

The framing of Euroscepticism in DF, AfD and FN: Contemplating Euroscepticism in the European right-wing.

Master Thesis Malthe Schiøtt Nielsen
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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	6
Research Question:	6
THEORY	6
The thin ideology of Populism.....	7
Left versus right populism.....	7
Mudde’s dual interpretation of Populism.....	9
A scholarly debated concept: Right-Wing Populism	10
‘We are The People’	12
In-groups and Out-groups	12
Anti-pluralism.....	13
Anti-establishment	14
Anti-Migration	16
Hard and Soft Euroscepticism	17
European Right-Wing Populist Parties.....	18
METHODOLOGY.....	19
Frame Analysis	21
The characterization of primary frameworks.....	22
Frame Alignment.....	22
Dansk Folkeparti, Alternative für Deutschland and Front National	24
Dansk Folkeparti	24
The History of DF.....	24
DF’s Party Program.....	25
The Political Position of DF	26
Alternative für Deutschland.....	26
The History of AfD.....	27
AfD’s Party Program.....	28
The Political Position of AfD.....	29
Front National	30
The History of FN	30
FN’s Party Program	31

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The Political Position of FN	33
ANALYSIS	33
The framing of Euroscepticism in Dansk Folkeparti	34
The framing of Euroscepticism in Alternative für Deutschland.....	40
The framing of Euroscepticism in Front National	45
The framing of Euroscepticism within DF, AfD and FN	50
Euroscepticism and anti-migration.....	50
Euroscepticism and anti-elitism.....	53
Euroscepticism and anti-establishment.....	55
Euroscepticism and nationalism	57
CONCLUSION	59
BIBLIOGRAPHY	61
Books.....	61
Articles, Journals.....	62
Newspaper Articles	65
Webpages	67

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the EU marked a turning point in European political history as it withbrought an increased industrial, political, legal, economic, social and cultural integration. As almost any nation in the world, the European states experienced how the increased globalization, and its impact on culture, economy and politics, changed the relationship between nation states and withbrought a need for transnational political cooperation. In the context of European political integration, and contemporary European politics, Euroscepticism has become a political key issue and an increasingly relevant concept within the discourse of European right-wing populist parties. Based on the observations of Cas Mudde (2017), Ruth Wodak (2013), Christian Schori Liang (2007) and Anton Pelinka (2013), it is presented that the EU faces a range of political and economic challenges as Eurosceptic right-wing populist parties seek to change the role of the EU in the European political landscape. Euroscepticism has already made its mark on the European political landscape in the past decades, from the negotiations leading up to the Maastricht Treaty up until the recently held elections across Europe. Right-wing populist parties and their promotion of Euroscepticism have presented the the EU with new pressing issues and challenges, and by observing the contemporary political environment within the EU member states, it is clear that the support for Eurosceptic right-wing populist parties is increasing, or at least not dwindling. Following, in particular, the role played by the United Kingdom Independence Party(UKIP) in the Brexit elections, right-wing populist parties and their affection upon popular opinion have been the year hot topic within European political discourse. The upcoming elections in France and Germany will also be closely watched at, as the outlook of the EU is surrounded by higher-than-usual-uncertainty. Moreover, right-wing populist parties in the Netherlands (Party for Freedom), Belgium (Vlaams Belang), Denmark (Dansk Folkeparti, Greece (Golden Dawn), Italy (Lega Nord, 5 Stars Movement) have also provided the European region with a degree of political and electoral unpredictability. The support gained by the far-right, nationalist and Eurosceptic parties such as Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), Front National (FN) and Dansk Folkeparti (DF), indicates that electoral support can be reached by declaring the need to safeguard the nation state sovereignty from external influences such as transnational policy-making and administration. Following the observations of Christina Schori Liang, presenting how European right-wing populist parties have experienced unprecedented electoral success based on a new type of politics; “The main structural conflict is not between the Left and the Right or between reformers and conservatives. The real clash is between elites that are becoming more

suspicious of democracy and the angry publics that are becoming more hostile to liberalism” (Schori Liang, 2007:7-9). The political common traits of the European right-wing populist parties are quite clear: opposition towards the EU, internal pressure on established structures of governance and elites, and a desire to prevent the immigration of foreign nationals who are seen to pose a threat towards national culture, national identity, welfare and national security (Mudde, 2016:5-9).

The contemporary challenges of the EU have affected the political climate within the EU member states and the countries outside of the EU. Migration flows, terrorism and economic turbulence have paved the way for right-wing populist parties in Europe and the political limitations and effects of the increased support for these parties are yet to be seen. Preceding the national elections in Germany and France, one could argue that the increased support for Eurosceptic right-wing populist parties marks a turning point in the European political environment. However, the majority of the right-wing populist parties have been present in their domestic political scenes for decades, advocating for similar political ideologies.

This thesis will analyse and compare the contemporary framing of Euroscepticism within the right-wing populist parties Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National (FN), in order to shed light on how Euroscepticism is represented in the European political environment. A large number of studies on European right-wing populist parties have been constructed during the past decades, denoting an increased focus on European right-wing populism and its affection on the European political environment. Nonetheless, Mudde argues that we still know very little about the ideologies, leaders, members and organizations and their role in the transformations of the European far right (Mudde, 2016:10). In order to contribute to the research on European right-wing populism, this thesis will provide an analysis of how Euroscepticism is framed by DF, AfD and FN, in order to examine how Euroscepticism is conceptualized within the European far right. This will generate an understanding of how European right-wing populist parties link their political ideologies to Euroscepticism within their party programs. Moreover, this will present an approach towards understanding why Euroscepticism has gained ground during the past decades and to what extent Euroscepticism could further alter the political landscape within the EU, if the European right-wing parties continue to promote Euroscepticism.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In order to understand the ideologies of European right-wing populist parties and how these parties frame Euroscepticism in the European political environment, it is important to understand the cultural, social and historical conditions from which these parties have been shaped. The rise of Euroscepticism in Europe and its impact upon voters and the public opinion at large within the EU member states is undeniable. Despite the fact that the EU attempts to advocate for a higher level of European cooperation to improve common economic, social and political measures, right-wing populist parties continue to lobby for Euroscepticism across the European continent. Mudde argues that “populists are reformist rather than revolutionary, they do not oppose political parties per se. Rather, they oppose the established parties, call for (or claim to be) a new kind of party; i.e. they express populist anti-party sentiments rather than extremist anti-party sentiments.” (Mudde, 2004:541-563). This statement denotes a notion of political change and adaption, stretching the populist need for constructing adequate political approaches to work against the established structures of governance. The contemporary political programs of DF, AfD and FN will be investigated to present how European right-wing populist parties present their voters with Eurosceptic aims and how they use Euroscepticism to promote their own political agendas. This will generate an understanding of why European right-wing populist parties as well as Euroscepticism have gained ground during the last couple of years. In order to present a substantial theoretical basis for investigating to what extent DF, AfD and FN are Eurosceptic, and furthermore how they frame Euroscepticism, the following chapter will provide a contemplation of traditional populist values with an enhanced focus on right-wing populism.

Research Question:

How is Euroscepticism framed by the Danish People’s Party, Alternative für Deutschland and Front National?

THEORY

In order to shed light on how Euroscepticism is framed Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National(FN), this section will elaborate on the concepts of right-wing populism. In order for this elaboration to take place, a range of conceptualizations of populism will be

used to present the various ideological values related to European right-wing populism (Mudde, 2004; March, 2017; Müller, 2014; Pelinka, 2013; Stanley, 2008; Taggart, 2003; Wodak, 2013). This will provide an approach for understanding the relationship between Euroscepticism and the characteristic ideological stances of European right-wing populism; anti-immigration, anti-elitism, anti-establishment, and nationalism. Furthermore, this will provide us with an approach for pointing out and comparing the similarities and differences regarding how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism. This will furthermore enable us to understand and investigate how and why European populist right-wing parties are focused on Euroscepticism.

The thin ideology of Populism

The concept of populism has been described differently by scholars in recent years. Some interpretations describe populism as a thin ideology, claiming that it denotes a limited potential due to its vague analytical utilities, while others have described it as a pathology, a political style and a doctrine, presenting it as an easily adaptable ideology which provides an approach for supporting the rights and power of the people (Stanley, 2008:104-105). Following Ben Stanley's interpretation of populism as a thin ideology, the obstacle to populism's further development as an ideology is that it is difficult to transform the concepts of populism into a coherent ideological tradition (Stanley, 2008:106). Stanley presents that "ideologies are not products only of logical thought-processes but must resonate with the context in which they are located." (Stanley, 2008:106). Ideologies such as liberalism and socialism present a higher degree of coherence than the ideology of populism, as the concepts identified with these traditions have proven easily translatable as they relate to actual experience and as they have influenced the content of that experience (Stanley, 2008:106). Moreover, Stanley draws on the plasticity of the term 'the people' and explains how populists have constructed this term to suit their chosen criteria of inclusion or exclusion (Stanley, 2008:107). The openness of this term, and also the populist ideology, has enabled populism to be an ideology in its own right, however for an ideology to function within the political environment, concrete core concepts must co-exist with peripheral concepts which link ideology to a particular context (Stanley, 2008:107).

Left versus right populism

As a thin ideology, populism in itself cannot provide a coherent program for the solution to important political questions (Stanley, 2008:106). This provides explanation for why and how it can be adapted

by both left-wing parties and right-wing parties (March, 2017:284). As a consequence of framed democracies, left-wing populists and right-wing populists aim to represent the demands of the people, advocating for collective participation, however there are emergent disagreements as to the nature and degree of left populism's distinctiveness (March, 2017:284). Based on the research of Luke March, it is clear that a large number of analysts have attempted to concede how left-wing populism and right-wing populism differ (March, 2017) John Judis (2016) argues that left-wing populism is dyadic, attacking ruling elites, and that right-wing populism is triadic, attacking elites and out-groups (March 2017:284). Matthijs Rooduijn and Tjitske Akkerman (2015) argue that left-wing populism and right-wing populism “do not differ significantly from each other when it comes to their populism”, and ‘the general message is the same: corrupt elites neglect the interests of ordinary people’” (March, 2017:285). Moreover, Daphne Halikiopoulou (2012) argue that: “‘issues of cultural identity and European integration’, including the ‘national-populism of the left’ mean that ‘Radical right- and left-wing parties side together’” (March, 2017: 285). While studying how left-wing populism and right-wing populism differ in the context of Euroscepticism, it is clear that Eurosceptic parties differ in terms of how they construct and present their political focus. This can be explained based by the observations of Maurits J. Meijers (2007) who argue: “left-wing voters’ fears regarding the European unification process are rooted in worries about socio-economic issues such as the loss of social security, the fears of right wing voters are grounded in concerns that European integration constitutes a loss of national identity and causes one’s own country to lose power in global politics while also increasingly transferring money to the European level.” (Meijers, 2007:9). Moreover, Left-wing populist parties are often focused on capitalist corporations and international finance institutions, whereas right-wing populist parties focus on immigration and welfare, often expressed with reference to cultural identity (Meijers, 2007:9) Due to the constant changes in the European political landscape, one has to investigate the ideological and regional influences in order to determine the differences between left-wing populism and right-populism in European context. Especially in the context of Euroscepticism, as the political orientation of any populist party, as either left-wing or right-wing, is not a reliable guide to whether or not a party is Eurosceptical (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:25).

Mudde's dual interpretation of Populism

Mudde presents two dominant interpretations of the term populism (Mudde, 2004:542). The first definition of populism refers to the politics of the 'Stammtisch', presenting the term as a simplistic and highly emotional discourse used by populists to appeal to the instinct of the people (Mudde, 2004:542). This puts forth the argument that populism is merely a rhetorical tool used to captivate and affect a predetermined audience to gain political support (Mudde, 2004:542). This definition is highly problematic to use in empirical studies as it is difficult to define when something is emotional rather than rational, in other words, when instinct can serve a guideline for right or wrong (Mudde, 2004:542).

The second definition presents populism as an opportunistic approach towards pleasing the people/voters with immediate solutions and promises and so 'buying' their support and trust (Mudde, 2004:542). Examples could imply a promise of higher salaries to all people without any increase in workhours, or lowering the taxes just before an election (Mudde, 2004:542). Whether such policies are 'trustworthy' or 'realistic' or just a populist promise is debatable, however it is certain that such policies could be both criticized and accounted for, depending on the politic angle from which these 'promises' are analysed. Mudde argues that both interpretations of populism seem to have some elemental value, but that they are vague in terms of defining what is considered to be the core of populism in academic literature (Mudde, 2004:543). On that note, Mudde argues that populism is better covered by terms such as *demagogy* and *opportunism* and furthermore he points out that most definitions of populism have at least two points of reference in common: 'the people' and 'the elite' (Mudde, 2004:543). In other words, populism is defined as the relationship between 'the people' and 'the elite', however this still leaves us with a noteworthy question as to how populism should be clarified; "is populism an ideology, a syndrome, a political movement or a political style?" (Mudde, 2004:543). Along similar lines, Mudde defines populism as "an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite' and moreover, he argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde, 2004:543).

Through this definition, it is clear that populism denotes two opposites: 'us. vs. 'them' as a form of clash between the elite (elitism) and the people (pluralism). This clash is according to Mudde based on a 'thin-centred ideology' that consists of a narrow range of political concepts and these are used to construct an ideological core (Mudde, 2004:543; Stanley, 2008:104-107). Though populism is

often used as a specific ideology, it does not consist of the same level of intellectual clarification and consistency as for instance liberalism or socialism (Mudde, 2004:544). Populism can be easily combined with other ideologies e.g. communism, nationalism or socialism and this programmatic nature makes it adaptable to the discourse regarding how society consists of two entities: ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ (Mudde, 2004:544). The term discourse should in this sense not be understood as a definition of a certain party, organization or political group, but rather as a specific method of political communication. This form of discourse is trending among leaders of right-wing populist parties as they spread specific agendas and opinions to supporters and other political groups (Mudde, 2004:545).. This could be explained based on how right-wing populist parties portray ‘the people’ as opposites to its nemesis, ‘the elite’ (Mudde, 2004:545). Conclusively, it is important to note that this definition is broad and that not all political actors who advocate for system change are populist.

