

# Italy/Austria

## The Extreme Right in Western Europe

Review/Introduction  
Italy  
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## Last week

- ▶ France: the “mastercase”
  - ▶ FN dominated by Le Pen
  - ▶ Modern at the surface, more traditional inside
  - ▶ Voters probably care about anti-immigrant message and not much else
- ▶ Belgium/Flanders: a lesser-known successful ERP
  - ▶ VB quite similar to FN
  - ▶ Initially, even more old-right in its outlook
  - ▶ Plus: Flemish nationalism
- ▶ VB still isolated, but Burka a complex issue

## Today

- ▶ Today: Austria and Italy: more countries with a long extreme-right tradition
- ▶ Histories of collaboration and occupation
- ▶ Histories of relevant Extreme Right movements *before* German National Socialism

## The Extreme Right in Italy: History

- ▶ Mussolini, obviously
- ▶ Republican constitution (1946/48) outlawed Fascism, but neo-fascist “Italian Social Movement” (MSI) in 1946
- ▶ Anti-Communism, but: 1960 Genoa → factions, terrorism; largely irrelevant but representation
- ▶ A southern party
- ▶ Mid-1990s: Fini becomes a moderniser (CD and the Second Republic) → MSI-AN, Fiamma Tricolore (FT), Alternativa Sociale (AS), ...
- ▶ A “post-fascist”, CD-conservative party (?!?)
- ▶ 2009: merger with Berlusconi’s party → “The People of Freedom”

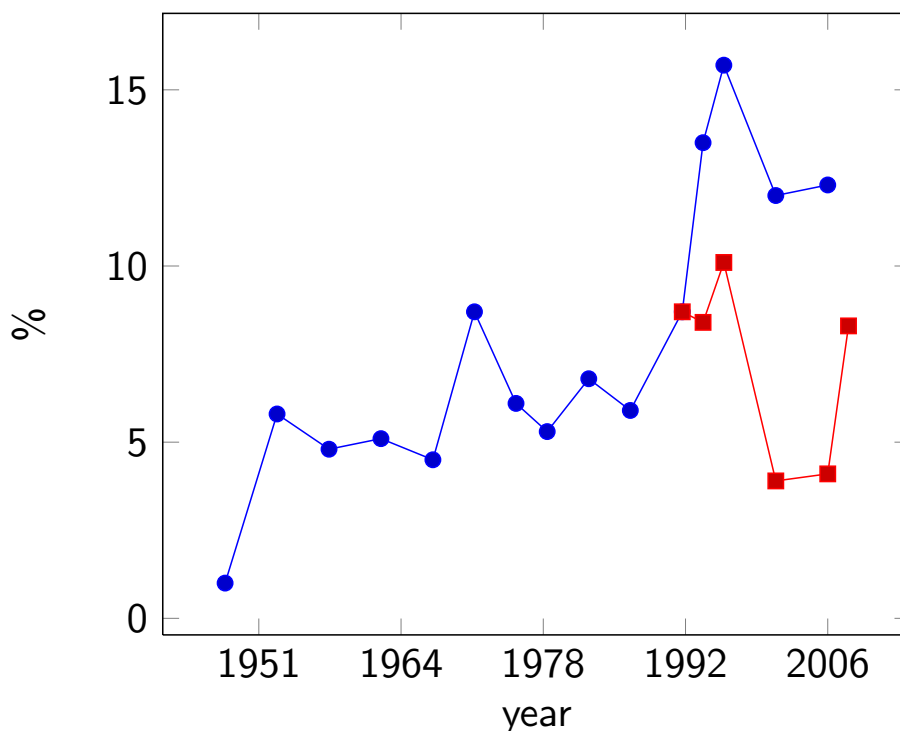
## The Extreme Right in Italy: The Lega Nord

- ▶ Regionalism movement in Northern Italy during 1970/80s
  - ▶ Cultural differences
  - ▶ Economic interests
  - ▶ The regional “Leagues”
- ▶ 1991: a federation of “Leagues”, soon dominated by Umberto Bossi
- ▶ Highly successful during 1990s
- ▶ Campaigned for secession, later for (fiscal) federalism and devolution
- ▶ Resentment against Southerners, than against non-European immigrants

## Policies

- ▶ MSI/AN
  - ▶ Initially, pro-fascist, suspicious of democracy
  - ▶ Anti-Communist but state-interventionist
  - ▶ Staunchly conservative but never racist, anti-semite etc. → refused to collaborate with NPD during 1970s/80s
  - ▶ A “normal” centre-right party?
- ▶ Fiamma, AS, etc.: a bunch of weirdos
- ▶ Lega
  - ▶ Occasionally odd ideas (Pagan cult of the river)
  - ▶ At times almost racist approach to Southerners
  - ▶ Free-marketeers turned protectionists and globalisation critics
  - ▶ Discovered “gypsies” and immigration during the 1990s: camps, gun-boats, rail-road apartheid

## Electoral Results



## Voters

- ▶ (At least) two electorates
- ▶ MSI: we don't know much
- ▶ Alleanza: more southern
  - ▶ Traces of old, fascist constituencies
  - ▶ Traditional, in later years not really xenophobic
- ▶ Lega:
  - ▶ Mixture of many different northern groups
  - ▶ Odd coalition of small business people, (their) workers, and others
  - ▶ A bit like Flanders: anti-immigrant party with a regionalist twist

