders estimates of their effect parameters unreliable. This is why studies using these methods usually restrict their analysis to larger parties (for example, Whitten and Palmer, 1996; Alvarez and Nagler, 1998). However, as we argued above, to estimate the electoral consequences of exclusion, we have to analyse successful as well as unsuccessful parties. So, for theoretical as well as technical reasons, it is necessary for us to employ a different methodology.

Fortunately, such an alternative methodology exists. Instead of employing party choice as the dependent variable, this methodology uses another dependent variable instead: the propensity to vote for a specific party. These propensities from each respondent for each party were obtained by asking them to rate each of the significant political parties in their own political system in terms of the probability (on a scale of 1–10) that they would ever vote for it.<sup>11</sup> Past research has shown the resulting measures to be related to actual party choice in a straightforward and almost deterministic manner: voters choose the party for which they have the highest vote propensity.<sup>12</sup> The properties of these survey items were tested thoroughly, which yields the conclusion that valid inferences can be drawn about the determinants of party choice by analysing the determinants of vote propensities (for example, Tillie, 1995; Van der Eijk *et al.*, 2006). In the Appendix the details of the estimation procedures are discussed.

Measuring vote propensities for each party allows us to compare these propensities for each voter across the parties that compete for his or her vote. For this purpose the data were reordered in a stacked form in which the unit of analysis is the respondent-party combination. Such a design was first proposed by Stimson (Stimson, 1985) and after that applied frequently in electoral research (Macdonald *et al.*, 1991; Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a; Westholm, 1997; Van der Brug *et al.*, 2000). In this stacked data matrix, each respondent is represented by as many ‘cases’ as there are parties for which (s)he was asked to indicate the probability of a future vote (for details about the number of cases and weighting procedures, see Appendix). This matrix allows us to apply multiple regression to explain parties’ electoral attractiveness. By adding



characteristics of the political systems and the parties as variables in the stacked data matrix, such characteristics can be included as variables in these regression analyses.

In order to estimate the effect of exclusion, the variable 'duration of exclusion' is imputed in the stacked data matrix, by linking it to all observations pertaining to the specific party. As a case in point, all records that pertain to the VB in 1994 get the value 1 on the variable duration of exclusion because there had been one national-level election since the start of the ostracism in 1989. All respondent  $\times$  party combinations pertaining to the VB, CD, REP and Walloon and French FN have a value greater than 0 on this variable. All other cases have a value of 0.

Before presenting the findings, we first need to discuss the control variables that we include in each analysis, and how these are treated in the stacked matrix. With respect to the independent variables, we distinguish between party characteristics and characteristics of individual voters.

The relevant literature on support for anti-immigration parties tells us that we should control for the following individual-level variables: social class, religion (for example, Swyngedouw *et al.*, 1998; Lubbers *et al.*, 2002), issues, perceived ideological distance to the party and approval of the European Union (for example, Van der Brug *et al.*, 2000; Van der Brug and Fennema, 2003). Class is measured with two separate variables: income and subjective social class. Religion is a composite variable combining religious denomination and church attendance. EU-approval is measured with the following question: 'Generally speaking, do you think that [country's] membership of the European Union is a good thing, a bad thing, or neither good nor bad?' Priorities given to issues are measured by the question 'what are the three most important problems facing the country?' Perceived ideological distance is measured by combining two measures: each respondent's self-placement on a 1–10 left–right scale and his or her perception of each party's left–right position.<sup>13</sup> On the basis of these two scales, an ideological distance is computed for each voter\*party combination. Because of the need to generate variables that are comparable across countries, our method requires a linear transformation of these independent variables (see Appendix for details). It is important to note that as a consequence of this transformation, the effects of these variables will be positively signed.

We include three *party* characteristics as well, one related to size of the party, one to its anti-immigration party status, and one to its government or opposition party status. We also include *party size*, measured by a party's proportion of parliamentary seats, which represents a strategic consideration that voters may take into account. When two parties are about equally attractive otherwise, voters tend to vote for the largest one because it stands a better chance of achieving its policy goals. We call this type of voting



‘pragmatic’ (for example, Tillie, 1995; Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a; Van der Brug *et al.*, 2000).<sup>14</sup> Secondly, we need an *anti-immigration party* identifier. The *government party* variable indicates whether a party was in government or not at the time of the survey. We add this dichotomous variable in order to control for the fact that participating in a government coalition involves an electoral cost (for example, Rose and Mackie, 1983; Paldam, 1986, p. 19; Strøm, 1990, p. 124; Powell and Whitten, 1993, p. 410; Nannestad and Paldam, 2002, p. 21).