[A scholarly debated concept: Right-Wing Populism](#)

In the context of European politics and the contemporary understanding of democracy within West-European countries, populism is argued to be a protest against the limitations and functionality of the modern democratic structure (Pelinka, 2013:3). However, this does not only imply a protest against a structure of governance, political representatives and parties within, but also against the existing political ideologies which are used to implement new political measures (Pelinka, 2013:6). The development of the liberal western democracies in Europe brought about the populist critique of existing democracies for being insufficient in terms of providing direct power to ‘the people’ (Pelinka, 2013:7). One of the critiques describes how corrupt élites serve to provide themselves with power and economic stability (Pelinka, 2013:7). Right-wing populists have often directed their rhetoric towards these ‘profiteers’, in a contemporary context, especially in the context of globalization (Pelinka, 2013:7). The corrupt élites have always been a focus point of critical democrats and right-wing populists are not an exception as they interpret society as a spectrum filled with social and political inequality (Pelinka, 2013:7). As right-wing populists present themselves as critical towards the elitism within the established governance structure, they tend to portray their political opponents, ‘the élite’, as an alien entity (Pelinka, 2013:7). Right-wing populists are therefore often focused on this specific alien entity as it, in the eyes of right-wing populists, is different in terms of either culture, political identity, religion, race or citizenship (Pelinka, 2013:7). This disassociation and categorization is used by right-wing populists to present what they stand for and what they oppose

(Pelinka, 2013:7). According to Ruth Wodak: “Right-wing populist parties are thus primarily defined by the construction of common enemies: ‘They’ are foreigners, defined by ‘race’, religion or language. ‘They’ are élites not only within the country but also on the European level (‘Brussels’) and global level (‘Financial Capital’)” (Wodak, 2013:29).

Pelinka argues that right-wing populists simplifies complex developments by presenting their followers with a culprit; a foreign enemy or culture, in order to point out their political opponents and frame their own ideological stances (Pelinka, 2013:7). The right-wing populist phenomenon, and its modern impact on contemporary politics, relies on the clash of traditional and modern ideologies e.g. nationalism versus multiculturalism. Nationalism must in this case be understood as a state of mind which gives ‘national’ messages, memories and values a preferred status in social communication (Alter, 1989:5-9). This implies that nationalists devote “greater attention to those messages which ‘carry specific symbols of nationality, or which originate from a specific national source, or which are couched in a specific national code of language or culture” (Alter, 1989:7-8). Moreover, it can be understood as both “an ideology and a political movement which holds the nation and the sovereign nation-state to be crucial indwelling values, and which manages to mobilize the political will of a people or a large section of a population” (Alter, 1989:8).

The right-wing populist phenomenon, and its modern impact on contemporary politics, presents a certain form of disillusionment and disappointment with the liberal and socialist political structure as right-wing populists depict this structure as irresponsible in terms of securing the freedom, rights, economy and culture of the people who right-wing populist have decided to represent (Pelinka, 2013:6). Depending on specific definitions of ‘the people’, the populist phenomena can be categorized as a political line of thought that seeks to represent the people who do not feel represented (Pelinka, 2013:4). Paul Taggart argues that populism is hostile to representative politics and claims that paradoxically “it is only under the conditions created by representative politics that it can become a political force” (Taggart, 2003:6). Furthermore, he argues: “with modernity (‘late’ or otherwise), come the institutions of representative politics and with those institutions come certain processes and demands that forces populism, insofar as it makes claims, to transmute from a cultural leitmotif into either a fully-fledged political movement or a political ideology.” (Taggart, 2003:6). It is clear that populist parties aim to represent ‘the people’ however, a predetermined construction and definition of ‘the people’ must be constructed to point out who they represent.

'We are The People'

In order to provide an explanation of how populists tend to identify themselves, others and their own political identity, I will draw on Taggart's conception of how populists conceive the term 'people': "The commitment to the people' is in fact a derivative consequence of the implicit or explicit commitment to the 'heartland'" (Taggart, 2003:6). "The 'people' denotes the population of the heartland and to understand what any populist means by the 'people' we need therefore to understand what they mean by their heartland" (Taggart, 2003:6). This provides an approach for understanding how and why right-wing populist parties are focused at conceptualizing 'the people', where these 'people' belong and lastly, who are excluded from this conception of 'the people. Right-wing populist parties can in that sense be seen as a challenge to representative democracies as their homogenous approach towards defining who belong and do not belong to the people serves as an undemocratic understanding of representative democracy (Müller, 2014). Populists attempt to unify the represented and the representatives (Müller, 2014). However, in connection to right-wing populism, it is important to understand that this unification is based on the direct or indirect distinction of the term 'the people'. A noteworthy statement regarding this split-distinction of people is presented by Ernesto Laclau, who argue that: "all politics (or, more precisely: the political) is about the creation of popular identities through conflict" (Müller, 2014). Laclau wanted to raise question to the pejorative/negative interpretation of populism and approach the construction of 'the people' as also a task for radical politics (Müller, 2014).

In-groups and Out-groups

One of the ambiguities and paradoxes of populism is rooted in the assumption that 'the people' exist in a homogenous way and this simplistic dogma tends to ignore cultural and social developments in society (Pelinka, 2013:5-6). The classification of people's ethnicity, religious beliefs and other aspects of their national or cultural identity, is used by right-wing populists to create an illusion of 'natural' borders between 'us' and 'them', indicating a popular polarization of the political and cultural spectrum (Pelinka, 2013:5-7). This perception ignores the reality of cultural, social and political diversity and counters the natural development of multicultural societies which are created as a result of globalization. As intra-societal conflicts take place in the contemporary world, a higher rate of international migration occur and if we consider the long-term conflicts which have occurred throughout history, we must expect such developments to take place (Pelinka, 2013:6).

There has been inconclusive debate on the vagueness of the term ‘people’ as right-wing populists have used it to describe ‘the people’ and their in society. The observations of Laclau (2005) puts forth the argument that: “‘the people’ is never a primary datum but a construct”, scholars and researchers have provided a number of different interpretation of the term (Pelinka, 2013:4). While some argue that ‘the people’ implies a specific culture, social or political identity, others have argued that it is nothing more than a rhetorical tool (Mudde, 2004:545). As many definitions as there is of ‘the people’, as many exist defining those who are not (Mudde, 2004:545).

Right-wing populists serve as reformists, arguing that the liberal parties corrupt the link between the leaders of governance and ‘the people’, arguably to gain the support of those who feel unrepresented or neglected in society (Mudde, 2004:546). In that sense, their reformist nature can be described as highly directed towards the established parties and less directed towards opposing parties as such as right-wing populists do not wish to change the people themselves, but rather their role and status within the established political system (Mudde, 2004:546). Right-wing populist parties will often express a desire to represent the voice of ‘Our people’ and mention how the values, choices and actual role of ‘the people’ in politics is suppressed by the dominant elites (Mudde, 2004:547). A number of scholars and researchers argue that populism is a phenomenon of (social) crisis and this could be used to investigate why populist propaganda is highly focused on leading ‘the people’ towards a more favourable position in society (Mudde, 2004:547).

Anti-pluralism

Following the observations of Jan-Werner Müller on populism, it is argued that: “populism does not oppose the principles of representation and the practices of election, it necessarily has to deny any kind of pluralism or social division: in the populist imagination there is *only* the people on the one hand and, on the other hand, the illegitimate intruders into our politics, from both above and from below” (Müller, 2014). This presents that populists want to unify ‘the people’ based on the principles from which they define ‘the people’; culture, history and political values (Müller, 2014). Moreover, populists are not against the principle of representation however, they seek to express the permanent unitary will of ‘the people’ based on their own paradoxical interpretation of society and democracy (Müller, 2014). Populists want different representatives and a relationship between representatives and the represented which differs from the liberal-democratic understanding of representation (Müller, 2014).

Anti-establishment

One of the major traits regarding the ideology of populism is that ‘Demos’, ‘the people’, are often neglected by a supreme elite of decision-makers. This framing of ‘the people’ as suppressed by the elites has been used to counter government-officials and legal representatives in political structures (Pelinka, 2013:4). The political philosophy of populism has existed since the term democracy was first mentioned and throughout history: populist fractions have historically and successfully managed to invoke political change. Populism has presented itself in many shapes and seized, considering Adolf Hitler’s rise to power in 1919-1933, Juan Perón’s presidency 1946-1955 in Argentina, Winston Peters National Party in New Zealand in the late 1970s and Silvio Berlusconi’s campaign with Forza Italia, just to mention a few; it is clear that populism can serve as a powerful opponent towards the established governance structures (Judis, 2016).

The disappointment with established systems of governance has been used by protest movements to express a desire to improve democracy by providing ‘the people’ with more political influence (Pelinka, 2013:3). Moreover, populist fractions have used this sense of disappointment to affect established political structures (Pelinka, 2013:3). In terms of European right-wing populism, Ruth Wodak presents how ‘the people’ have been conceptualized by right-wing populist parties to indicate the “‘democracy deficit and loss of trust in the European Union’ or the alleged and perceived ‘threat of migrant workers from Eastern Europe who might take the jobs away from German workers’, or to point to manifestations of racism across Europe” (Wodak, 2013:23). Wodak argues that in all cases “what seems to be meant and described points to something unknown or strange, a vague, only partially visible and blurred phenomenon (a ‘spectre’), which has thus not become distinct, nor attributable to a traditional and recognizable category. Moreover, this vague phenomenon is seen as potentially powerful, threatening to ‘overwhelm’ an entire continent, or impinge on abstract concepts, such as employment or democracy, related to this continent, namely Europe.” (Wodak, 2013:23).

In order to understand European right-wing populism and its approach towards democracy, it is important to consider to what extent right-wing parties recognize the limitations of democracy and to what extent they consider the people’s ability to uphold order and ensure progress within a structure of governance (Pelinka, 2013:4-6). In order to approach this, one needs to perceive a certain understanding of the philosophy of right-wing populism and how right-wing populists consider the balance of power between elected representatives and ‘the people’; who deserves the power and why

‘the people’ ought to maintain it. Critics of the right-wing populist ideology argue that this scepticism towards existing structures of governance is merely a delusional approach used to campaign for a new form of leadership and a shift in power relations, turning the favour onto the populists right-wing parties (Pelinka, 2013:4-6). In addition, it has also been argued how this approach tends to overlook the political reality of society and that it ignores how society would turn chaotic if ‘the people’ were given fewer restrictions (Pelinka, 2013:4-6). Critics have therefore often argued that populism is a thin ideology (Mudde, 2004; Stanley, 2008:104-105) which cannot be used for any serious analysis of contemporary politics and society as it revolves around the idea of giving all the power to ‘the people’ (Pelinka, 2013:4-6). Contrary to this critique, a large number of right-wing populist parties have managed to gain a significant amount of voter support based on a critical approach towards a representative governance. This can be explained based by the observations of Meny and Surel, observing that: “One can understand populism as a social movement. Regardless that, it often emerges from the protest of social groups and uses some of methods associated with protest movements, it also conducts its political action via elections or referendums, which are the channels provided by political systems” (Meny & Surel, 2002).

In order for right-wing populist parties to affect established structures of governance, a certain political approach must be facilitated. One could consider to what degree right-wing populist parties are able to invoke change in the political environment in which they exist. Some interesting pieces of evidence from political science were seen in the wake of the electoral victory of right-wing populist Dansk Folkeparti (DF) in Denmark’s 2001 general election (Marsdal, 2013:50; Meret, 2010). DF exploited its xenophobic, anti-élite rhetoric with strong emphasis on immigration, multiculturalism and Euroscepticism, and gained a sizeable electoral support which enabled the party to enter the Danish government (Marsdal, 2013:50). In order to understand the ideology and political methods of European right-wing populist parties, their protest against established governance structures and their approach towards affecting their surrounding political environment, it is important to investigate the relationship between the populist-right wing and the liberal western democracies. “Wacquant claims for instance that there is a causal relationship between neo-liberal social democracy and the rising tide of right-wing populism among the working class” (Wacquant in Marsdal, 2013:50). In order to understand this relationship, and to what degree it can be considered causal, a further conceptualization of populism as part of western liberal democracies must take place.

One of these critiques of modern right-wing populists is that they tend to implement a radical form of collectivism without the willingness to adapt to the development of multiculturalism as a process of globalization (Pelinka, 2013:7). Modern right-wing populists are often focused on those who seem responsible for multiculturalism, Europeanization and globalization, and moreover those who have embraced foreign influences and allowed migration to occur (Pelinka, 2013:7). This implies that modern right-wing populists are against a high level of transnational dependency such as austerity measures, refugee quotas and open borders (Pelinka, 2013:7). In order to preserve a certain amount of nationalism, independence and sovereignty; right wing populist parties protest against multiculturalism, migration and political integration (Pelinka, 2013:7). This protest is highly represented within the field of contemporary European politics as right-wing populist parties promote themselves as a Eurosceptic nationalist counterpart of globalism and multiculturalism. Radical European right-wing populist rhetoric often presents a political ideology that rejects the current political consensus and based on the observations of Pelinka and Mudde, this has challenged parties such as Vlaams Belang and Front National as a ‘cordon sanitaire’ prevents such parties to transform their opposition into electoral and executive power (Pelinka, 2013:7; Mudde, 2007). The obvious precondition for this ‘cordon sanitaire’ is the existence of a stable majority of voters who do not support the opinions of the far-right parties. This indicates, that in order for a ruling coalition to bring a far-right party into a coalition cabinet, the coalition has to violate the ‘cordon sanitaire’. In addition to this line of thought, one could argue that a transformation of the rhetoric and ideology of far-right parties could provide them with a more favourable position for obtaining executive power.

Anti-Migration

In Western Europe, the phenomenon of anti-migration is closely linked to the rise of radical right-wing parties (Mudde, 2012:9). These parties rely on nativism, authoritarianism and populism, often linked to three political issues: crime, corruption and immigration (Mudde, 2012:9). Following the observations of Mudde (2012:9-10), who argue that, “At least four frames (cultural, religious, security, and economic) are used in the propaganda of Western European nativist movements.”, it is clear that radical right-wing parties frame migration and migrants as a threat towards their national culture, economy, religion, and security (Mudde, 2012:9).

The predominant frame is the *cultural*, where migration and migrants are seen as a threat to the cultural homogeneity of the heartland (Mudde, 2012:9-10). This frame is often used to present that migrants are unwilling or unable to assimilate to the culture of the heartland (Mudde, 2012:9-10). The second frame, the *religious*, accompanies the cultural frame as it draws on a cultural aspect, the religion of migrants, as a threat towards national identity, culture and values (Mudde, 2012:9-10). The framing of religion as a threat to Europe has become a frequently used topic within the discourse of radical right wing parties, especially the focus on Islam, as most radical right-wing parties depict and portray immigrants as Muslim (Mudde, 2012:9-10). The third frame, *security*, is often used by radical right-wing parties to link immigration and crime, presenting “that immigrants are much more likely to commit criminal acts than the host population, but that the real level of crime is being kept from the public by politically correct politicians” (Mudde, 2012:9-11). Moreover, European radical right-wing parties tend to defend their anti-migration views in the context of Euroscepticism by presenting how the religious beliefs of migrants are linked to Islamic terrorism in Europe (Mudde, 2012:9-11). The fourth frame, the *economic*, depicts immigrants as a financial burden to the heartland, “taking jobs away from the natives and/or draining social benefits.” (Mudde, 2012:9-11). Radical right-wing parties often campaign for the deportation of immigrants and describe how such deportation would provide natives with more efficient services; welfare, educational systems and healthcare facilities (Mudde, 2012:9-11). Despite that anti-migration has been closely linked to the rise of radical right-wing parties, one must consider that radical-right parties consist of other political ideologies and that people can vote for these parties for other political reasons (Mudde, 2012:9-9). However, in the context of Eurosceptic right-wing populist parties, it is clear that an increased focus on anti-migration has been used to campaign for political change and that the role of anti-migration within the discourses of right-wing parties has increased. (Mudde, 2012:9; 2016).

