

Xenophobia in 2020 Europe – A View on Xenophobic Political Parties

The article focuses on the presence of xenophobia in the public communication of European political parties after the 2019 European elections, as well as offers a set of tools for its objective exploration.

The questions answered by the research stem from the reassuring statement that European xenophobia is far from being as worrying as the Eurobarometer and national election results would suggest. According to the tested hypothesis, new tools may lead to different conclusions.

This set of tools consists of: a) xenophobia, which is designed for public communication; b) a matrix (*Table 2*), which provides a comprehensive picture of this social phenomenon; c) tools for describing, evaluating and ranking xenophobic political parties.

We believe that they are able to provide a more accurate image of xenophobia and provide a stronger foundation for the struggle against it in the political and communication spheres. They are an attempt to innovate research methods.

Applying these tools would ideally lead to a reduction in xenophobia supported by political parties in the EU; however, concerns about smaller parliamentary xenophobic parties should not be dismissed.

Introduction

The 2019 European Parliament (EP) elections did not confirm the worrying predictions of the Eurobarometer that European citizens were not interested in the EP electoral process, nor the dynamics of populist (xenophobic) voters. After the electoral process, political groups with xenophobic Manifestos did not gain power in the EP and the Commission.

The turnout was higher than in the previous two electoral processes. Comparing the turnouts of 2009, 2014 and 2019, it is clear that the 2019 turnout was ‘one of the highest’;¹ and it reversed the steadily declining trends in voters for the European Parliament elections. The facts confirmed the predictions of the above-mentioned *Eurobarometer*.

The election results did not confirm the catastrophic predictions about the presence of radical forces in the EP. On the contrary, they proved the voters’ political confidence in the major ‘political colours’: the blue of the *European People’s Party*, (EPP) and the red of the *Socialists & Democrats* (S&D). They brought a new force that was predicted

¹ EP turnout average: 2009 – 42.97 per cent, out of the total registered voters; 2014 – 42.61 per cent out of the total registered voters; 2019 – 50.66 per cent out of the total.

in a limited way: *Renew Europe*. The appearance of more radical groups alongside the old was not confirmed.

Table 1: Political groups in the European Parliament 2019–2024

Political groups in the European Parliament in its 9 th legislature	Number of seats in the constitutive session (751 MEPs)	Current – 2020 – number of seats after Brexit (705 MEPs)
EPP – Group of the European People’s Party (Christian Democrats)	182	187
S&D – Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament	154	146
Renew Europe – Renew Europe group	108	98
Greens/EFA – Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	74	68
ID – Identity and Democracy	73	76
ECR – European Conservatives and Reformists Group	62	62
GUE/NGL – Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left	41	39
NI – Non-attached Members	57	29
Total	751	705

Source: compiled by the authors

Table 1 shows how the seats are distributed in the EP in its 9th legislature.

Comparing the current colours of the groups with those historically registered, it can be seen that no new colour arose. There were Far-Right Nationalists and Xenophobes in other legislatures as well.

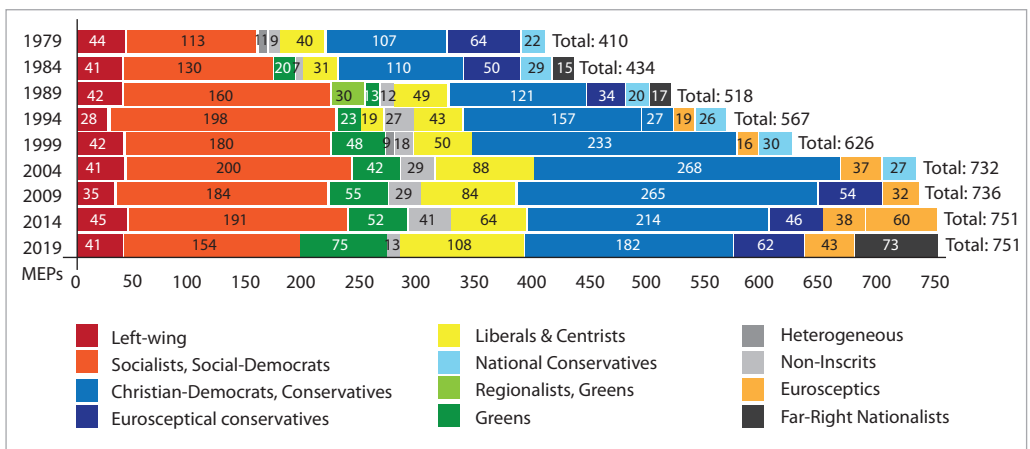


Figure 1: Political groups in the European Parliament since the 1979 elections to 2019