Furthermore, a measure of the ideological position of the anti-immigration party and a measure of that of its largest mainstream competitor are added to the analysis (both measured on a 1–10 left–right scale). Based on standard spatial (proximity) models of party competition, one might expect a negative effect, indicating that the more to the extreme end of the political spectrum, the fewer voters who feel ideologically close to the party.<sup>15</sup> The expected effect is negative because the distribution of contemporary Western European voters along a left–right axis is assumed (and sometimes shown) to be normally distributed. However, for anti-immigration parties this is expected to work differently. We have theoretical reasons to believe that the more radical an anti-immigration party is, the higher the probabilities to vote for it are. This is because anti-immigration parties have been shown to benefit from the differentiation from their main competitor (Ezrow, 2008). For the same reason, anti-immigration parties can be expected to do better the more moderate this competitor is. Contrary to the earlier effect, this is also in accordance with predictions on the basis of proximity models (for example, Carter, 2005, p. 206).<sup>16</sup>

Finally, we add two country-level variables. These are, first of all, the presence of an anti-immigration party that is represented in the national parliament in contexts where opposition influence is high. Secondly, the duration of the ostracism – if any – of the country’s anti-immigration party. These effects are only of interest in interaction with other variables, as discussed above. See Table 2 for descriptive statistics of the variables included in the analysis.<sup>17</sup>

## Results

We want to find out whether exclusion hurts or benefits anti-immigration parties in elections. We address this question on the basis of analyses of electoral preferences for all parties in the 26 political contexts (presented in Table 3).

Model 1 presented in Table 3 includes 10 individual-, party- and country-level control variables as well as the cross-level interaction of ostracism



**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables

<i>Variable</i>	<i>N observations</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<i>Dependent var</i>					
Probability to vote for party	21 509	3.69	3.04	1	10
<i>Ind. level var</i>					
Class and income	21 509	0.00	0.44	−4.48	4.46
Religion	21 509	0.00	0.54	−4.87	7.58
EU-approval	21 509	0.00	0.46	−2.48	2.74
Issues	21 509	0.00	0.55	−6.01	6.63
LR distance voter to party	21 509	2.90	2.35	0	9
<i>Party level var</i>					
Party size	201	0.12	0.13	0	0.62
Party in government	201	0.32	0.47	0	1
Anti-immigration party	201	0.13	0.34	0	1
LR position anti-immigration party	201	8.22	1.64	5.32	9.89
LR position largest mainstream competitor	201	7.52	0.71	4.52	8.46
<i>Country level var</i>					
Influential parliamentary AI-party in country	26	0.47	0.50	0	1
Ostracism duration in country	26	1.00	1.48	0	4

Note that the continuous variables are centred around their means before adding them to the analysis and before computing their interaction, so as to reduce multicollinearity problems (Aiken and West, 1991).

duration and the anti-immigration party dummy. The magnitude of the effects of the control variables is similar to the effects in comparable analyses (for example, Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a; Van der Eijk *et al*, 1999). This, in combination with the value of the *R*-squared, indicates that the model is well specified. The individual-level control variables yield strong effects, as expected. The party characteristics, size, participation in government and the anti-immigration party identifier, all have the predicted effect. Party size has a positive impact, capturing the effect that voters attribute higher preferences to larger parties than to smaller ones, all other things being equal. The anti-immigration party dummy has a negative effect, which indicates that, on average, these parties receive lower probabilities than other parties. The cost of governing effect is tapped by the negative effect of the government party identifier. The two country-level variables – the one that distinguishes countries with an influential parliamentary anti-immigration party in opposition from countries without, and the duration of the ostracism of the country's main anti-immigration party – are not of interest here. The main effect of interest in