Hard and Soft Euroscepticism

Based on the observations within Taggart and Szczerbiak’s research on the nature of European party politics, Euroscepticism can be defined as ‘hard Euroscepticism’ or ‘soft Euroscepticism’ (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). The former denotes a principled opposition towards the EU and European Integration, most apparent in political parties that advocate for their country’s withdrawal from membership (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). Hard Eurosceptic parties present their opposition

towards the EU by framing it as either too capitalist, socialist, neoliberal or bureaucratic (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). “Such parties will often tend to advocate for a fundamental re-construction of the relations between their country and the EU; a re-construction that is incompatible with the present laws and policies within the EU, connoting a de facto opposition to EU membership” (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7).

Soft Euroscepticism denotes opposition to one (or a number) of EU-policies and does not imply a principled objection to European integration or EU membership (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). Soft Eurosceptic parties express a qualified opposition to the EU, for instance, based on a sense of opposition towards a topic of national interest (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). One of the purposes for identifying soft Euroscepticism is that it captures opinions and positions that constitute real scepticism towards how the European integration is currently developed and facilitated by EU member states (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). This characterization of Euroscepticism, as either soft or hard, provides an approach from which one can understand the different qualities and variants of Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). Moreover, it provides a way of assessing the limitations of different Eurosceptic policies and this enables of to investigate to what extent Euroscepticism can serve as an adequate political approach for solving obstacles within the EU (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7).

European Right-Wing Populist Parties

European right-wing populism takes different forms depending on specific national factors such as culture, governance structure and political history (Greven, 2016). In order to investigate why right-wing Euroscepticism has gained ground during the last couple of years, how this development has affected the European political environment and how it could further alter the political landscape within the Eurozone, it is important to understand the cultural and political factors which have shaped the Eurosceptic approaches of DF, AfD and FN. Following the observations of Taggart & Szczerbiak (2002) and their differentiation between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ Euroscepticism, one can evaluate to what extent DF, AfD and FN can be characterized as either hard Eurosceptic or soft Eurosceptic. However, this differentiation does not encompass the recent political changes and developments within their respective political domains and the need for a more contemporary approach is essential. In order to create an approach for analyzing how these parties frame Euroscepticism and their political

ideologies, this thesis will draw on the contemporary political programs of DF, AfD and FN to scrutinize their political opposition towards the EU.

METHODOLOGY

This section serves to address the various methodological implications for investigating how Euroscepticism is framed by The Danish People's Party, Alternative für Deutschland and Front National. Firstly, the philosophy of science from which my research was conducted will be addressed to present how this thesis was constructed based on a predetermined conception of academic functionality. Secondly, I will elaborate on my considerations regarding the purpose of my research design. Thirdly, I will address how the theoretical concepts within this thesis was implemented and moreover, I will address my case selection, data collection and academic scope to generate an understanding with the reader as to why this thesis unfolded the way it did. Fourth and finally, I will elaborate on my choice of framing analysis and conclude with a review of the strengths and limitations of this thesis in order to present suggestions for further research.

Since this thesis is concerned with understanding how Euroscepticism is framed by European populist right-wing parties, the political ideologies and positions of DF, AfD and FN were investigated bases on a critical approach towards how these parties present themselves, asserting that the promotion of their political and ideological positions may differ from how these political and ideological positions are facilitated and promoted in reality. In order to compensate for any uncertainties regarding the political and ideological positions of DF, AfD and FN, this thesis was constructed based on academic articles and previous studies on European right-wing populists parties. The ideological positions of political parties are arguably dependent upon the interpretation from which these are understood and analysed. Thus, this thesis was constructed from an epistemological position known as interpretivism. Even the inclusion of ideological positions and their implication for political behaviour and analysis, essentially puts forth a demand for interpretivist research. As to the ontological position, this thesis was highly focused on how DF, AfD and FN present themselves in relation to Euroscepticism, therefore, a position of constructivism has founded this study. Constructivist theory is "the idea that significant aspects of international relations are socially constructed, that is, historically contingent rather than necessary consequences of the nature of international politics"(Jackson & Nexon, 2002). Moreover, this implies "that cultural (and hence

putatively social and contingent) factors influence international outcomes." (Jackson & Nexon, 2002). The political culture of DF, AfD and FN as well as the culture surrounding these parties, possess a undeniable role as to how these parties act in the political sphere.

In order to examine the framing of Euroscepticism within European right-wing populist parties, a frame analysis of Dansk Folkeparti, Alternative für Deutschland and Front National was facilitated to investigate how these parties frame Euroscepticism within their party programs and furthermore, to investigate what they lobby for and against. Due to the wide selection of literature on European right-wing populist parties, the framework of this thesis was constructed to narrow down the focus from which Euroscepticism would be approached. Following the observation of Mudde, we still know very little about the ideologies, leaders, members and organizations and their role in the transformations of the European far right (Mudde, 2016:10). Therefore, in order to contribute to the field of research on Euroscepticism, the approach of this thesis was directed towards analysing the party programs of DF, AfD and FN to shed light on how these parties frame Euroscepticism in connection with their political ideologies.

The research design of this thesis was constructed to present a brief outline of DF, AfD and FN, drawing on their history, their main ideological and political stances and their contemporary position in the political environment, in order to provide the reader with an understanding of how these parties have promoted and positioned themselves in relation to Euroscepticism. Moreover, their main ideological and political features were scrutinized to present a brief outline of how these parties have constructed a political identity and furthermore, how their political identities correlates with how they frame Euroscepticism. In order to generate a substantial basis for understanding their political and ideological identities, this thesis relied on data from their contemporary political programs which could reveal how these parties present themselves. Moreover, this thesis benefited from a number of previous studies on European right-wing populist parties and they are considered by other scholars and researches. Due to my focus on the contemporary framing of Euroscepticism within DF, AfD and FN, this thesis was focused on extracting evidence from contemporary political programs, anno 2017, in order to provide this thesis with a certain degree of actuality and relevance and moreover, to contribute to the present research on European right-wing populist parties and Euroscepticism. In order to create a theoretical basis for investigating how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism, this

study benefited from earlier conceptualizations of populism, right-wing populism and Euroscepticism. This provided a substantial amount of theoretical knowledge from which an analysis could be constructed. The role of the theoretical positions in this thesis can be argued to be mostly deductive insofar as my educational background as a scholar in the Culture, Communication and Globalization program (CCG) and my interest in contemporary European politics, gave a sense of the political environments and ideologies which I incorporate in this thesis. Moreover, the literature review and these theories subsequently extracted from the relevant literature on European politics and right-wing populism provide a knowledge foundation upon which I constructed my problem formulation, research questions and analysis. However, the research also reflects an infusion of the inductive approach since I did not construct a specific hypothesis, as would a strictly deductive study, but a problem question revolving around Euroscepticism.

In order to generate an approach for analysing how Euroscepticism is framed by DF, AfD and FN, this thesis incorporated the concepts of Frame Analysis, as presented by Goffman (1974 and Snow et al. (1986), in order to construct an adulate approach for analysing how Euroscepticism is framed in European populist right-wing parties. Even though the framework of this study was not constructed and conducted solely on these conceptualizations of frame analysis, they provided me an understanding of how framing is used to point out, interpret and analyse political communication. In other words, the framework of this thesis was not constructed as a step by step approach for analysing how Euroscepticism is framed by DF, AfD and FN, rather it was aimed at generating an understanding of how the framing of Euroscepticism is constructed based on a set of predetermined ideological values and political aims.

Frame Analysis

Based on the observations of Goffman (1974), the dimensions of framing provide a theoretical guide and argumentation for how people act on behalf of their own personal interpretation of a given situation and furthermore for why this behaviour and interpretation occur (Goffman, 1974:21). Keywords such as ‘background’, ‘setting’ and ‘context’ serve as an approach for analysing why people act differently in different settings as they interact (Goffman, 1974:21). Frames provide a way of organizing these experiences and this provides us with answers to: “What is happening here?” and provides us with an ability to define the situation in which we find ourselves (Goffman, 1974:21).

As strips of interaction are used to discover the underlying assumptions about what is happening in them, we can analyse how we as human being communicate (Manning, 1992:126).

The characterization of primary frameworks

One of the first key points in his book describe that primary frameworks vary in degree of organization, some are thoroughly constructed by the use of rules, systems and other entities, while others, “-indeed, most others- “are presented with no apparent articulated construct, providing only a simply and vague approach or understanding of a specific subject matter (Goffman, 1974:21). Despite the organization of frameworks, the user is presented with ways to locate, perceive, identify and label its content (Goffman, 1974:21). The user is likely not aware of the framework nor its features, but still able to apply it without evaluating its consistency and completeness (Goffman, 1974:21). On that note, Goffman present a broad but clear distinctions of how such a primary framework can be constructed, presenting the term social frameworks (Goffman, 1974:21-22).

Social frameworks incorporate the will, aim and controlling effort of an intelligence, a live agency or individual, who provides a certain amount of background understanding to the subject matter (Goffman, 1974:23). This is described as an implacable guidance for understanding a subject matter as it provides ‘standards’ regarding safety, efficiency, economy, tactfulness and honesty (Goffman, 1974:23). This controlling effort can be coaxed, flattered, affronted and threatened and therefore, a serial management of consequentiality is sustained to maintain a corrective control (Goffman, 1974:23). Such a framework will be most apparent when it is unexpectedly countered or challenged, and the live agency, or individual, will in this case be forced to a rearrange the framework to maintain a certain level of functionality to accede the original motive and intent (Goffman, 1974:23).

Frame Alignment

In addition to the attributions of Goffman (1984), a further theoretical and empirical understanding of framing was provided by a number of researchers in 1986 (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford). The linkage between individuals and SMO interpretive frameworks, also known as frame alignment processes, denotes how SMOs outline their views and aims to advocate for supporter participation (Snow et al., 1986:467) One of the main arguments of frame alignment is that it serves as a necessary condition for movement participation and moreover, that it represents a certain amount of

interactional intensity (Snow et al., 1986:467). This perspective presents frame alignment as consisting of four processes; (1) Frame bridging, (2) Frame amplification, (3) Frame extension and (4) Frame transformation (Snow et al., 1986:467).

- (1) Frame bridging is the process from which two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a specific problem are linked together (Snow et al., 1986:469). This linkage provides a basis for people who share similar views and moreover, it can provide an organization with an approach for gathering support. (Snow et al., 1986:469). Moreover, one can understand this process as an organizational tool for inviting people who share similar views into the organizational framework (Snow et al., 1986:469).
- (2) Frame amplification refers to the process from which an organization clarifies and invigoration specific values, issues or events (Snow et al., 1986:469). This can appear in two variations; value amplification and belief amplification. The former refers to the identification, idealization and elevation of one or more values and is used by organizations to present how these values have been suppressed, either because of the lack of an opportunity for expression due to a repressive authority structure or due to the absence of an organizational base for expressing these values (Snow et al., 1986:469). The latter refers to the construction of beliefs as ideational elements that: “cognitively support or impede action in pursuit of desired values” (Snow et al., 1986:469-470). This relies on underlying presumptions from which an individual can relate to the beliefs of an organization and this serves as a tool for portraying how the beliefs of the organization correlate with the beliefs of the individual (Snow et al., 1986:469-470).
- (3) The third process, frame extensions, denotes how an organization extents the boundaries of its proposed frame to include the interests and values of a specific target group (Snow et al., 1986:472). This extension is used to clarify the linkage between the target group and their support for the organization and moreover, it serves as a tool for maintaining the support of people who feel uncertain towards if the organization is representing their values. (Snow et al., 1986:469-470).
- (4) The fourth process, frame transformation, it the total transformation from one frame to another and this is implied when the programs, causes and values of an organization is not congruous

with the original objective of the organization (Snow et al., 1986:473). When this process is facilitated, new values and approaches towards gathering the support of a specific target have to be implemented in order to compensate for the ‘misframing’ which has occurred in the organization (Snow et al., 1986:473).

Dansk Folkeparti, Alternative für Deutschland and Front National

In the following chapter, I will briefly present the political history, political programs and contemporary political position of Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National(FN). This will enable us to understand the political ideologies and aims of these parties and this will serve to provide us with a certain amount of knowledge as to why these parties are focused on Euroscepticism. This will enable us to investigate how these parties frame Euroscepticism and moreover, as different conceptualizations of populism and European right-wing populism (Mudde, 2004; Müller, 2014; Pelinka, 2013; Stanley, 2008; Taggart, 2003; Wodak, 2013) will be connected to these sections in the analysis chapter of this thesis, we will experience an adequate approach for investigating Euroscepticism.

Dansk Folkeparti

The following sections will present a brief conceptualization of the the political history, present the main ideological and political stances of DF and present its contemporary position within the political environment. This will enable us to understand how DF has promoted and positioned themselves in the political environment and this will enable us to investigate and analyze how DF frame its Euroscepticism.

The History of DF

Following the recommencement of Mogens Glistrup in 1987, scepticism towards the anarchistic nature of FrP increased after a series of internal disputes (Den Store Danske, 2017). Four members had left FrP in 1995 as they deemed its political scope and strategy to be incoherent with their own political identity and the establishment of right-wing populist party DF, in October 1995, was seen by many as a direct result to the disagreements and disputes within the FrP (Den Store Danske, 2017). As an attempt to portray DF as a responsible and cooperative political organization, DF elected Pia

Kjærsgaard to lead to party towards a higher electoral success (Den Store Danske, 2017). Despite the fact that most researchers and scholars consider DF to be right-wing populist, the party managed to undergo a process of centralization under the leadership of Pia Kjærsgaard 1995-2002 which resulted in a higher rate of voter support during the Danish election in 1998, gaining 7,4 % of the votes and 13 of 179 mandates (Den Store Danske, 2017; Marsdal: 2013:39–54). Despite of this increase, DF was not able to take part in the conciliation proceedings before 2002 where the party gained 12% and 22 out of 179 mandates, resulting in the creation of the VK-government: consisting of Dansk Folkeparti, Left Liberal Party of Denmark and The Conservative People's Party (Den Store Danske, 2017). Following this electoral success, the party program of DF was established in 2002, functioning as an ideological guideline based on national conservative and right-wing-populist values (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a).