Source: www.europe-politique.eu/parlement-europeen.htm

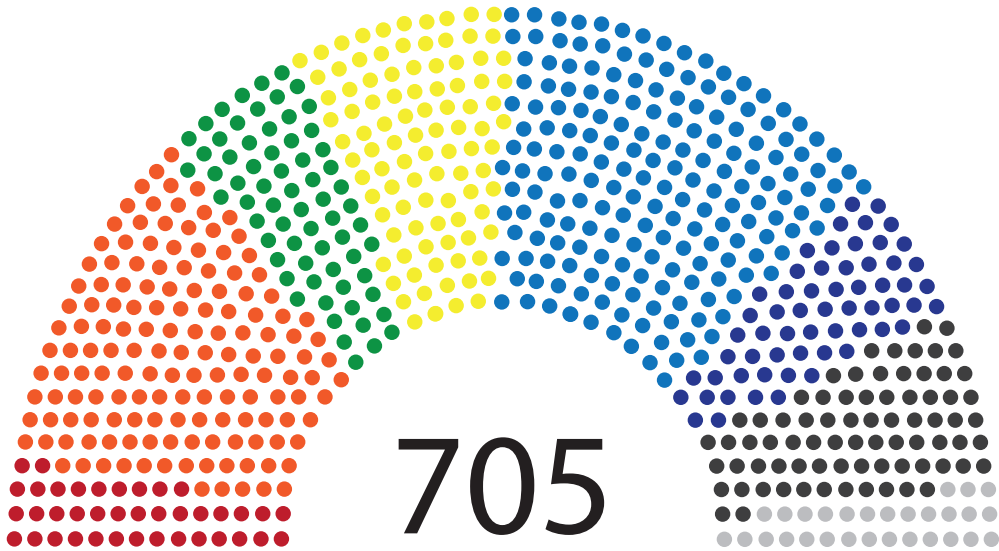


Figure 2: The political groups in the European Parliament 2019–2024 in the hemicycle

Source: www.europe-politique.eu/parlement-europeen.htm

Table 1 and Figures 2 and 3 show that a surprising political orientation received enough votes to play an important role in forming a governing coalition. It is the centrist group called *Renew Europe (RE)*. Interpreting the figures with the traditional tools, we can conclude that the main political forces have to respond more coherently to the concerns and issues of the European citizens.

On the other hand, radicals certainly cannot form a political construct. The EP 2019 elections did not legitimise the xenophobes as the leaders in the European constructions. The implications of the growing support for the far-right group *Identity and Democracy (ID)* and the *European Conservative and Reformist Group (ECR)*, however, should not be overlooked.

The traditional tools of analysis raise the question: Can the far-right coalition join forces to block decisions that require a qualified majority in the EP? The figures show that the *ID* in coalition with the *ECR* could not receive more than 138 votes. That is, radical and extremist parties, including those with clear xenophobic Manifestos, have not received enough electoral support to identify xenophobic tendencies at the level of EU policies.

Should the Europeans be concerned about these political discourses? The results are saying no. But, in the context of the Covid-19 crisis, is this the real answer?

Going back to the Eurobarometer’s predictions about the xenophobic outcome of the EP 2019 elections and the de facto results, we have to admit that there is an obvious difference between the predictions and reality.

It is true that in the three founding Members States of the United Europe – France, Germany and Italy – the xenophobic forces² received a concerning amount of electoral support. However, the public should not be alerted about xenophobia.

Despite the relatively reassuring results, the issue of the difference between the predictions and the results deserves attention. Some of the same questions still remain: ‘How to explain the above-mentioned difference?’, together with the issue of radicalisation of European voters: ‘Does radicalisation mean xenophobia?’. These questions need a new clarification on what xenophobia and its dangers are.

Simply put, the clarification is needed to: a) give clear content to the word xenophobia (or even better, to appeal to a concept of xenophobia, instead of taking the word for granted as an operational tool in measuring values, opinions, feelings, attitudes, behaviours at an individual, group, national/European level); b) to try to look at the electoral results not only in terms of making and breaking governments, but also in terms of threats for the social consensus on governability.

We hypothesise that more predictable results can be achieved with more accurate measurement tools. What is more, we are in favour of: a) a matrix in which xenophobia is largely explored, in a holistic approach; and b) the matrix of political xenophobia.