**Table 3:** Models explaining preferences for all (Models 1–2)/anti-immigration (3–4) parties, 26 contexts, 1989–2004

	Model 1 <i>All parties</i>		Model 2 <i>All parties</i>		Model 3 <i>Anti-immigration parties only</i>		Model 4 <i>Anti-immigration parties only</i>	
	<i>b</i>	CRSE	<i>b</i>	CRSE	<i>b</i>	CRSE	<i>b</i>	CRSE
<i>Individual-level variables</i>								
Constant	2.59***	0.04	2.56***	0.04	0.31	0.79	–0.62	0.75
Class and income	0.64***	0.02	0.64***	0.02	0.70***	0.09	0.69***	0.09
Religion	0.72***	0.02	0.72***	0.02	0.81***	0.09	0.80***	0.09
EU-approval	0.48***	0.02	0.48***	0.02	0.67***	0.06	0.67***	0.06
Issues	0.59***	0.02	0.59***	0.02	0.68***	0.05	0.67***	0.05
LR distance voter to party	–0.49***	0.01	–0.49***	0.01	–0.39***	0.01	–0.40***	0.01
<i>Party-level variables</i>								
Party size	5.37***	0.07	5.35***	0.07	12.09***	0.92	11.74***	0.92
Party in government	–0.15***	0.02	–0.15***	0.02	–0.29*	0.17	–0.45**	0.16
Anti-immigration party	–0.41***	0.03	–0.39***	0.03	—	—	—	—
LR position anti-immigration party	—	—	—	—	0.74***	0.06	0.70***	0.06
LR position largest mainstream competitor	—	—	—	—	–0.26**	0.10	–0.07	0.11
<i>Country-level variables</i>								
Influential parliamentary AI-party in country	0.09*	0.05	–0.00	0.06	–0.25**	0.10	–0.41***	0.13
Ostracism duration in country	–0.07***	0.01	–0.08***	0.01	–0.26***	0.03	–0.25***	0.03
<i>Interactions</i>								
Ostracism*anti-immigration party	0.01	0.02	–0.04**	0.02	—	—	—	—
Ostracism*in parliament	—	—	0.06*	0.03	—	—	0.17*	0.08
Anti-immigration*in parliament	—	—	–0.06	0.06	—	—	—	—
Anti-immigration*in parliament*ostracism	—	—	0.22***	0.05	—	—	—	—
Ostracism*LR distance voter	—	—	—	—	0.05***	0.01	0.06***	0.01
In parliament*LR distance voter	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.03	0.02
In parliament*LR distance voter*ostracism	—	—	—	—	—	—	–0.05**	0.02
<i>N</i>	21 509		21 509		19 409		19 409	
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.32		0.33		0.29		0.29	

Country dummies included; CRSE = cluster robust standard error. \* $P < 0.05$ ; \*\* $P < 0.01$ ; \*\*\* $P < 0.001$  (one-tailed).



Model 1 is the duration of ostracism variable in interaction with the anti-immigration party dummy. This variable does not yield a significant impact. This indicates that, controlling for party size, there is no general effect of ostracism on anti-immigration party support.

In a next step, we try and detect a context-specific effect of ostracism. For this, we add the three-way interaction of the anti-immigration party identifier, ostracism duration and the influential parliamentary opposition party dummy (and estimate the relevant lower-order effects). On the basis of Hypothesis 2 we would have expected, if anything, a weak negative effect. However, contrary to expectations this effect is positive ( $b=0.22$ ) and significant at the  $P=0.001$  level. In order to assess whether or not the differences between ostracized and non-ostracized parties are significant for the empirically observed values of the duration of ostracism (0–4 elections), we calculate the 95 per cent confidence intervals of the expected values of the dependent variable for four scenarios. When an anti-immigration party is not represented in parliament, its expected vote probability lies between 3.33 and 3.48 when it is not ostracized, and between 3.14 and 3.32 when it is ostracized. In this case, the ostracism has a negative effect that borders on statistical significance, in line with Hypothesis 1. An anti-immigration party that is represented in a high-opposition influence parliament is expected to receive probabilities between 3.04 and 3.22 when it is not ostracized, and between 3.88 and 4.32 when it is ostracized. Thus, an anti-immigration party is clearly expected to *benefit* from ostracism when it can be influential as a parliamentary opposition party. We therefore conclude that the longer the ostracism lasts, the better influential parliamentary anti-immigration parties fare. Other anti-immigration parties, by contrast, are electorally hurt more with each national-level election in which they are confronted with ostracism.

Until now, we have assessed the effects in terms of *probabilities to vote* for specific parties. What do our findings mean in terms of *votes* for the ostracized parties? This depends not only on a voter's probability to vote for the ostracized party, but also on her probability to vote for each of the other parties in her country. For instance, a decrease in the probability to vote for the *Republikaner* from 9 to 7 on a 10-point scale as a result of it being ostracized can make a difference for a German citizen's vote if her probability to vote for the CDU is 8. If, by contrast, her probability to vote for the CDU were 10, the decrease in probability to vote for the *Republikaner* would not make any difference. In order to estimate the effects of ostracism on party choice, we predicted each respondent's party choice on the basis of our model, assuming that each respondent votes for the party that receives the highest predicted probability to vote. If all individual predictions are aggregated, we get a prediction of the election outcome based on our model.