DF's Party Program

The party program of DF presents the aim to secure and empower the Danish cultural heritage (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This includes an opposition towards the EU as DF depicts the EU as a catalyst for increased immigration and multiculturalism (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). Furthermore, DF advocates that Denmark is not an immigrant-country and that Denmark belongs to the Danes (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This has been one of the strongest arguments within DF rhetoric since its establishment in 1995 and while studying the DF party programs from 1997 and 2017, it is obvious that DF has not changed its focus on EU, migration and state-sovereignty (Dansk Folkeparti, 1997).

DF does not only strive to ensure the domestic Danish population, it is also advocating for a higher financial, political and moral support to Danish minorities in other countries (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This sense of obligation towards Danish culture has been enforced since the establishment of the party and DF has therefore also stretched the importance of fundamental liberties such as freedom of speech, the right of assembly and the need for an efficient social and healthcare system as well as a high-standard educational system (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a).

DF presents that in order to ensure these values, Danes must prevent that Denmark transforms into a multicultural society. One of the key points of DF's party program presents that the party is against the current EU-developments regarding refugee quotas and therefore, they demand stronger restrictions in terms of migration and immigration policies to prevent foreign nationals from non-

western countries from obtaining Danish citizenship (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This cultural protection does, according to the party program, imply the need for secure national borders and a strong national defence (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). Furthermore, DF seeks to limit Danish-EU relations to trade policies, environmental policies and ensure future cooperative measures between EU and the Danish state (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). Despite of the proclamation of DF as a dynamic, cooperative and EU-friendly party, it continues to oppose the EU as it, according to DF propaganda, has forced Denmark to surrender its national sovereignty (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This implies that a very critical attitude towards the EU must be maintained in order to favour the laws of the Danish constitution rather than EU legislations (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b).

The Political Position of DF

During the Danish general election in 2015, DF gained 21.1% of the national vote which provided the party with 37 of the 179 mandates, making it the second largest political party in Denmark (Meidell, 2017). However, DF experienced a decrease in electoral support as Morten Messerschmidt – who received the largest number of personal votes during his campaign against EU fraud – was accused of misusing EU funds (Cooper, 2016). Allegedly, Messerschmidt had spent EU funds on financing DF rallies in Denmark and these allegations led to the resignation of Messerschmidt as leader of the DF delegation of MEPs (Meidell, 2017). Messerschmidt's allegations resulted in the largest decrease of voter support in 6 years (15.6%), demoting DF to be the third largest party in Denmark, nonetheless recent polls indicate that DF has reclaimed its position as the second biggest party, gaining 17.7 % of the national vote (Meidell, 2017).

Alternative für Deutschland

The following sections will present a brief conceptualization of the the political history, present the main ideological and political stances of AfD and present its contemporary position within the political environment. This will enable us to understand how AfD has promoted and positioned themselves in the political environment and this will enable us to investigate and analyze how AfD frame its Euroscepticism.

The History of AfD

The European debt crisis in late 2009 marked a new chapter in EU-politics as several countries in the Eurozone faced the collapse of major financial institutions and high government debt (Simitis, 2002:69-70). Germany came relatively unscathed through the crisis due to its strict economic management, foreign bailout politics and export-driven economic model (Grimm, 2015:264). Despite of a brief contraction in 2008, the German economy continued to grow and while Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain struggled to control their sovereign debt, fiscal policies and massive youth unemployment, Germany's youth unemployment dropped to record lows and many described Germany as the biggest beneficiary within the Eurozone and winner of the European debt crisis (Grimm, 2015:264-265). From 2010 to 2013, the members of the Bundestag expressed that Germany had to support the struggling members of the Eurozone, however a critique towards the ruling coalition of CDU/CSU and FDP arose within the German political environment (Grimm, 2015:264-267). The opposition criticized CDU/CSU for its lack of leadership and efficiency in terms of stabilizing the financial markets within the Eurozone (Grimm, 2015:267). Moreover, the German government was criticized by financial experts and academics for its pro-bailout position and trust in the government's resoluteness and expertise was fading among the German public (Grimm, 2015:267).. Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), founded in April 2013, was considered to be a direct response to the distrust in the political ideologies of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and the German Government (Grimm, 2015:267).. As Merkel advocated for a higher level of political and economic cooperation within the European Union, she intrinsically linked German prosperity together with the European Idea and this still seen by many political fractions as a possible method for reconciliation and as a guarantee for a peaceful Europe (Grimm, 2015: 267).

“Until German unification, the catastrophic experience of National Socialism was the pivotal historiographical point for Germany's collective identity). West Germany's denationalized post-war state identity was oriented towards its Western allies (Westbindung) and inextricably bound to the creation of a supranational European community that guaranteed peace and mutual cooperation rather than political isolation.” (Grimm, 2015, 267).

AfD opposes the idea to transform the EU into a centralised federal state and rejects the idea of a “United State of Europe (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15-21). AfD advocates for a sovereign German state and seeks to establish a political framework in Germany which ensures the security and freedom of the German population (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15-21). “Should we not succeed

with our ideas of a fundamental reform within the present framework of the European Union, we shall seek Germany's exit, or a democratic dissolution of the EU, followed by the founding of a new European economic union" (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15).

AfD's Party Program

Since its establishment in 2013, AfD has remained faithful to its main objective which is to take Germany out of the Eurozone, reintroduce national currencies and end Germany's involvement in the bailouts of German banks and financially unstable countries (Knight, 2016). Despite that AfD was founded as an anti-euro party, it has also directed its focus towards immigration and Islam based on its Eurosceptic and anti-establishment position (Knight, 2016). AfD managed to mobilise voters in 2013 with a Eurosceptic programme which disconnected from the pro-European position of Germany's centrist parties Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), Christian Social Union in Bavaria (CSU) and Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU) (Grimm, 2015: 265). One of the claims of AfD is that the Euro has created political and social tensions in the Eurozone as it has divided the member states into donor countries and debtor countries (Grimm, 2015: 265). Moreover, this economic dependency has been characterized as a national threat by AfD as they consider this dependency to be a natural catalyst for new EU-based initiatives such as migration policies and refugee quotas (Grimm, 2015: 265). AfD has campaigned against the European 'welfare tourism', criminal asylum seekers, trans-border crime and urged for public protests against the construction of mosques and minarets (Grimm, 2015: 273). One of the main obstacles for solving these issues are, according to AfD propaganda, the cooperative nature between Germany and the EU (Grimm, 2015: 273). AfD does not table a 'principled objection' to European integration, it presents a general scepticism to German-EU relations (Grimm, 2015: 273). Moreover, AfD supports the idea of a single market, but rejects its current institutional arrangement and questions the viability of the single currency (Grimm, 2015: 273).

In addition to the protectionist values of AfD, the party has also campaigned for the promotion of Christianity, traditional German family values and a higher focus on portraying marriage and family in a positive way in the media (Knight, 2016). Moreover, AfD has presented its opposition towards abortions, same-sex marriages and suggested a higher focus on informing German Scholars about homosexuality in public school curriculums (Knight, 2016). A less-debated focus point of AfD's

program is its scepticism toward climate changes and its opposition towards Germany's energy transition (Knight, 2016). AfD rejects the idea of European unilateral actions against global warming as the party is sceptical of the scientific evidence of the effects of climate changes (Knight, 2016). Another reason for this opposition towards actions against global warming is that it would imply a higher level of European cooperation and as AfD is sceptical of German-EU relations, the party has chosen to advocate for budget cuts and lesser governmental involvement in environmental programs (Knight, 2016). The political program of AfD (grundsatzprogramm) presents that AfD rejects a common EU foreign and security policy as AfD advocates for "the pooling of European community interests without curtailing the sovereignty, democratic co-operation, and legislative powers of member states" (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:17).

The Political Position of AfD

Since her appointment as German Chancellor in 2005, Angela Merkel has been depicted as synonymous with pro-European politics and her political beliefs have provided her with a large amount of electoral support (Dearden, 2016). Recent domestic terrorist attacks carried out by immigrants, as well as the refugee crisis, have nonetheless shifted the mood of a certain sentiment of the German population and resulted in the rise of German right-wing populism, sceptical of German-EU relations (Dearden, 2016). As a result, the political ideology of Merkel has been put under political and economic pressure and the once comprehensive "Wir schaffen das" has not managed to suppress the right-wing scepticism towards German-EU relations which dwells in the German political environment (Dearden, 2016). This rise of Euroscepticism in large parts of Germany has arguably provided the AfD with influence in the country's political environment. AfD was originally founded to contravene the Eurozone and prevent the Greece bailout plans, as the party directed a critique towards the fiscal and monetary regime of the European Union, including the failures of the Maastricht Treaty in European Monetary Union (EMU) (Knight, 2016). However, the party has to a higher degree begun to direct its political focus towards the European refugee crisis, anti-immigration and anti-islamization; indicating a political transformation (Knight, 2016).

AfD has experienced a decrease in electoral support as the party's reputation suffered from several internal disputes between former chairwoman Frauke Petry and co-leader Jörg Meuthen after party leader Bjoern Hoecke caused outrage with controversial comments on Germany's culture of holocaust remembrance (Chase, 2017a). Recent opinion polls indicated a drop from 15% to 10% in

voter support and AfD's regional leaders have promised their supporters a higher sense of party unity (Chase, 2017b). Political scientists have argued that these controversial comments have damaged the image of AfD externally and internally due to their resemblance to the ideas and language of National Socialism (Chase, 2017b). Karsten Grabow provides an argumentation for how representatives of AfD's national right wing have begun to express a higher rate of support of nationalist and anti-immigration tendencies, an example of this could be Alexander Gauland, a local leader of Afd in Brandenburg, who mentioned PEGIDA as a "natural ally" (Grabow, 2016:174). These radical statements have provided AfD supporters with a sense of scepticism towards whether AfD is moving to the extreme far right of German politics or if it lacks central charismatic leadership (Chase, 2017b).

Front National

The following sections will present a brief conceptualization of the the political history, present the main ideological and political stances of FN and present its contemporary position within the political environment. This will enable us to understand how FN has promoted and positioned themselves in the political environment and this will enable us to investigate and analyze how FN frame its Euroscepticism.

The History of FN

The dissolution and prohibition of extreme right-wing groups Occident, Une Jeune Europe and Action Nationaliste, forced French right-wing fractions to regroup in the late 1960's (Stockemer, 2017:9). Violent clashes between leftist student organizations and right-wing organizations forced the right-wing parties to create new approaches for achieving political success, resulting in the creation of far-right activist organizations, Groupe Union-Droite and Ordre Nouveau (Stockemer, 2017:9). Members of Ordre Nouveau (ON) had become increasingly willing to participate in conventional political activities in order to become more strongly anchored in French society and based on François Duprat's manifesto Pour un Front National, ON began to reform their organization (Stockemer, 2017:10). The organization began to rally for their far-right beliefs regarding suspicion of democracy, xenophobia and national defence and in order to gain political influence in France it officially became a political party in June 1972 under the name Front National pour Unité Française (FNUF) (Stockemer, 2017:10). Based on the original intension of Ordre Nouveau, FNUF called for a

reformation of the party in order to lead FNUF towards a “French renaissance and a new defence” and for that purpose, the party elected its first president, Jean-Marie Le Pen and rebranded itself as Front National (FN) (Stockemer, 2017:10). Marine Le Pen has proved successful not only internally but also externally in the electoral market by combining the ideologies of her father Jean Marie Le Pen regarding immigration, security, and national identity with a powerful populist leftist agenda that advocates for the re-nationalization of France, wage increases for workers and a reimplementation of protectionism (Stockemer, 2017:24). Since Jean-Marie Le Pen passed on the reins of FN to his daughter in 2011, FN has transformed from a successful yet marginal far-right party to a major player in French politics and the increase voter support has provided the party with abilities to spread its cogent political program (Stockemer, 2017:1). The ideology of FN under Marine Le Pen has been characterized as a strategy of normalization; also known as her dédialisation strategy, transforming FN’s xenophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic image into one that presents FN as a soft respectable party. In order achieve a higher level of support, the party targeted a broader political segment of the French population and this transformation proved successful, providing FN and Marine Le Pen with the most favourable poll ratings since the establishment of the party (Stockemer, 2017:55).

FN’s Party Program

For over 30 years, FN has used anti-immigration as its defining feature to advocate for political change (Stockemer, 2017:28-31). The 2007 presidential program listed ‘the facts about immigration’ and portrayed these as the main reason for public insecurity, the loss of national identity and the problems within the labour market (Stockemer, 2017:28). One of the focus points of the electoral program was the overrepresentation of immigrants in crime statistics, presenting that criminal activity caused by immigration and multiculturalism was a major threat towards national security, however, these statistics were not adequately listed in official documents (Stockemer, 2017:29). The second focus point of the 2007 program was the exploitation of social benefits by foreign nationals as FN presented that the massive immigration had “triggered both a contributory deficit in social security and an increase in expenditures on healthcare and pensions” as legal and illegal immigrants were taking advantage of the French social welfare system (Stockemer, 2017:29). One of the statements of the 2007 presidential program presented that: “Massive and uncontrolled immigration takes more than 1 million jobs away from the French and severely punishes our economy by imposing costs of over 300 billion francs” (Stockemer, 2017:30-31). The linkage between immigration and economy

was, and still is, an important focus point of FN rhetoric as the party depicts that immigrants arrive to France for economic reasons (Front National, 2017). A third focus point of the program presents how globalization, Europeanization and the spread of neoliberal ideology undermine French national identity. FN blames the French government for this cultural disintegration, stating that the French people must remain masters of their own home in order for France to remain France (Stockemer, 2017:30; Front National, 2017). Moreover, the party presents that immigrants are to blame for the increased feeling of rootlessness within the French population and also to blame for the decline of French monuments and culture (Stockemer, 2017:30). In addition to this linkage between immigration and cultural decline, FN also presents that immigration, as a result of globalization, liberalism and Europeanism, is the main reason for France's economic decline (Stockemer, 2017:31). After Marine Le Pen won the leadership of FN in 2011, she launched her presidential campaign in 2012 and published her presidential platform, which provided the same solutions to immigration, anti-Europeanism, welfare chauvinism, public security, and loss of national identity as the 2007 presidential program (Stockemer, 2017:28-31). During her second bid for the 2017 presidential election, Le Pen presented her 144-point manifesto which promoted the traditional FN focus points: anti-immigration, anti-elitism, law and order and national sovereignty (Front National, 2017). FN presents that neo-liberalism has led to the cultural uniformity of the French lifestyle and moreover, that foreign influences have destroyed France's culture, traditions and heritage (Stockemer, 2017:31). Based on one of the key policy proposals in the 2007 presidential program, "national preference", Le Pen has often expressed her disregard for the EU (Stockemer, 2017:31). This proposal for national preference is presented as the main objective in the 144-point manifesto from 2017 (Front National, 2017). In order to solve the cultural, economic and social problems within France, FN has campaigned for the reestablishment of national sovereignty and proposed to take France out of the EU if voted into power (Stockemer, 2017:31; Front National, 2017). Complemented with authoritarianism, anti-establishment, anti-immigration and a focus on national sovereignty, FN has constructed a political program based on Euroscepticism, nationalism and xenophobia (Stockemer, 2017:28-31). Moreover, Le Pen presents that if elected French president, she will enter negotiations to take France out of the Eurozone and the EU in order to prioritise French interests over global forces (Front National, 2017).