## The Extreme Right in Austria: History

- ▶ Historically, home of the original Nazi party
- ▶ Three “camps” after WW I
  1. Socialists/workers
  2. Authoritarian Catholics → “Austro-Fascism” 1934-38
  3. Non-liberal Liberals (German-nationalist) → Nazism
- ▶ After WW II, Austria restored as an independent, neutral and democratic republic → 3 camps, 3 parties
- ▶ VdU/WdU → FPÖ (1956)
  - ▶ Dominated by former Nazis/Nazi sympathisers
  - ▶ A more prominently liberal party from the 1960s
  - ▶ Support for SPÖ min. government from 1970, member of Liberal International from 1979, coalition 1983
  - ▶ New course unpopular with voters/members

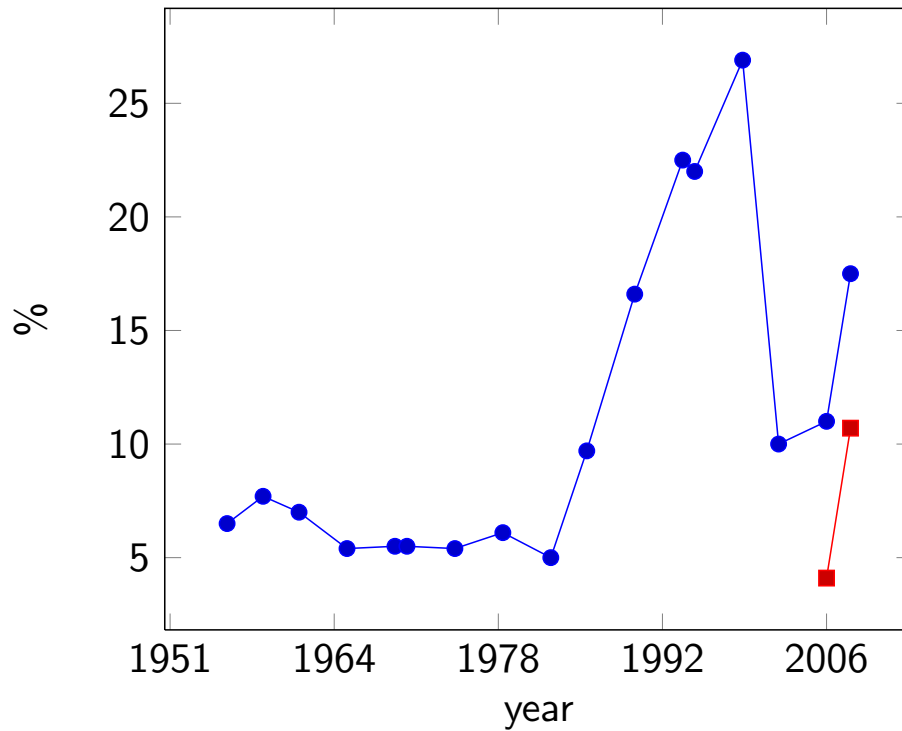
## The Extreme Right in Austria: Haider

- ▶ 1950-2008, born into a family of Nazi sympathisers, involved in Extreme Right politics as a teenager
- ▶ Throughout his career, positive remarks on Hitler/Nazis, racist sneers, a regular guest at Waffen SS veterans' meetings
- ▶ Rapid career within FPÖ
- ▶ Replaced liberal Norbert Steeger as party leader in 1986, radically transformed FPÖ, Carinthia as a power base (governor from 1999)
- ▶ Unprecedented success for FPÖ (up to 27 per cent, coalition FPÖ/ÖVP coalition(s) 99-2006)
- ▶ Haider stepped down as chairman in 2000 ...
- ▶ But dominated party completely until 2005 → split (BZÖ)

## Policies

- ▶ Austria: strong corporatism, semi-permanent Grand Coalition government
- ▶ FPÖ and Haider: *populist*, anti-establishment, an “uncorrupted outsider”
- ▶ Anti-left (culturally), anti-corporatist (culturally & economically)
- ▶ Against foreigners and minorities (Slovenes, Romanians, “Gypsies”, Easterners, Jews etc.)
- ▶ Motto of 1991 municipal campaign: “Vienna for the Viennese”
- ▶ 1990s: “Austria First”; anti-EU, anti-globalisation, Temelin (2001)

## Electoral Results



## Voters

- ▶ Liberals (into the early 1990s)
- ▶ Traditional right-wingers
- ▶ Xenophobes
- ▶ Young(ish), unaligned, dissatisfied voters

## Summary

- ▶ Two countries with very long Extreme Right Traditions
- ▶ Long standing parties with very deep roots
- ▶ Old parties rebounding during 1990s
- ▶ But two very different trajectories!

## Class Questions

### Mudde 2007

- ▶ Minimum: Nativism
  - ▶ Radical Right: Nativism + authoritarianism
  - ▶ Populist Radical Right (Maximum): Radical Right + Populism
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- ▶ How is it possible that more than 25% of Austrian voters support the FPÖ/BZÖ?
  - ▶ What do the FN, VB, AN, FT, LN, FPÖ, BZÖ have in common, where are the differences?
  - ▶ Are they members of an ERP family? In which of Mudde's subgroups would they fit?