**Table 4:** Projected loss or gain anti-immigration parties if ostracized

<i>Country</i>	<i>Anti-immigration party</i>	<i>Largest mainstream competitor</i>	<i>Loss or gain as a result of being ostracized</i>	<i>Loss or gain if party were ostracized</i>
Austria	FPÖ	ÖVP	—	−0.1% (1999); 0.0% (2004)
Belgium – Flanders	VB	PVV/VLD	+1.4% (1994); +3.8% (1999)	—
Belgium – Wallonia	FN-NF	PRL/MR	0.0% (1994); +2.3% (1999)	—
Denmark	DF	V	—	0.0% (1999); −0.1% (2004)
Denmark	FrP	C, V	—	−0.8% (1989); −0.4% (1994); 0.0% (1999)
Finland	PS	KOK	—	0.0% (2004)
France	FN	RPR/UMP	+0.5% (1989); −0.2% (1994); +0.3% (1999); −0.3% (2004)	—
Germany	REP	CDU-CSU	−0.1% (1994); 0.0% (1999); 0.0% (2004)	— <sup>a</sup>
Italy	LN	FI	—	+0.7% (1994); +2.2% (1999); +1.1% (2004)
Netherlands	CD	VVD	0.0% (1994); 0.0% (1999)	—
Netherlands	LPF	VVD	—	−0.1% (2004)

The years in the table refer to the years in which the survey data were collected.

*N* observations by context varies from 134 (Wallonia 1999) to 1937 (Italy 1999), mean *N* = 706.

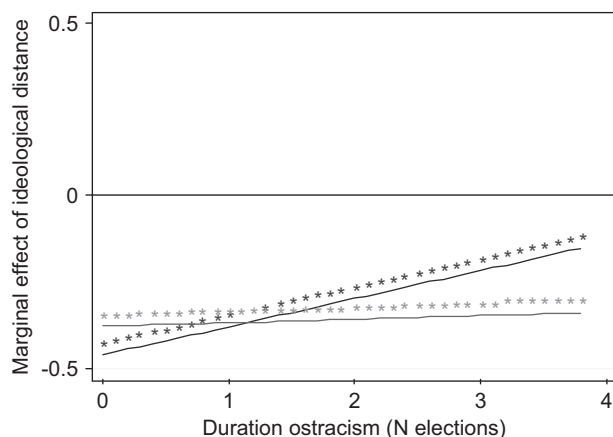
<sup>a</sup>In 1989, the Republicans had not participated in any Bundestag election, so the response of the CDU does not yield any impact in the model pertaining to that year.



This procedure allows us to also estimate what the election result would have been if an ostracized party had not been ostracized, or if a non-ostracized party would have been ostracized. Table 4 presents the results of these estimations. The first column of Table 4 presents the results for the ostracized parties. It is the difference between the predicted share (in percentages) of votes an anti-immigration party obtained under the real conditions, and the predicted share of votes it would have obtained if the 'duration of ostracism' were equal to 0. A positive score indicates that the party benefits from being ostracized and a negative score indicates that it is hurt electorally by ostracism. The second column of Table 4 shows the predicted effects for anti-immigration parties that are not ostracized. These are the differences between actual predictions and predictions where the 'duration of ostracism' is set to the observed maximum (four elections).

Table 4 shows that the effect of ostracism on the electoral support is marginal for most anti-immigration parties. The effect is larger than 1 per cent in five contexts only. Interestingly, these are all cases in which a party has *benefited* from the ostracism (VB 1994, 1999; FN-NF 1999), or would have benefited if it had been ostracised (LN 1999; 2004). The FrP is the only anti-immigration party in our study that would have been substantially hurt if it had been ostracized. We thus conclude that the positive effect of ostracism on the targeted party's electoral support in the case of influential parliamentary opposition parties is, on average, larger than the negative effect in the case of other parties. Ostracism exerts the intended effect on party choice in some contexts, whereas it backfires in others.

We now move to our tests of Hypotheses 3 and 4, and assess whether the extent of ideological voting is affected by the ostracism of parties. To this end, we focus on anti-immigration parties only. In the third model (see Table 3), we add two additional control variables (and drop the anti-immigration dummy and its interactions). The impact of the ideological party positions is positive, which reflects the idea that, on average, the more radical the anti-immigration party is, the higher the preference for it (Ezrow, 2008). The ideological position of the largest mainstream competitor also yields an effect in the expected (negative) direction. This means that the more moderate the centre-right is, the more differentiation between this party and its anti-immigration rival, which is beneficial for the last-mentioned party. We also include an interaction between ostracism duration and the perceived ideological distance. This generates the expected positive effect ( $b = 0.05$ ), which is significant at the  $P = 0.001$  level. To interpret the meaning of the positive interaction term, we have to compare the interaction term to the main effect of left/right distance for anti-immigration parties, which is negative ( $b = -0.39$ ). The negative lower-order effect of left-right distance means that the smaller the distance between respondents and an anti-immigration party, the higher



**Figure 1:** Marginal effect left–right distance on ptvs anti-immigration parties as duration and opposition influence change.