The Political Position of FN

Since the appointment of Marine Le Pen, FN has called for political change in France and the Eurozone, as the EU member states face a number of political challenges; terrorism, war, migration and the European debt crisis (Front National, 2017).. According to the traditional FN rhetoric, French society is tainted by foreign influences, oppressed by the dictates of European integration and economic globalization and affected by lax governmental public security policies and (Stockemer, 2017:27; Front National, 2017). In addition to these geo-political challenges, French politics has been affected by internal conflicts within the centre-right Union pour un mouvement populaire, record low support for President Hollande, ongoing economic crisis and record high unemployment. These aspects have provided FN with possibilities for turning the views of a significant amount of the French population in the party's favour (Stockemer, 2017:1+25). FN has experienced a rise in FN-memberships, going from approximately 20.000 members in 2000/2001 to 60.000-80.000 members in 2014, indicating an increase in supporters. Secondly FN has experienced an increase in the party's nationwide ranking as a result of the 2012 campaigns of Marine Le Pen and FN, gained 18% of the national vote (Stockemer, 2017:2). This was followed up by polls in 2017 which credited Le Pen with an estimated 30 % of voters' intentions, providing her with as favourable poll ratings as centre-right politician Alain Juppé from Les Républicains and centre-left politician Manuel Valls from Parti socialiste in the French presidential election (Stockemer, 2017:2). The French presidential election has been characterized as one of the tightest and most unpredictable political races in the history of the 5th République with polls suggesting a runoff between Marine Le Pen and the independent Emmanuel Macron who served as minister of Economy under Francois Hollande's first government in 2012 (Henley, 2017). Leading by 22% and 23 %, narrowly surpassing scandal-hit right-winger Francois Fillon (21%) and hard-left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon (19%), polls indicate that Eurosceptic Le Pen and pro-European Macron are the ones who will attempt to win the support of the French population and unify politically diversified France (Henley, 2017).

ANALYSIS

In terms of ideologies, right-wing populist parties are politically diverse. The majority of these parties seems to present their political programs based on the characteristic ideological stances of right-wing populism; anti-migration, anti-elitism, anti-establishment, nationalism and Euroscepticism. Nonetheless, the European right-wing populist parties seem to frame Euroscepticism differently. This

observation will serve as an approach for analysing how Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National(FN) frame Euroscepticism. An analysis of the contemporary party programs of DF, AfD and FN will now be facilitated to examine how these parties frame Euroscepticism. This analysis will be approached based on the concepts of frame analysis (Goffman, 1974., Snow et al., 1986) in order to point out, and compare, the similarities and differences regarding how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism. This will furthermore enable us to understand and investigate how and why European populist right-wing parties are focused on Euroscepticism. Drawing on the different conceptualizations of populism and European right-wing populism (Mudde, 2004; Müller, 2014; Pelinka, 2013; Stanley, 2008; Taggart, 2003; Wodak, 2013). this analysis will furthermore enable us to understand and discuss the role of how Euroscepticism is framed in the contemporary political environment in Europe.

The framing of Euroscepticism in Dansk Folkeparti

The first mentioning of Euroscepticism within the political program of DF frames the party's opposition towards the EU as a protectionist political strategy aimed at securing the sovereignty of the Danish State (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This indicates that DF considers EU as a direct threat towards Danish sovereignty. "Danish independence and freedom are the primary objective of Danish foreign policy. The Danish People's Party wishes friendly and dynamic cooperation with all the democratic and freedom-loving peoples of the world, but we will not allow Denmark to surrender its sovereignty. As a consequence, the Danish People's Party opposes the European Union." (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). Based on Goffman's conceptualization of social frameworks (1974) it is obvious that DF aims to provide a certain amount of background understanding for why it opposes the EU. Goffman describes how a social framework can be used as a guided understanding towards why specific aims are legitimized (Goffman, 1974:21-22). Following this description, the evidence seems to suggest that DF legitimizes its Euroscepticism by presenting that the Danish independence and freedom must be protected and secured. Moreover, DF frames its opposition towards the EU as an aim to limit Danish-EU relations to trade policies, environmental policies and to ensure future cooperative measures between the EU and the Danish state (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). Following this line of thought, and considering how social frameworks denote specific standards regarding safety and economy (Goffman, 1974:21-22), it is clear that DF frames its Euroscepticism based on a predetermined understanding of how Danish safety and economy is best preserved. One of the most

noteworthy framings of DF's opposition towards the EU is the linkage between migration and the accession of Turkey as a EU member state: "Denmark has to maintain its state sovereignty. This implies that no law or decision shall overrule the Constitution of Denmark. This is the core of our EU-policy. 72 million Turks are waiting for free access to Europe. The Danish People's Party is the only party you can rest assured will never accept Turkey as a EU country." (Author's translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). This statement indicates that DF is sceptical of the accession of Turkey to the EU as DF frames that this could provide 72 million Turks with access to the EU. Following the conceptualization of the first process of framing analysis, frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986), this can be interpreted as a constructed linkage between migration and the accession of Turkey as a EU member state. This serves as an attempt to point out that if Turkey is accepted into the EU, Denmark's EU-membership would enable 72 million Turks to legally access Denmark. This assertion indicates a notion of frame bridging between two of DF's main ideological stances; Euroscepticism and anti-migration, and if one considers this linkage based on the notion of frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986), this denotes that DF frames the Danish EU-membership as a possible catalyst for an increased migration of foreign nationals. Within the DF party program, one of the highlighted phrases presents that "Denmark is not an immigrant-country and never has been. Thus we will not accept transformation to a multiethnic society" (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). While considered the previously mentioned linkage between migration and the Danish EU-membership, it could be argued DF considers the current migration policies within the EU as contributing to the transformation of Denmark into a multi-ethnic society. This presents us with a noteworthy observation as it indicates that DF is Eurosceptic due to the open-borders policy within the EU and its possible influence on the increased migration from foreign countries. Following the statement: "we will not accept transformation to a multiethnic society", DF states that: "Denmark belongs to the Danes and its citizens must be able to live in a secure community founded on the rule of law, which develops along the lines of Danish culture" (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This frame bridging between immigration, multiculturalism and national security indicates that DF depicts immigration as a threat to Danish state security. While considering the characterization of Euroscepticism as either hard or soft (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7), it can be argued that DF frames its Euroscepticism as both hard and soft. Within the party program, DF presents a noteworthy statement on Danish-EU relations: "We are against the current developments within the EU which are moving towards United States of Europe. The Danish People's party wants a close and friendly cooperation in Europe, but the cooperation must

be limited to areas such as trade policies, environmental policies and technical cooperation. We are opposing the implementation of a European political union” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). DF frames its EU-scepticism as a principled opposition to the EU and European integration, indicating that DF is a hard Eurosceptic party (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). However, based on DF’s mentioning of maintaining cooperative Danish-EU relations in terms of trade and environmental policies, it could be argued that DF wants to reform the relationship between Denmark and the EU to ensure that the current European integration of EU member states does not imply migration policies. This indicates that DF expresses a soft approach towards Danish-EU relations (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). However, following the argument that hard Eurosceptic parties “will often tend to advocate for a fundamental re-construction of the relations between their country and the EU; a re-construction that is incompatible with the present laws and policies within the EU, connoting a de facto opposition to EU membership”, it can be concluded that DF’s framing of Danish-EU relations is in fact denoting the characteristics of hard Euroscepticism (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7).

Following Ben Stanley’s interpretation of populism as a thin ideology (2008:105-107), we can consider DF’s linkage between immigration and Euroscepticism as an attempt to transform their populist ideologies; ethnocentrism, anti-elitism and opposition towards immigration, into a coherent political critique of the EU. As DF outlines its EU-policies and frames its Euroscepticism, DF presents that no law or decision shall overrule the Constitution of Denmark. This indicates that DF considers EU as an elitist entity, able of implying political measures which could overrule the Constitution of Denmark. DF promotes itself as a representative of Danish values and the Danish population based on nationalist and protectionist values and as DF opposes the EU and promotes that it poses a threat to Danish values, it is clear that DF is focused at protecting the Danish people and values from the EU (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). One of the characterizations of right-wing populism (Pelinka, 2013:4) describes how right-wing populist parties frame ‘the people’ as suppressed by the elites and furthermore that this suppression is used to counter government-officials and legal representatives in political structures (Pelinka, 2013:4). This argument presents that right-wing populists are critical towards the elitism within established governance structures and that they tend to portray their political opponents, ‘the élite’, as an alien entity (Pelinka, 2013:7). This can be used to understand why DF considers the EU as a supreme élite which supresses the laws of ‘the people’ within the established governance structure, the EU. DF is simply against EU-influences which do

not stand in relation with national interest and this opposition is clearly based on how DF frames national interest. According to DF, Denmark has to remain a sovereign state and Denmark must not become a country filled with migrants and immigrants as this does not correlate with the core political values of the party (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). This denotes an opposition towards how the EU, as an established governance structure in Europe, influences its member states and moreover, it denotes an opposition towards how the Danish EU-membership enables EU to implement legal measures which can alternate the culture in Denmark and undermine Danish political freedom and security. Within the party program, DF presents how the party and the Danish people are bound by Danish cultural heritage and moreover they “want a country of free Danish citizens empowered to fend for themselves and decide their own fate” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a). If DF depicts EU as a foreign influential entity that poses a threat towards the preservation of Danish culture, law and security, it can be argued that DF considers the influence of EU as a direct threat to the Danish cultural heritage. As DF frames why Denmark must not accommodate to EU-influences which pose a threat to Danish culture and sovereignty, e.g. migration policies, DF presents that it will not allow the EU to dictate laws on migration and immigration. As DF wants to secure that Denmark remains a country of free Danish citizens who can decide their own fate without EU-influences, it opposes the influences of the EU. Moreover, DF’s framing of Euroscepticism seems to suggest that it opposes how the union is able to impose political measures in other EU-Member as well as the party; “wants a close and friendly cooperation in Europe, but the cooperation must be limited to areas such as trade policies, environmental policies and technical cooperation.” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). To what extent DF’s linkage between Euroscepticism and anti-migration policies can be considered as the main reason for its EU-opposition is debatable. Nonetheless, DF has promoted itself as a nationalist, anti-migration and anti-Europeanization party since its establishment in 1995, and it has always presented itself as critical towards the EU (Den Store Danske, 2017). With this in mind, there seems to be no compelling reason to argue against that DF frame its opposition towards the EU in relation to anti-migration and by studying how DF constantly frame how it wish to protect Danish culture and values, this argument seems to be quite substantial. Furthermore, this can be supported based on the observations of Mudde who argues that the common traits of European populist right-wing parties are quite clear: they oppose the EU, they are critical towards the established structures of governance and elites, and they aim to prevent migration and immigration of foreign nationals who are seen to pose a threat towards national culture, identity, welfare and security (Mudde, 2016:5-9).

In order to understand why DF considers the EU as a threat to the Danish people, it is important to bear in mind that DF considers the Danish people to be a homogenous and antagonistic group who possesses a specific range of values. These values are framed in the party program and while studying how DF describes ‘true’ Danish values, it is obvious that DF relies on these values to frame and promote Euroscepticism: “Christianity has been honoured in Denmark for centuries and is an integral part of Danish life.” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a), connoting that DF considers Christianity as a value of the Danish people. Moreover, DF presents that Danish culture: “consists of the sum of the Danish people's history, experience, beliefs, language and customs. Preservation and further development of this culture is crucial to the country's survival as a free and enlightened society.” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a), connoting that the Danish history, language and values are an integral part of Danish culture. On the basis of this mentioning of Danish language and Christianity, there seems to be confirmatory evidence that the linkage between DF’s Euroscepticism, and how the party portray Danish culture and values, is used to argue that people who do not support and follow these customs are not Danish. This could arguably be used to present that DF considers that the migration and immigration of foreigners must be prevented to protect the Danish culture and the Danish values. Moreover, on the basis of the previously mentioned observations regarding how DF considers EU as a contributor to an increased migration from foreign countries, this framing of Danish culture in itself seems to be used as an argument against Europeanization, globalization and multiculturalism and therefore I wish to put forth the argument that DF frames its Euroscepticism based on a predetermined opposition towards how increased migration and immigration can threaten the Danish culture.

The observations of how ‘the people’ and ‘the élites’ are conceptualized by right-wing populist parties (Wodak, 2013:23) (Mudde, 2004:547) can contribute to an understanding of why DF frames the EU as a supreme élite within its political program. Wodak argues that ‘the people’ have been conceptualized by right-wing populist parties to indicate the ‘democracy deficit and loss of trust in the EU based on the perceived ‘threat of migrant workers (Wodak, 2013:23). Following how Turkey’s accession to the EU is framed within the party program, it is clear that DF frames migrants and immigrants as a threat towards Danish values. Mudde argues that right-wing populist parties often claim to represent the voice of ‘Our people’ and their propaganda do often mention how the values, choices and actual role of ‘the people’ in politics are suppressed by the dominant elites (Mudde,

2004:547). As DF outlines its interpretation of Danish culture and presents that Denmark belongs to the Danes, the party simultaneously presents what is not considered as Danish values. Islam is the largest religion in Turkey (Toprak, 2005:27) and as DF frames migrants and immigrants as a threat to Danish values, this indicates that DF depicts Islam as a threat to Danish values. DF presents how Denmark must not transform to a multicultural society and as the party links Euroscepticism together with how “72 million Turks are waiting for free access to Europe” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b), it can be argued that DF attempts to frame Islam as a threat to Danish culture. Wodak presents that right-wing populist parties often frame migrants and immigrants as a powerful national threat which can overwhelm an entire continent, take the jobs from nationals and overthrow democracy and can be used to explain why DF is focused on framing this possible migration as a threat to Danish culture and democracy (Wodak, 2013:23). Moreover, it connotes a notion of fear regarding Muslim migration and as DF frames Christianity as a natural premise: “for any country's evolution, for freedom, openness and democracy” (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b), it can be argued that DF frames Islam as incompatible with Danish culture, freedom and democracy. Within an online published press-release on DF's webpage, it is presented that DF campaigns for an “unambiguous ‘no’ to the construction of minarets (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017c), this denotes that DF opposes certain elements of Islam on a domestic level. Following Mudde's characterization of anti-migration as consisting of at least four frames (cultural, religious, security, and economic), and how these frames are often used in the propaganda of European nativist movements, it is clear that DF incorporates the cultural and religious aspects of anti-migration when framing its Euroscepticism (Mudde, 2012:9-10).

The underlying argument in DF's framing of Danish culture and values is that DF aims to protect Denmark and the Danish population from foreign influences and therefore also the influences of EU if they pose a threat to Danish culture or political sovereignty. The political approach of DF towards the EU is based on the party's nationalist values and its framing of Euroscepticism is therefore constructed based on a certain degree of nationalism. Mudde describes how populism can be combined with other ideologies and in the case of DF, it is clear that the party frames its Euroscepticism based on the right-wing populist ideologies, nationalism and anti-globalization, combined with anti-migration and xenophobia (Mudde, 2004:543). Mudde argues that populists can combine different ideologies to create a coherent political party discourse which can be used to frame society as consisting of two entities, ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic

groups; ‘the pure people’ vs. ‘the corrupt elite’ (Mudde, 2004:544). It is argued that such a split-distinction of society is trending among European right-wing populists parties and that it enables them to frame their values and programs to promote their ideological standpoints to supporters and other political groups (Mudde, 2004:545). While studying DF’s 2017 party program, it is clear that DF frames its opposition towards the EU based on its political aim, which is to safeguard Danish sovereignty from foreign influences (Europeanization, immigration, globalization and multiculturalism) as DF considers these foreign influences to be a threat towards Danish sovereignty: “The EU shall not conduct Denmark’s foreign policy and defence policy. Denmark must be preserved as an independent and sovereign nation” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 1997).

The framing of Euroscepticism in Alternative für Deutschland

Within the 2017 Grundsatzprogramm, AfD frames its Euroscepticism as an opposition towards the current centralization of the European nations: “The vision of a centralised European state inevitably entails the loss of sovereignty of individual EU member states and their constituent populations” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16). This presents that AfD depicts the centralization of the European states as a major threat to the sovereignty of the EU member states. Based on Goffman’s conceptualization of social frameworks as an implacable guidance for understanding a subject matter (Goffman, 1974:23), there seems to be strong indications that AfD presents a certain amount of background understanding for why it opposes the EU. Following this line of thought, it is clear that AfD frames its Euroscepticism based on a predetermined understanding of how the sovereignty of the EU member states is best preserved and according to AfD, the sovereignty of the EU member states is best preserved by preventing the EU from centralizing Europe (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16). Moreover, as AfD opposes the current political integration within the EU and frames the current political developments in Europe as a threat to the sovereignty of the EU member states, there seems to be strong indications that AfD frames its Euroscepticism based on a certain notion of anti-Europeanization and anti-globalization (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16).

Within the Grundsatzprogramm, AfD presents its opposition towards the EU within five separate sections. These are mainly focused on the political, social and economic impacts of the German-EU relationship and serve as a critique to the financial relationship between Germany and the EU; “A Europe of Nation States”, “Restore the Powers of Nation States”, “Pool Common European Interests”, “National Referendum on the Euro” and “No Liability for Foreign Banks”. (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15-21). Within the first section, AfD presents that: “The EU has become an undemocratic entity, whose policies are determined by bureaucrats who have no democratic accountability. A fundamental reform of the EU is necessary, if it is to remain a beacon of freedom and democracy in the world” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16). This statement shows us that AfD frames the EU as an untrustworthy bureaucratic entity which calls for a political reform. While considering the previous observations on how AfD considers that the sovereignty of the EU member states is best preserved by preventing the centralization of Europe, this statement seems to suggest that the EU consists of undemocratic bureaucrats who undermines the sovereignty of the EU member states. Following the observations of Pelinka (2013:3), who presents that European populist parties are known to protest against the limitations and functionality of modern democratic structures, it seems clear that this framing of Euroscepticism is a political protest aimed at exploiting the EU. According to AfD, the EU consists of untrustworthy bureaucrats who facilitate centralization processes which undermine the political sovereignty of its member states and favours the EU instead of the member states (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16). By putting forth the claim that a reform of the EU is necessary “if it is to remain a beacon of freedom and democracy in the world”, AfD frames the EU and its contemporary role in the European political environment as dysfunctional (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16). This dysfunctionality is, according to the AfD, rooted in how the EU fails to promote and enforce political measures which could ensure the freedom and sovereignty of the member-states (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16).

As AfD was founded as a direct response to Angela Merkel’s promotion of a higher level of political and economic cooperation within the EU, the evidence within this thesis seems to suggest that AfD is not only sceptical of the EU, but also sceptical of how the German government has supported the idea of a higher level of European centralization, indicating a strong opposition to how the German government has constructed and enforced its EU-friendly policies. While considering that AfD was founded in 2013, and furthermore that it was based on an opposition towards how the German federal policies concerning the Eurozone-crisis were conducted, there seems to be no compelling reason to

argue that AfD was established in a time of European financial distress. Following the observations of Mudde (2004:547) who puts forth the argument that populism is a phenomenon of (social) crisis, it can be argued that the increased support for AfD is a result of the increased scepticism towards the Eurozone which arose in Germany in the wake of the financial collapse of a large number of European nations (Grimm, 2015:264-267).

Following the observations of Mudde (2004:547), right-wing populist parties are known to represent the voice of 'Our people' and as AfD frames how a centralization of the EU member states poses a threat to German sovereignty, and therefore a threat to the German people as they are affected by how the German government conducts its EU-policies, this indicates that AfD has established a political program aimed to represent the Euroscepticism within the German population. Mudde argues that populist propaganda is constructed to represent the values, choices and actual role of 'the people' in politics, especially in times where 'the people' are suppressed by dominant elites (2004:547). Following this argument, there seems to be overwhelming evidence supporting that AfD constructed a political alternative to the German people in 2013, focused at combating the elitism within the EU (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16; Grimm, 2015:264-267). These results provide confirmatory evidence that the framing of Euroscepticism within the Grundsatzprogramm is based on a lack of trust towards how the EU conducts its policies and furthermore, that it provides the German population, sceptic of the EU, with a political alternative. Following the observations of Pelinka, European right-wing populists parties present disillusionment and disappointment with the liberal and socialist political structure as they consider it to be irresponsible in terms of securing the freedom, rights, economy and culture of the people who the right-wing populist have decided to represent (Pelinka, 2013:6). This observations can be connected to how AfD frames its Euroscepticism based on a sense of disillusionment and disappointment towards the EU. The AfD considers the EU as irresponsible in terms promoting and enforcing political measures which could ensure the freedom and sovereignty of its member-states, including Germany.

While studying the Grundsatzprogramm, and its overall structure, it is clear that AfD's framing of the EU relies mostly on an economic perspective and on an anti-establishment approach aimed at reforming German-EU relations. This presents that AfD frames its Euroscepticism based on a certain amount of disillusionment and disappointment with the current political structure in the EU. "No longer can we remain idle and observe the breaches to justice and the rule of law, the destruction of

the constitutional state, and irresponsible political actions which clash with sound economic principles. ... Therefore, we have decided to offer Germany and all its citizens a true political alternative, which covers all aspects of life.” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:5). Following the observations of Taggart & Szczerbiak on Euroscepticism (2002:7), AfD’s political program expresses a qualified opposition to the EU based on a notion of national interest (sovereignty and economy) to reform the relationship between the German state and the EU, indicating that AfD is a soft Eurosceptic party. One of the purposes for identifying soft Euroscepticism is that it captures opinions and positions that constitute real scepticism of how the European integration is developed and facilitated by EU member states (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7), and by studying the second section within AfD’s chapter on the EU, it is clear that the AfD presents its scepticism in relation to how the European integration is facilitated by EU-member-states: “the European Union has, over the years, acquired powers for which there is no reference in European treaties. The increasing centralisation of sovereignty rights, and attempts to create a European federal state, are irrational and not sustainable” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:16).

There seems to be no compelling reason to argue against that the AfD frames its Euroscepticism based on an anti-establishment approach towards securing the German economy and state sovereignty, as well as reforming the EU. Nonetheless, even though AfD frames its Euroscepticism as focused on securing the German economy and state sovereignty, the data yielded by this thesis provides strong evidence that AfD has linked its Euroscepticism together with other political issues, indicating a process of frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986:469).

Within chapter 9 of the Grundsatzprogramm, AfD outlines the political stances of the party on immigration, integration and asylum: “The German “maverick approach”, however, has promoted immigration into the German social security systems. ... We want to change this: We demand a paradigm shift regarding 1) the influx of asylum seekers, 2) the way how the free movement of people is handled inside the EU, 3) the immigration of skilled labour from third countries, and 4) the integration of immigrants belonging to these three categories.” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:57). On the basis of this demand for political reform, it is clear that AfD wants to change how the EU allows people to move freely within the EU member states and as this is presented in AfD’s chapter on immigration, integration and asylum, it can be argued that AfD frames that the EU is to blame for the free movement of immigrants, migrants and asylum seekers (Alternative für

Deutschland, 2017:57). Considering that AfD was founded on a political opposition to German federal policies concerning the Eurozone crisis and moreover, that the focus of AfD is mostly directed towards the financial aspects of the German-EU relationship, this linkage between the EU and migration suggests that AfD have begun to frame its Euroscepticism based on the notion of anti-migration. While considering Mudde's four frames of anti-migration, this may indicate that AfD links its scepticism of EU's financial policies together with migration, as a method of enabling a process frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986:469).

Mudde argues that Eurosceptic right-wing populist parties have used anti-migration to campaign for political change (Mudde, 2012; 2016) and this can be confirmed by studying the available evidence within the Grundsatzprogramm, more specifically the chapter on AfD immigration policies, as it frames a demand for political change in Germany and the EU based on migration (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:57). There is ample support for the claim that AfD frames its Euroscepticism as linked together with migration and economy, and by considering Mudde's claim which argues that: "populists are reformist rather than revolutionary, they do not oppose political parties per se. Rather, they oppose the established parties, call for (or claim to be) a new kind of party; i.e. they express populist anti-party sentiments rather than extremist anti-party sentiments." (Mudde, 2004:541-563), this analysis of AfD's party program seems to suggest that AfD frames Euroscepticism in a reformist manner which presents its economic focus as connected to European migration. This indicates a strong notion of frame bridging as AfD constructs a Eurosceptic approach which implies a connection of two ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames; migration and economy (Snow et al., 1986:469). Following Pelinka's observations on how right-wing populist parties often consider the liberal governance structure as irresponsible in terms of securing the freedom, rights, economy and culture of the people (Pelinka, 2013:6), it is clear that this connection is ideologically congruent as AfD is a populists right-wing party. Nonetheless it can be argued to what extent these developments on migration and economy correlate and this can be used to argue that these frames are structurally unconnected. Following the conceptualization of frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986:469), the evidence seems to indicate that AfD facilitates a Eurosceptic approach which consists of a number of different ideologies; anti-establishment and anti-migration. Moreover, this frame bridging provides AfD with an approach for gathering support (Snow et al., 1986:469). This denotes how AfD extends the boundaries of its proposed frame (Euroscepticism based on economy and anti-establishment) to

include the interests and values of a specific target group, in this case, Germans who are worried about how Germany and the EU conduct their policies on migration and immigration (Snow et al., 1986:472). This denotes a frame extension of AfD's original focus (economy) and while considering that an increased focus on anti-migration has been used to campaign for political change, and that the role of anti-migration within the discourses of right-wing parties has increased (Mudde, 2012; 2016), this indicates that AfD, as a Eurosceptic right-wing party, attempts to clarify the linkage between people who are concerned about the current economic developments in the EU and people who are sceptical of the current migration and immigration in Europe, in order to campaign for political change and gain support (Mudde, 2012; 2016; Snow et al., 1986:472; Alternative für Deutschland, 2017).

The framing of Euroscepticism in Front National

During FN's 2017 presidential campaign, Marine Le Pen issued a 144-point manifesto which outlined her ambitions for government (Front National, 2017). The first point of the manifesto presents that Le Pen aims "To regain our freedom and control over our own destiny by restoring sovereignty to the French people (monetary, legislative, territorial and economic sovereignty). To achieve this, negotiations will be entered into with our European partners, followed by a referendum on whether we should remain in the European Union. The aim is to arrive at a European project that respects French independence, national sovereignties and which serves the interests of the different people" (Front National, 2017). There seems to be no compelling reason to argue that Euroscepticism is valued high within the political program of FN, considering that the Eurosceptic approach of FN is positioned as the first commitment with the presidential program (Front National, 2017). Nonetheless, it is important to investigate how this Euroscepticism is framed in order to understand from which political perspective it is constructed.

The underlying argument within the first point of the 2017 presidential program of Le Pen is that France is in need of regaining its state sovereignty (Front National, 2017:1-3). This connotes that FN considers the current relationship between France and the EU as incoherent with the aims of FN (Front National, 2017). Following the critique of right-wing populism (Pelinka, 2013:7), it is clear that FN are not willing to further adapt to the political measures of the EU. Within the 2017 manifesto,

leading up to the first commitment on FN's Euroscepticism, Le Pen describes how she aims to "give France back its freedom and to give the people a voice" (Front National, 2017). This presents how Le Pen frames that France have lost its freedom and while considering that the very first point within the manifesto revolves around the aim to take France out of the EU, this indicates that FN blames the EU for this loss of sovereignty and freedom. As the first point describes that France has to regain its legislative and economic sovereignty, we are presented with a noteworthy observation: FN considers EU as a supreme decision maker which has taken control over the French economy and, arguably, France's ability to control its own political policies.

The first commitment in the presidential program is introduced with a short paragraph, presenting that Le Pen: "wants to give the French people their money back because, for far too many years, our social and taxation policies have impoverished the middle and working classes, whilst enriching multinational corporations and wasting public money on totally uncontrolled immigration" (Front National, 2017). FN frames that social and taxation policies have been constructed to finance the integration of immigrants while the middle and working class of France have been impoverished (Front National, 2017). Furthermore, FN frames that social and taxation policies have allowed multinational corporations to increase their capital (Front National, 2017). This framing presents that the French government values immigrants and multinational corporations higher than the French middle of working class (Front National, 2017). This indicates that FN attempts to present that 'the French People' are suppressed by their own government. If we consider why FN presents this Euroscepticism towards the French government based on Pelinka's critique of right-wing populists and their attempt to raise a notion of scepticism towards established governance structures (2013:4-6), the underlying reason for the scepticism seems quite clear: FN seeks to present how the French government and its social and taxation policies have neglected the middle and working class in France, in order to gain the support of the middle and working class in France. Following Pelinka's critique, this is merely a delusional approach used to campaign for a new form of leadership in France and if this approach could provide FN with a higher electoral support, the party could ensure a favourable position in the French election. This can be explained based on the observations of Mudde (2004:542), as an opportunistic approach towards pleasing the French people/voters with immediate solutions (in this case, political alternation in form a new government) and promises (higher salaries and an increased focus on improving the financial situation of the middle and working class) and so 'buying' the trust and support of the middle and working class in France (Mudde, 2004:542). This

characterization of the middle and working class as financially neglected by the French government frames the middle and working class as suppressed by the current social and taxation policies in France (Front National, 2017).