The line with the gentle slope denotes the marginal effect concerning anti-immigration parties that are represented in parliament where opposition influence is strong, the one with the steep slope denotes the marginal effect for other anti-immigration parties.

\*indicates significance at the 95 per cent level (upper and lower bounds indistinguishable in figure).

the preference for this party. The positive interaction term thus shows that the longer there is ostracism of a political party in a country, the less negative the effect of ideological distance becomes, that is, the effect becomes weaker. Substantially this means that, over time, the ostracism of an anti-immigration party reduces the extent to which it is evaluated by its ideology.

Is there a difference on this point between influential parliamentary opposition parties and other parties? In order to assess Hypotheses 3 and 4, we enter a three-way interaction between ostracism duration, ideological distance and the influential parliamentary opposition party dummy (along with all the lower-order effects). The effect of this variable is negative ( $-0.05$ ) and significant at the  $P=0.01$  level. In order to interpret this finding, we plot the marginal effects of the perceived ideological distance against the ostracism duration variable (0–4 elections) for the two relevant groups of anti-immigration parties, influential parliamentary opposition and other parties (cf. Brambor *et al.*, 2006). See Figure 1 for the result.

To the left in Figure 1, we see that the marginal effect of the ideological distance is about  $-0.45$  for all anti-immigration parties in the absence of ostracism. This means that if a voter places herself or himself one point farther from the anti-immigration party on a 1–10 left–right scale, her or his



preference for this party decreases with about half a point on a similar (1–10) scale. This is in accordance with expectations based on standard spatial analysis of electoral behaviour. If the party is ostracized, however, the influence of the ideological distance gradually decreases. The more elections the party has contested while being ostracized, the weaker the effect of ideology becomes. This phenomenon largely pertains to a specific group of ostracized parties, however. The group of the influential parliamentary opposition parties, indicated by the line with the gentle slope, is hardly affected by the ostracism, if at all. These parties do not seem to attract less ideologically driven votes as their ostracism continues. Thus, there is empirical evidence for Hypothesis 4.

The steep line indicates that for the rest category, by contrast, electoral competition *does* substantially change. After having contested four elections while ostracized, this group of parties is hardly affected by competition in terms of ideology anymore. This suggests that other considerations become more important for the vote for these parties – possibly, the ostracism itself. Hypothesis 3 is also supported by the empirical evidence.

## Conclusion

In this paper we have explored the electoral consequences of the strategy of ostracism for the targeted parties, anti-immigration parties. We have included 11 parties, ranging from very unsuccessful ones such as the Dutch CD (0.6 per cent of the national-level vote in 1998) to the very successful Austrian FPÖ (27 per cent in 1999). By means of a literature review and an expert survey, we have obtained measures of the extent to which established parties exclude anti-immigration parties, and linked this information to individual survey data collected in 1989, 1994, 1999 and 2004. We have conducted various analyses, comparing across 26 political contexts. These analyses resulted in empirical evidence supporting the claim that ostracism influences the way voters evaluate the targeted parties in elections.

There are basically two consequences of prolonged exclusion. First, parties that are ostracized become increasingly less attractive over time (Hypothesis 1). Second, their remaining supporters are less motivated by ideological concerns (Hypothesis 3). In accordance with our expectations, anti-immigration parties do not lose support among just *any* citizens when they are excluded – they lose support among a specific *kind* of group. Instrumental ideologically driven voters opt for other parties instead or stay home, leaving the excluded parties with those who support them for non-ideological reasons – perhaps protest voters. Since these effects only materialize when exclusion continues over time, we conclude that learning effects take place. Voters gradually become aware of the exclusion, and adjust their actions accordingly.



In countries where parliamentary opposition parties are influential, however, anti-immigration parties that are represented in parliament do not suffer from the isolation forced upon them by other parties (Hypothesis 2). Nor do preferences for anti-immigration parties become less ideologically driven (Hypothesis 4). Indeed, influential parliamentary opposition parties *benefit*, on average, from being ostracized. This positive impact could be because of additional media attention that parties receive when other parties ostracize them. In line with this argument, earlier studies have shown that anti-immigration parties benefit from media attention more generally (for example, Lubbers and Scheepers, 2001). In addition, it could be that particular considerations play a role in the vote for anti-immigration parties if they are ostracized, such as voters' attitudes towards the ostracism, or dissatisfaction with the established parties. In contexts where opposition influence is low, such considerations may only (partly) replace usual policy considerations, whereas in high-opposition influence contexts, they are likely play a role in addition to policy considerations. In that case, the more voters are guided by such considerations, the more ostracized anti-immigration parties benefit. More research should be carried out on this point, however.

Our results seem to be in accordance with most election outcomes. The ostracized Flemish Interest (VB), for example, has flourished behind its *cordons sanitaire*, whereas parties that are not influential parliamentary opposition parties, for example, the CD in the Netherlands, performed poorly in each of the elections they contested. Our conclusions are also in accordance with earlier work on the electoral fortunes of anti-immigration and other parties (for example, Meguid, 2005; Ezrow, 2008). Meguid (2005) argues and empirically shows that these parties' electoral success partly depends on the mainstream parties' policy responses to their existence. To this, we add that responses not only in terms of policy positions, but also in terms of systematic boycotting play a role in this respect. Ezrow (2008) finds that 13 Western European parties, among which the French FN, have benefited from their distinctiveness in terms of policies between 1984 and 1998. Combined with the finding that ostracized anti-immigration parties stay radical whereas non-ostracized ones tend to mellow their tone (Van Spanje and van der Brug, 2007), it may be that the ostracism of a political party by its mainstream competitor reinforces this distinctiveness, which would play into the hands of the targeted party. Future research should focus on voter perceptions of parties under such circumstances, and on the role of policy radicalism in this process.

To conclude, in some countries mainstream parties can reduce the electoral attractiveness of anti-immigration and communist parties by ostracizing them. Moreover, we have demonstrated that in these settings, the vote for anti-immigration parties becomes less ideologically-driven if a party is excluded. This suggests that the targeted parties become less effective instruments for





the representation of interests and ideologies as a result of the exclusion. This is yet another unintended effect of ostracism that established parties might want to consider when deciding upon their strategy to oppose anti-immigration parties.

## Notes

- 1 We focus on the national level because politics at that level is bound to have the greatest impact on the electorate. In the eyes of the voter, national elections are the most important elections: 'first order elections' (for example, Reif and Schmitt, 1980)
- 2 In addition to inter-party variations, ostracism can differ among different levels of policy-making: the local, regional, national and international level. Parties may collaborate at the local level, and simultaneously refrain from cooperation at the national level. This might contaminate the national-level effects that we examine in this paper, which makes us less likely to find any significant effects. This makes us more confident about the significant effects that we find in this paper.
- 3 Note that we do not consider co-opting policy positions as 'exclusion'. It is perfectly possible, and even reasonable, for a party to co-opt another party's policy position without cooperating with the other party. Thus, co-opting a party's policy positions does not preclude systematically boycotting it.
- 4 Interestingly, Downs (1957) begins from what Simon (1985) would call a 'substantive' view of human rationality, and not from a bounded or 'procedural' view. According to Downsian spatial analysis, a voter is expected to vote for the party that would yield the highest utility. In practice, this does not make much of a difference in this paper, however.
- 5 The ostracism of a particular party may affect *targeting* parties in similar ways. A party that participates in a *cordon sanitaire* around a particular other party may be internally divided over the issue of whether or not to continue this strategy. This is clearly the case for the Flemish Liberals and Democrats (VLD), a party that has been systematically boycotting the Flemish Interest (VB) over the last decade although several prominent VLD members have argued for a *rapprochement* to the VB (for example, Maddens and Fiers, 1998). If both the mainstream right and the anti-immigration party are divided, the net electoral effect of the ostracism of the anti-immigration party may be zero. This is a counterargument that Van Donselaar does not deal with.
- 6 It is possible that the exclusion also leads voters to not state their party choice if they voted for an anti-immigration party. This would then lead to an under-representation of anti-immigration party voters in contexts where an anti-immigration party is excluded. Given our findings that the effects of ostracism depend on the political context, we have no reason to assume that this should make us less confident about our results.
- 7 Belgium is a federal state with two completely separate party systems, which means that a Flemish voter cannot vote for a Wallonian party and vice versa. For this reason, we treat the two parts of Belgium as two separate systems (see also for example, De Winter and Swyngedouw, 1996).
- 8 Because of the small sample of the two Belgian sub-systems, these results are not very reliable, but the other sub-samples do not pose such problems.
- 9 The studies consisted of independent cross-sectional surveys fielded in each member country of the EC/EU immediately after each of the EP elections. The European Elections Studies are extensively documented on the European Elections Studies' web site: <http://www.european-electionstudies.net/>.