Following this line of thought, it can be argued that FN positions this framing as an introduction to the first commitment to link the current relationship between France and the EU together with the suppression of the middle and working class. This would indicate that FN attempts to frame the current political relationship between France and the EU as a negative force which undermines the interests of the working and middle class in France. Following the concept of frame amplification, this would indicate that FN attempts to identify the values and policies of the current French government and the EU as an alien entity which suppresses the French people based on a repressive authority (Snow et al., 1986:469). This representation denotes the process of value amplification as FN frames its opposition towards the French government and the EU as a campaign for improving the financial situation with the French middle and working class (Snow et al., 1986:469). Moreover, it also denotes the process of belief amplification (Snow et al., 1986:469-470) as the framing of Euroscepticism is presented as a common goal which both FN and the French middle and working class can pursue if Le Pen is elected president. The reason for this framing of Le Pen's Eurosceptic approach can be explained based on the observations of Mudde, who presents that populists often have an opportunistic approach towards pleasing the voters by presenting them with a specific promise just before an election. Mudde presents: "Examples could imply the promise of higher salaries to all people without any increase in workhours, or lowering the taxes just before an election" (Mudde, 2004:542). However, it can be argued to what extent the EU are responsible for how social and taxation policies are constructed and implemented by the French government. Moreover, it can be argued to what extent the French government are to blame for the financial situation within the middle and working class in France. Scholars have argued that right-wing populists simplifies complex developments by presenting their followers with a culprit; a foreign enemy or culture, in order to point out their political opponents and present their own ideological stances (Pelinka, 2013:7) and following this argument, there seems to be confirmatory evidence that this is the case with FN (Front National, 2017). This presents us with a noteworthy observation: FN attempts to frame the French government and the EU as an enemy of the French middle and working class and moreover, FN frames its Euroscepticism based on a split distinction between: 'the people' (The French population) vs. 'the élite (The French government and the EU). In this case, it can be argued if the word 'enemy'

is used as an exaggeration. Nonetheless, it has been observed that right-wing populist parties often seek to separate society into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups (Mudde, 2004:543). This could indicate that FN is well aware of how it frames the relationship between the French population and the French Government and if this is the case, this serves as a deliberate political tool used by FN to frame themselves as representatives of the people and not the *élite*.

“This framing of ‘the people’ as suppressed by the elites has been used to counter government-officials and legal representatives in political structures (Pelinka, 2013:4). On these grounds, we can argue that the framing of Euroscepticism within the presidential program of Le Pen appears to suggest that FN presents the EU as a suppressing elitist entity which neglects the political sovereignty of the French people (Front National, 2017). Point 126 within the 144-point manifesto could support this claim as it states that Le Pen wish: “To transform the Common Agricultural Policy into a French Agricultural Policy. To guarantee the amounts of subsidies whose criteria are fixed by France and no longer by the European Union, with the aim of saving and sustaining the French family farming model” (Front National, 2017). This statement presents how FN wish to prevent the EU from controlling French agricultural policies and this provides yet another example of how FN frames the EU as a repressive authoritarian entity. There is overwhelming evidence for the notion that FN approaches French politics in an anti-pluralist fashion as they on the one hand frame ‘the people’ based on predetermined values and ideas and on the other hand, frame the EU as an illegitimate intruder that suppresses the French population (Müller, 2014). Following Mudde’s definition of populism as politics of the ‘Stammtisch’ (2004:543), the presented evidence on FN’s framing of Euroscepticism indicates that FN presents how it will minimize EU influences in the agricultural sector, in a simplistic and highly emotional discourse that appeal to the instinct of the people. FN does not present concrete examples of how this would affect the people within the agricultural sector. Moreover, FN presents that the French agricultural sector has to be “saved” from the EU-restrictions, indicating that the EU poses a threat to the “French family farming model” (Front National, 2017). This presents us with a noteworthy observation: FN relies on a simplistic framing of the EU, which directs the focus of the voters towards changing French-EU relations without presenting any possible consequences or outcomes. Moreover, FN do not present any clarifications as to how this could improve French society (Front National, 2017). There seems to be no compelling reason to argue that farmers are likely to support the idea of a less restricted agricultural sector if this could provide the farmers with more freedom and possibly, increased revenues. Moreover, considering the previous linkage

between the EU and the social and taxation policies, the middle and working class of France would likely support the idea of an improvement of their financial situation. This indicates that FN frames its Euroscepticism through the promise of securing people's freedom and improving their financial situation (Front National, 2017). This puts forth the argument that FN uses 'the people' and its relation to the EU, as a rhetorical tool aimed to captivate the people and direct their focus towards economy and personal freedom to gain political support. Following Mudde (2004:542), this form of political discourse relies on the emotional rather than rational, in other words, it appeals to the instinct of the people rather than presenting concrete examples of how it would affect their daily lives. FN seems to mediate a deliberate focus on the financial situation of the people in order to frame that the French government has allowed EU influences to suppress the freedom of the French people and moreover, harm their financial situation (Front National, 2017). EU's suppression of the French people and the French economy is also framed in point 43 of the presidential program as FN promise: "To sort out our public finances by putting an end to bad public spending (especially spending on immigration and the European Union) and by combating social and tax fraud" (Front National, 2017). In this case, FN frames that it aims to stop the French government from spending money on immigration and the EU in order to sort out public finances (Front National, 2017). The underlying argument of this particular framing of FN's Euroscepticism is that FN do not support how the French government is currently spending money on immigration and French-EU relations. Based on Mudde's characterization of how radical right-wing parties often depict immigrants as a financial burden to the heartland (Mudde, 2012:9-11), it is obvious that FN frames the public spending on immigrations as a financial burden to the French people and the French economy (Front National, 2017). Moreover, by linking bad public spending to immigration, FN presents that it seeks to minimize the funding on immigration in order to provide French nationals with more efficient services (Front National, 2017); Mudde, 2012:9-11). While studying the presidential program of Marine Le Pen, it is obvious that FN frames its opposition towards the EU and the French state based on its aim to improve the French economy and secure the freedom of the French people (Front National, 2017). Moreover, the influences of the EU as well as the public spending on immigration are, according to the political values of FN, the main reason for why the French economy has been challenged (Front National, 2017). This provides a noteworthy conclusion as to how FN frames its opposition towards the EU and the French government; FN depicts French-EU relations as harmful to the French economy and the French people and this is used by FN to frame its opposition towards France's EU-membership

challenged (Front National, 2017). Moreover, FN presents that France has to regain its legislative and economic sovereignty and frames EU as a supreme decision maker which has taken control over France and, arguably, France's ability to control its own political policies challenged (Front National, 2017).

The framing of Euroscepticism within DF, AfD and FN

Almost everywhere in Europe, right-wing populist parties have established themselves as relevant political forces (Mudde, 2004). The facilitated analysis within this thesis provides confirmatory evidence that Euroscepticism is framed differently by European populist right-wing parties; DF frames its Euroscepticism to safeguard Danish sovereignty from the increased Europeanization, immigration, globalization and multiculturalism (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). The framing of Euroscepticism within the Grundsatzprogramm relies mostly on economic perspectives and on an anti-establishment approach aimed at reforming German-EU relations (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017); whereas FN frames its Euroscepticism to prevent the EU from suppressing the French people and controlling the French economy (Front National, 2017). Based on the previous examples of how DF, AfD and FN frames Euroscepticism, there is no compelling reason to argue that these parties frame their Euroscepticism based on the characteristic ideological stances of right-wing populism; anti-migration, anti-elitism, anti-establishment and nationalism. However, for the sake of discussion, I would like to argue that DF, AfD and FN frame these ideological stances differently and therefore, I will now summarize how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism in connection with these right-wing populist stances. This will be used to point out, and compare, the similarities and differences regarding how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism.

Euroscepticism and anti-migration

In terms of how Euroscepticism is framed by DF, AfD and FN, one of the political common traits is quite clear as each party frame Euroscepticism as related to migration. Following the observations of Mudde (2012:9-10), "at least four frames (cultural, religious, security, and economic) are used to by populists to frame migration and migrants. The data gathered in this thesis provides strong evidence that DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism as linked to the immigration of foreign nationals who are seen to pose a threat towards national culture, national identity, welfare and national security, however there seems to be some different in terms of how these parties connect it with

Euroscepticism. One of the similarities, as to how Euroscepticism is framed by these parties, is that each party conducts a frame bridging between the EU and migration (Snow et al., 1986:469). DF frames that “Denmark has to maintain its state sovereignty. ... This is the core of our EU-policy. 72 million Turks are waiting for free access to Europe. The Danish People’s Party is the only party you can rest assured will never accept Turkey as a EU country.” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). In this case, the framing of Euroscepticism is presented as a future threat towards Danish society. In the case of AfD, the frame bridging between the EU and migration is presented as a contemporary ongoing crisis: “AfD presents that it wants to change how “the free movement of people is handled inside the EU” as “...the ruling German political parties have tried to disguise the complete failure of their policies on asylum and immigration of recent years.” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017). On the basis of these examples of frame bridging, it seems fair to suggest that AfD frames the connection between migration and Euroscepticism in a more extreme manner than DF, underlining that AfD calls for urgent EU reforms to tackle immigration. In order to understand why AfD frames its linkage between migration and Euroscepticism as an urgent issue, I wish to draw on migration statistics published by the EU (European Union, 2017a). The data within the migration statistics, published by the EU in 2017, presents that Germany has the largest total number of immigrations in the EU, approximately 1.543.800, whereas Denmark has allowed approximately 78.500 immigrations to take place, presenting overwhelming evidence for why AfD presents the connection between migration and the EU in a more urgent way (European Union, 2017a). The linkage between migration and the EU is simply stronger in Germany compared to Denmark. Based on Mudde’s observations regarding how an increased focus on anti-migration has been used to campaign for political change by right-wing parties (2012:9-10; 2016), this connection between AfD’s framing of Euroscepticism and the increased migration in Germany indicates that AfD attempts to gain voters support by focusing on the refugee crisis in Europe. Mudde puts forward the claim that populism is a phenomenon of (social) crisis (Mudde, 2004:547) and this could explain why the framing of Euroscepticism in AfD is focused on migration, it is simply used to captivate the support of people who are worried about the contemporary political and social issues related to the refugee crisis. Following Goffman’s description of how frames provide a way of organization experiences (1974:21), I wish to connect AfD linkage between Euroscepticism and migration with his approach for analysing why people (or organizations) can act differently in different settings as they interact. If we consider the Grundsatzprogramm (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017) as a

communicative bridge between AfD and its supporters (and also people who do not support them), where the ideologies and the aims of AfD are framed and mediated, it can be argued that the refugee crisis in Europe is used by AfD to gain a higher level of voter support. Keep in mind that Wodak puts forth the argument that populists often present migrants as a threat which could ‘overwhelm’ an entire continent, or impinge on abstract concepts, such as employment or democracy (2013:23). Furthermore, Mudde’s conceptualization of anti-migration (2012:9-11), presents that radical right-wing populists have often used the third frame of anti-migration, *security*, to link immigration and crime. As AfD has linked the political and social issues in Germany together the EU and the European refugee crisis, there seems to be some indications of a deliberate linkage between the EU, Germany’s security and migration. Research on the Grundsatzprogramm presents this indication as quite reasonable as AfD presents that it wants “a fundamental change in the system, and a return to state authorities who are capable of providing maximum protection to citizens by way of immigration authorities, law enforcement agencies, and criminal prosecution.” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:23). AfD has extended its original frame (Euroscepticism based on economic policies) in order to include the interests and values of a specific target group (people who are sceptical of the refugee crisis and who oppose that the German state has allowed immigrants to enter Germany). This indicates a frame extension which has enabled AfD to focus on migration policies (Snow et al., 1986:469-470) and I will put forth the claim that this frame extension is facilitated to gain more political support in Germany.

Along similar lines, it can be argued that FN links Euroscepticism together with anti-migration in order to gain support. Le Pen introduces the first commitment in the presidential program (focused on the EU) by describing that French “social and taxation policies have impoverished the middle and working classes, whilst enriching multinational corporations and wasting public money on totally uncontrolled immigration” (Front National, 2017), this presents how FN frames Euroscepticism as connected to French economy, this is another example of frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986:469). Following the observations of Mudde (2012:9-11), the fourth frame of anti-migration, the *economic*, which depicts immigrants as a financial burden to the heartland, “taking jobs away from the natives and/or draining social benefits”, it is clear that FN frames its Euroscepticism based on a linkage between the migration and economy. In order to understand why FN frames its Euroscepticism by linking migration and economy, I wish to explain this based on migration statistics published by the

EU (European Union, 2017a) and on unemployment statistics published by the EU (European Union, 2017b). The data within the migration statistics presents that France has the third largest total number of immigrations in the EU, approximately 363.900 (European Union, 2017a). Compared to Germany (approximately 1.543.800) and Denmark (approximately 78.500), these stats are not either surprising or remarkable as France is the fourth largest nation in the EU by area (European Union, 2017c) and the second largest by population (European Union, 2017d). However, the data within the unemployment statistics shows us that France has the sixth largest rate of unemployment in the EU (10.1%), whereas Denmark has the seventeenth largest rate (6.2%) and Germany the twenty-seventh largest rate (3.9%) (European Union, 2017b). This present us with a noteworthy observation as this can be used to understand why FN frames its Euroscepticism in connection with economy and migration. FN present that the social and taxation policies in France have impoverished the middle and working classes, whilst wasting public money on totally uncontrolled immigration” (Front National, 2017) and considering the high unemployment rate in France, there seems to be indications that FN seeks to present that the increased migration of foreign nationals is linked to this high rate of unemployment. Moreover, this indicates that frames its Euroscepticism based on a linkage between the high rate of unemployment and the high rate of immigrations in France (Front National, 2017). This indicates a frame bridging between migration and a socio-economic issue (unemployment) and this is used by FN to present its Euroscepticism (Snow et al., 1986:469-470). I will put forth the claim that this frame bridging is facilitated by FN to campaign for a decreased funding of integration and immigration, presenting FN as focused on prioritizing the French people (national preference).