- 10 Only the results concerning the nine parties that still existed at the time that the expert survey was conducted (June 2005) could be cross-validated. However, given that no errors were discerned in the codings of other parties, we do not see any reason to question the coding of the other two parties, the Danish FrP and the Dutch CD.
- 11 This variable is sometimes referred to as the 'probability to vote' question. It must be emphasized that the variables do not measure probabilities in the statistical sense of that word, as their sum is not – and should not be – constrained to 1 (Van der Eijk, 2002). Tillie (1995) has demonstrated that answers to it are not constrained by the intention to vote for a specific party in the upcoming election. In other words, voters who are certain to vote for a particular party may still give a very high score to the party that is their second preference.
- 12 In the 1999 European study, more than 93 per cent of the respondents gave the highest utility to the party they would vote for in a national election at that time. Similar percentages were obtained in 1989 (Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a, b, Chapter 20) and for 1994 (Van der Eijk *et al.*, 1999, p. 168).
- 13 Our focus on ideology and the left–right scale ignores that other dimensions may be at play as well when it comes to vote choice. However, we have no way of dealing with this issue, as we do not have data at our disposal that would completely solve this problem.
- 14 Most importantly, the conclusions concerning our four hypotheses do not change when excluding the party size variable. We may seem to have a theoretical argument not to include the party size variable. The size of the party is theoretically expected to be affected by exclusion before the measurement. Taking the size of a party into account would therefore enforce a focus on the short-term effects of exclusion, whereas we expect exclusion to have an impact in the long run rather than in the short term. As a result, we make it very difficult to find any effects of exclusion, which may lead us to commit Type-II errors. However, not taking into account party size may lead us to attribute pragmatic considerations to exclusion. Not surprisingly, the effect of exclusion on the anti-immigration party becomes significantly negative. It is impossible to disentangle whether this is because of the exclusion of these parties, or simply because they are small (for other reasons).
- 15 And perceived ideological closeness is important for the vote for any party, as has been repeatedly shown (for example, van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996b).
- 16 It would be interesting to also include the interaction between these variables. Such an interaction variable would tap the effect that the more moderate its position *and* the more moderate that of its main rival, the more votes the anti-immigration party will receive. However, this interaction variable is highly correlated with its lower-order effect of the anti-immigration party's ideological position ( $r = 0.88$ , significant for  $P = 0.001$ , one-tailed,  $N = 21\,509$ ).
- 17 The interaction variables are not included in Table 2, as their descriptive statistics are difficult to interpret.
- 18 With his permission, this appendix relies largely on a paper by Van der Eijk (Van der Eijk, 2002).
- 19 The original regression equation is  $y_i = b_0 + b_1 * x_i + e_i$ . In this equation the predicted value  $\hat{y}_i = b_0 + b_1 * x_i$ . By substituting  $b_0 + b_1 * x_i$  for  $\hat{y}_i$  in the equation, the new regression equation (using the  $\hat{y}_i$  as predictors of party utility) becomes:  $y_i = \hat{y}_i + e_i$ . If one were to estimate a new regression using the predicted value as the single predictor of the propensity to support that party, the estimate of the intercept and slope become 0 and 1, respectively, and  $e_i$  (which forms the basis for the computation of explained variance) is unaltered. When stacking the  $y$ -hats on top of each other in the stacked matrix, the actual variable added to the stacked matrix is not the predicted value ( $y$ -hat), but the deviation of the  $y$ -hats from their mean for each party. This still encapsulates the variance in party preferences caused by the independent variable, but prevents differences among parties in the average level of party preferences from being



incorporated in the newly created independent variable. Such differences among parties in average preferences are caused by other factors besides the predictor variable  $x$ , and should hence not contribute to the variance in the newly created predictor ( $\hat{y}$ ). For an elaborate discussion of this procedure, see (Van der Eijk and Franklin, 1996a, b, paper 20).