Euroscepticism and anti-elitism

Populism denotes two opposites: ‘us. vs. ‘them’ as a form of clash between the elite and the people (Mudde, 2004:543). This clash has been explained by Schori Liang, presenting that: “The main structural conflict is not between the Left and the Right or between reformers and conservatives. The real clash is between elites that are becoming more suspicious of democracy and the angry publics that are becoming more hostile to liberalism” (Schori Liang, 2007:7-9). Based on these observations, I will present how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism in connection to anti-elitism. The available evidence seems to suggests that DF, AfD and FN are sceptical of how the EU affects the EU member states. DF wishes to limit Danish-EU relations to trade policies, environmental policies and ensure future cooperative measures between EU and the Danish state

(Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). AfD opposes “the idea to transform the European Union into a centralised federal state...” and wishes to change “...the European Union to an economic union based on shared interests, and consisting of sovereign, but loosely connected nation states.”

(Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15). Meanwhile, FN wants to take France out of the EU “to regain our freedom and control over our own destiny by restoring sovereignty to the French people (monetary, legislative, territorial and economic sovereignty)” (Front National, 2017). These political demands show us why DF, AfD and FN are Eurosceptic. These parties share an important premise as they frame the EU as a political organization able of suppressing the sovereignty of its member states. DF, AfD and FN are against that the EU can imply political measures which minimize the legislative independence in EU member states. As DF, AfD and FN frame their Euroscepticism based on anti-migration, anti-elitism, anti-establishment and nationalism, it is clear that they consider the EU to prevent them from conducting their policies.

This indicates that DF, AfD and FN have created political identities which do not correlate with the political identity and legislative power of the EU. Moreover, if the political identity of the EU does not correlate with the political identities of DF, AfD and FN, these parties have to oppose its behaviour in order to maintain their own interest and strive towards achieving their political goals. Despite that DF, AfD and FN present that they wish to “live in a spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15) and that they want “a close and friendly cooperation in Europe” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b), these parties do not wish to accommodate to the increased Europeanization which is currently facilitated by the EU. FN presents that “the aim is to arrive at a European project that respects French independence, national sovereignties and which serves the interests of the different people.” (Front National, 2017). Likewise, AfD presents that: “Should we not succeed with our ideas of a fundamental reform within the present framework of the European Union, we shall seek Germany’s exit, or a democratic dissolution of the EU...” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15). Also, DF presents: “We are against the current developments within the EU which are moving towards United States of Europe... We are opposing the implementation of a European political union” (Author’s translation, Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). **On the basis of** these statements, it seems fair to suggest that DF, AfD and FN will not accommodate to the elitist behavior of the EU as these parties frame the EU as far too influential in the context of European politics and moreover, they frame the currently political role of the EU as non-coherent with their own political aims. I will put forth the claim that DF, AfD

and FN frame their Euroscepticism based on the assumption that the EU is simply too dominating in the European political environment; indicating that these parties consider the EU as an elitist political organization based on their respective aims and ideologies.

Euroscepticism and anti-establishment

DF, AfD and FN frame their Euroscepticism based on the assumption that the EU is simply too dominating in the European political environment. Nonetheless, there seems to be some differences as to how DF, AfD and FN frame their Euroscepticism in connection to anti-establishment. Following the observations of Pelinka (2013:4-6), it is important to understand to what extent DF, AfD and FN recognize the limitations of democracy within the EU. By observing the concrete framings of Euroscepticism within the party program of DF, AfD and FN, it is clear that each party frames its Euroscepticism based on certain degree of anti-establishment. AfD presents that “Should we not succeed with our ideas of a fundamental reform within the present framework of the European Union, we shall seek Germany’s exit, or a democratic dissolution of the EU, followed by the founding of a new European economic union” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:15). This presents that AfD frames its Euroscepticism as a political ultimatum. AfD demands to reform the current relationship between Germany and the EU however, if this demand for a fundamental reform is not accommodated, they would rather seek a democratic dissolution of the EU than allow the current relationship between Germany and the EU to continue. Following Taggart & Szczerbiak (2002:7), this framing denotes a principled opposition towards German-EU relations and as the evidence seems to suggest that AfD wish to take Germany out of the EU, AfD can be classified as a hard Eurosceptic party.

FN frames its Euroscepticism as a demand to “regain our freedom and control over our own destiny by restoring sovereignty to the French people (monetary, legislative, territorial and economic sovereignty). To achieve this, negotiations will be entered into with our European partners, followed by a referendum on whether we should remain in the European Union. The aim is to arrive at a European project that respects French independence, national sovereignties and which serves the interests of the different people.” (Front National, 2017). This presents that FN frames its Euroscepticism as a direct opposition towards the EU. Not only do FN frame a political demand to regain freedom, control and sovereignty, FN frames that it demands a political referendum on whether

or not France shall remain in the EU. When comparing how AfD and FN frame their Euroscepticism and anti-establishment, it is clear that FN presents its Euroscepticism based on a certain degree of democratic understanding. They frame how negotiations will be entered to regain French freedom, control and sovereignty. AfD frames that it will seek to dissolve the EU and this indicates that the Euroscepticism of AfD, compared to the Euroscepticism of FN, can be categorized as a more direct opposition towards the EU. I will put forth the claim that while comparing the Euroscepticism of DF and FN, AfD seems to frame a more aggressive opposition towards the EU. Following the observations of Taggart & Szczerbiak (2002:7), it is clear that FN frames a principled opposition towards the EU, presenting them as a hard Eurosceptic party. However, FN seems to represent hard Euroscepticism in a more 'subtle' manner than the AfD as FN frames its Euroscepticism as focused on the French-EU relations, whereas AfD portray a principled opposition towards the EU in general.

By comparing the Euroscepticism of AfD and FN, it is clear that hard Euroscepticism can be framed differently. If we consider how Euroscepticism is framed by DF, there seems to be no reason to question that DF also wish to regain sovereignty, but that DF aims to limit Danish-EU relations to trade policies, environmental policies and ensure future cooperative measures between EU and the Danish state (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017b). This presents that DF frames its Euroscepticism based on a demand to reform the current relationship between Denmark and the EU. Following the observations Taggart & Szczerbiak (2002:7), this anti-establishment approach of DF towards the EU could indicate that DF is a soft Eurosceptic party as DF present how it opposes a number of EU-policies. However, within their political program, the party present: "DF oppose the European Union." (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a; 2017b), and due to this statement, it is clear that DF is a hard Eurosceptic party. Taggart & Szczerbiak argue that hard Eurosceptic parties will often tend to advocate for a fundamental re-construction of the relations between their country and the EU; a re-construction that is incompatible with the present laws and policies within the EU, connoting a de facto opposition to EU membership" (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002:7). As DF advocate for a fundamental re-construction of the Danish-EU relationship, which is currently incompatible with the present laws and policies within the EU, the evidence shows us that DF is de facto a hard Eurosceptic party.

Moreover, there seems to be no compelling reason to argue that DF, AfD and FN are hard Eurosceptic parties. The disappointment with the EU as an established structure of governance is used by DF, AfD and FN to express how they wish to campaign against the EU in order to 'free' their countries

from the political restraints of the EU. It is important to bear in mind, that each party has its own political aims and demands and that their framing of Euroscepticism relies on a set of predetermined values and beliefs. One of the similarities of DF, AfD and FN is that wish to regain sovereignty, but to what degree they can affect the EU is debatable. Even though DF, AfD and FN proclaim how they oppose the EU and demand a political referendum on EU-membership, it is important to consider that none of these parties have managed to draw their countries out of the EU. In order to do so, they have to gain a sufficient amount of voter support and despite the fact that these parties have managed to gain a higher level of voter support in recent years, they have not managed to turn public opinion around to a degree which have enabled them to take their countries out of the EU. Following Pelinka (2013:4-6), critics of the right-wing populist ideology argue that scepticism towards existing structures of governance is merely a delusional approach used to campaign for a new form of leadership and a shift I power relations, turning the favour onto the populists right-wing parties (Pelinka, 2013:4-6). This leaves us with an interesting thought: Is the Eurosceptic approach of DF, AfD and FN based on a desire to safeguard the values, choices and actual role of their ‘oppressed’ people from EU’s firm grip on European politics? Or is the Eurosceptic approach just as a political tool used to gain the support of people who feel misrepresented? In order to present confirmatory evidence that this is not the case with DF, AfD and FN, a more thorough analysis of their political behaviour needs to be facilitated. However, if we consider how the contemporary role the European populist right-wing parties have affected the EU, it seems hard to believe that DF, AfD and FN can reform or demolish the relationship between the EU and its member states.

Euroscepticism and nationalism

Within the political programs of DF, AfD and FN, there are multiple indications of nationalism and how it is linked together with Euroscepticism. When considering the historical background of DF and FN, it is clear that nationalism has been combined with right-wing populism for many years to create a political identity. If we consider Ben Stanley’s interpretation of populism as a thin ideology and how he argues that the obstacle to populism’s further development as an ideology is that it is difficult to transform the concepts of populism into a coherent ideological tradition (Stanley, 2008:106), we can understand why DF, AfD and FN have incorporated a sense of nationalism into their party program. The nationalist approach to Euroscepticism is utilized by DF, AfD and FN to construct values and political aims and these aims and values provide them with an ideological basis for constructing their Euroscepticism. If we consider how the political reform of FN,

The framing of Euroscepticism in DF, AfD and FN: Comtemplating Euroscepticism in the European right-wing.

Master Thesis Malthe Schjøtt Nielsen
Culture, Communication & Globalization

May 31st 2017

under the leadership of Marine Le Pen, has been characterized as a strategy of normalization; also known as her dédialisation strategy, transforming FN's xenophobic, racist, and anti-Semitic image into one that presents FN as a soft respectable party, we see that FN has attempted to change how nationalism is represented in FN's political program (Stockemer, 2017:55). Moreover, if we consider that DF has managed to undergo a process of centralization under the leadership of Pia Kjaersgaard 1995-2002 and also that the DF was established to move away from nationalist FrP, there seems to be some indications that DF has tried to present their party ideologies in a manner that is not purely nationalist (Den Store Danske, 2017; Marsdal: 2013:39–54).. Due to the fact that AfD was founded in 2013, presenting it as a relatively new populist right-wing party, it is difficult to extract evidence which presents that nationalism has been used to construct a political identity since its establishment. Nonetheless, there seems to be compelling evidence in the 2017 Grundsatzprogramm indicating that nationalism has been implemented into the AfD to frame its Euroscepticism (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017). In order to explain how DF, AfD and FN have used nationalism to frame their Euroscepticism, I will point out a number of examples which exemplifies how these parties present their Euroscepticism as related to nationalism. Within Le Pen's 144 presidential commitments, point 37 and point 93 presents FN as rather patriotic as they wish to “fly the French flag on public buildings at all times and to remove the European flag” (Front National, 2007:93). Moreover, FN wish “to establish genuine economic patriotism by ridding ourselves of European constraints and imposing an obligation to «buy French» on all public bodies” (Front National, 2017:37). This is another example of Le Pen's proclaimed ‘national preference’ and this indicates that FN frames its Euroscepticism by advocating for a higher sense of nationalism. Within the Grundsatzprogramm, AfD presents how “It is one of the primary political goals of the AfD to preserve the great cultural heritage for future generations, and to develop and retain its unique characteristics in an age of globalisation and digitalisation.” (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017:46). This presents how AfD wish to preserve its national culture from foreign influence, indicating that a foreign influence, such as the EU, shall not be valued higher than the culture of the German nation. This presents how AfD connects nationalism to their Euroscepticism. Within DF's party program there is also presented a desire to protect Danish culture and as DF depict the EU as a catalyst for multiculturalism, there seems to be compelling evidence indicating that DF values national culture higher than the EU: “In the Danish People's Party we are proud of Denmark; we love our country and we feel a historic obligation to protect our country, its people and the Danish cultural heritage. (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a).

CONCLUSION

There is conceivably an abstract sphere, a conceptual place, in between the European people and the European right-wing populist parties. This sphere serves as a communicative bridge where political aims, values and identities can co-exist and clash from time to time. As the European people and the European political parties have experienced how an increased globalization and political integration, and its impact on culture, economy and politics, have affected the political topics from which we categorize ourselves as either supporters or opponents, we see that the political environment is constantly changing. This thesis shows us how Euroscepticism is framed within the political programs of Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National(FN) and provides us with an understanding of how Euroscepticism is framed within the European right-wing. European right-wing populism takes different forms depending on specific national factors such as culture, governance structure and political history (Greven, 2016), and as we investigate how DF, AfD and FN frame their Euroscepticism, it is clear that the framing of Euroscepticism in European right-wing populist parties vary. Firstly DF frames its Euroscepticism based on a predetermined opposition towards how increased migration and immigration threatens the Danish culture. Moreover, the Euroscepticism of DF is used to safeguard Danish sovereignty from the increased Europeanization, immigration, globalization and multiculturalism (Dansk Folkeparti, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). In the case of AfD, the framing of Euroscepticism within the Grundsatzprogramm relies mostly on economic perspectives and on an anti-establishment approach aimed at reforming German-EU relations. However, AfD has begun to focus more on migration policies, indicating that AfD attempts to gain more political support in Germany through a political frame extension (Alternative für Deutschland, 2017). FN frames its Euroscepticism to prevent the EU from suppressing the French people and controlling the French economy (Front National, 2017). Moreover, FN has linked migration together with socio-economic issues in France to campaign for a decreased funding of integration and immigration, presenting FN as focused on prioritizing the French people (national preference).

The observations, analysis' and conclusions presented in this thesis reflect on how European right-wing populist parties co-exist with cultural, economic, historical and political perspectives. The facilitated analysis provides confirmatory evidence that Euroscepticism is framed differently by European populist right-wing parties. Based on the previous examples of how DF, AfD and FN frame Euroscepticism, there is no compelling reason to argue that these parties frame their Euroscepticism

based on the characteristic ideological stances of right-wing populism; anti-migration, anti-elitism, anti-establishment and nationalism. These parties are all sceptical of how the EU affects the EU member states, however DF, AfD and FN have created different political identities and none of them correlates with the political identity and legislative power of the EU. Moreover, if the political identity of the EU does not correlate with the political identities of DF, AfD and FN, these parties have to oppose its behaviour in order to maintain their own interest and strive towards achieving their political goals. It can be concluded that Dansk Folkeparti(DF), Alternative für Deutschland(AfD) and Front National(FN) have created different Eurosceptic approaches based on their political goals and identities. However, even though there are similarities and differences as to how they frame Euroscepticism, one notion is quite clear: Each party frames Euroscepticism based on a predetermined understanding of the contemporary political environment in Europe and the contemporary political environment in their respective countries. In order to conclude this thesis, I wish to draw on Mudde's conceptualization of the reformist nature of right-wing populist parties: Right-wing populists do not wish to change the people themselves, but rather their role and status within the established political system (Mudde, 2004:546). As long as DF, AfD and FN, or any other European right-wing populist party, have not succeeded in achieving their political goals, they will continue to reframe their Euroscepticism as a contemporary counter-response to how their political demands are suppressed.

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Master Thesis Malthe Schjøtt Nielsen
Culture, Communication & Globalization

May 31st 2017

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