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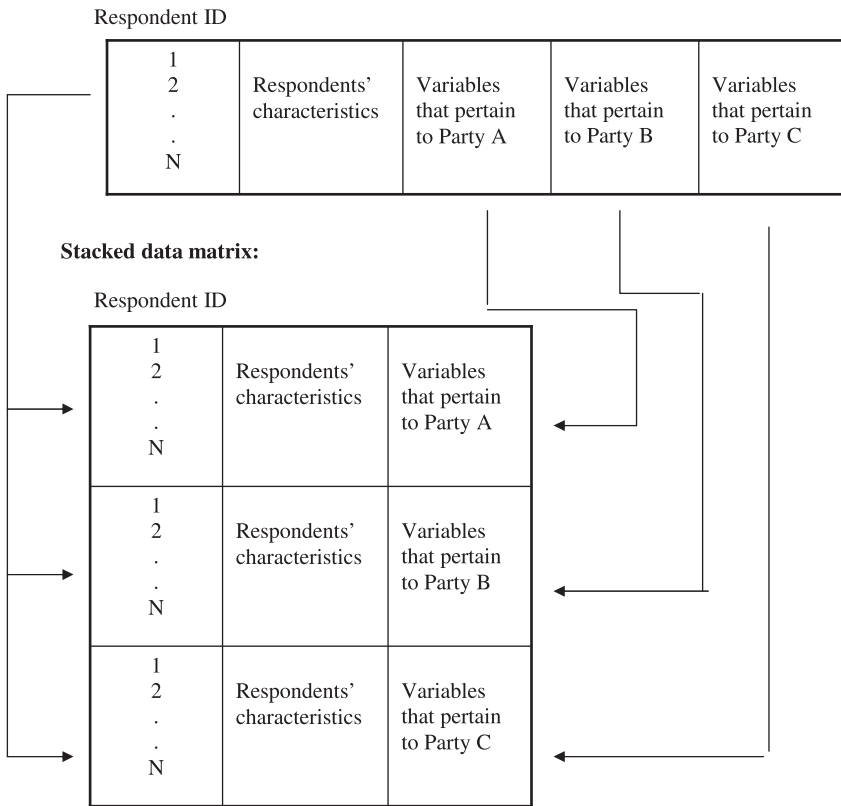
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## Appendix

### Method by which analyses were conducted<sup>18</sup>

The dependent variable in our analysis stems from a series of questions – one for each party – which asks respondents how likely it is that they will ever vote for this party. Earlier research (Tillie, 1995) has shown that these variables perform in the way that Downs (1957) imagined party utility to perform. The electoral preferences obtained from these questions yield a large number of variables: one for each party. In order to answer our research questions these should all be analysed simultaneously. This can be achieved by a variant on the technique suggested for regression in time and space (Stimson, 1985), which involves a regression analysis on a 'stacked' data matrix. This is a matrix derived from a 'normal' survey data matrix, in which the records represent every respondent\*party combination. Figure A1 illustrates graphically how the original data matrix is transformed into a stacked matrix.

The dependent variable in the analyses is the observed propensity to vote for the party that is indicated in the respective respondent\*party combination. In this data matrix, the dependent variable thus pertains to each of the parties in turn, and can be considered as a generic measure of party support. In this stacked data matrix, independent variables that pertain to a relation between party and voter have to be specially constructed. A party's position on the left/



**Figure A1:** Structure of the data matrix.

right scale, for example, will not capture in this design the effect of ideology on propensity to vote, but a distance between the left/right positions of voter and the respective party does.

In the European Elections Studies of 1989–2004, vote propensities were measured for 21 509 individual respondents in the countries that we selected. In the stacked data matrix each respondent is represented by as many ‘cases’ as there are parties for which (s)he indicated a vote propensity. The stacked data matrix has 158 646 entries.

When no party placement scores on specific issues are available, independent variables have to be constructed empirically. This is done by predicting propensities to support a party on the basis of a simple regression analysis for that party in the original data matrix. This is done for each of the parties in turn. These predicted values ( $\hat{y}$ -hats) are simply linear transformations of the



original independent variables. These are saved and inserted as new predictors of party support in the stacked data matrix.<sup>19</sup>

This procedure was applied for the variables social class, income, religion, EU-approval and issues. For example, to estimate the contribution of social class to the explanation of party choice, we assessed empirically how well respondents' subjective assessments of their social class predict preferences for each of the parties. So for each of the parties in turn, a regression analysis was conducted with social class as the independent variable (in the form of four dummies) and vote propensities for that party as the dependent variable. The predicted values of each of these regressions ( $\hat{y}$ -hats) were saved and inserted in the stacked data matrix as new predictors of vote propensities. The variable, with which the effect of religion is estimated, is constructed in a similar way: it consists of predicted values of separate regressions per party. The independent variables in these separate regressions were five dummies indicating five different religious denominations and church attendance as an additional variable. The same procedure was used to estimate the effect of EU-approval (a linear bivariate regression). In the case of the issues, we used the answers to the question what is the most important problem facing your country? What are the second and third most important problems? On the basis of these answers we constructed a large set of dummy variables, which indicate whether a respondent mentioned a specific problem, or not. These variables were then used as independent variables in the regressions per party.

Since multiple observations in the stacked data matrix refer to the same respondent, these observations are not independent from each other. Moreover, the distribution of the dependent variable is rather skewed, so that the data do not meet some assumptions that OLS regression requires. For this reason we estimated robust standard errors (in STATA), which do not assume a homoskedastic distribution of the error terms. Moreover, multiple observations pertaining to one respondent were defined as dependent (using the option 'cluster' in STATA).