The concept of xenophobia

The word xenophobia, in most European languages, is a word composed of the two words ‘foreigner’ and ‘phobia’. They stem from the Greek words: *xeno* (ξένος)³ meaning ‘foreign’, and from *phobia* (φοβία), meaning ‘fear’ or ‘disease’.

The term *foreigner*, as a noun, is a word frequently used in Romanian. Before Communism, traditionally, it had multiple meanings, usually having negative connotations.

² The following parties/alliances are known for xenophobic ideologies:

- in France, the *National Rally* won the larger electoral support among the 6 alliances that entered into the EP. It gathered 23.34 per cent out of the total votes and secured 24 out of the 79 seats apportioned to France. (A large coalition of the traditional Left – lead by Raphaël Glucksmann, the son of André Glucksmann – got only 6.19 per cent out of the total votes and secured 6 seats.)
- in Germany, the *Alliance for Germany (AfD)* won 11 seats – with 11 per cent of the popular votes – being the 4th in the voters’ preferences. (In the East German provinces it constantly gained majority.)
- in Italy, *Lega* won the larger electoral support among the 5 Italian parties/alliances that entered into the EP. It gathered 34.26 per cent of the total votes and secured 29 out of the 76 seats apportioned to Italy. It defeated the Socialists – *Democratic Party (DP)*, which secured only the 2nd rank of Italian preferences, 22.74 per cent of the votes with 24 seats. (The Catholic parties succeeded to get support for entering in the EP only with *Forza Italia* – lead by Silvio Berlusconi – with only 7 seats.) Taking into account that the alliance *Fratelli d’Italia (Fdi)* won another 6 seats, the Radical Right was the big winner in Italy.

³ *Xenos*, in Greek, means one who is not from here. (Its meaning is clarified in relation to the allogeneic and the barbarian. The allogeneic being a neutral term, while the barbarian indicates the one who comes here to commit barbarian acts, to destroy our civilisations. Generally, the Roma – nomads – were and are, in Europe, the well-known foreigners. Nowadays, the first foreigners – that come to European minds – are the Syrian migrants and refugees. Their recent arrival and settlement in the *No-Go* areas near the big cities have drawn the attention of the public to them. More than ever, they are seen as strangers (barbarians).

With Communism, the meaning of the word became polarised. Officially, foreigners were ‘exploitative capitalists, enemies of the working class’; informally, however, a stranger was someone who came from a better world, with a freer, easier and more abundant personal life. Many girls dreamed of marrying foreigners, and many did so only because they were foreigners. Many people risked their lives to flee abroad. After 1989, the major and almost exclusive meaning of the word remained positive. A stranger was someone who did not want the deprivations of Communism. Going abroad was a ‘must do’; knowing foreign languages – English and German in particular, has become a standard (knowing Japanese, Arabic, Chinese was for the very ambitious); studying abroad was an ideal.

Two notions that have become cultural concepts can be deduced from the origins of the term: foreignness and alienation. It is also used as a name: one of the most important Romanian historians is called Xeno-pol (Alexandru Xenopol, 1847–1920). In Romanian onomastics, the name Xenia is also used.

The notion of alienation in Romanian has the meaning of losing one’s identity, causing longing or pain. Alienation, derived from the Marxist and existentialist concept, seems to be fading.

The term *phobia* is an academic term, introduced to the public under the influence of psychoanalysis and Freud. Popularly, the term *phobia* has the meaning of: horror, hatred of something. Alexandra Zărnescu after criticising the explanation of the word xenophobia in Romanian dictionaries, insists on its etymology and advocates for understanding xenophobia as a horror of strangers. Then – from a nationalist perspective – she denounces that a *xenocracy* has been installed in contemporary Romania with the intent to justify hatred towards foreigners.

The modern term ‘xenophobia’ was first used by Anatole France in the well-known battle for Dreyfus’s justice in the early 20th century. (The late invention of the term does not mean that hatred of foreigners did not exist before. It has been a very real phenomenon all over Europe.)

There are individual and social fears/phobias.⁴ The case in which the whole society is sick⁵ with fear of foreigners is a social phobia, and is the result of some political dynamics or/and manipulations. They end up in hatred, violence and crimes against foreigners.

The phenomenon, however, has roots in mythology. In ancient times, horror had its god: Phobos in Greek, the companion and son of Ares (god of war). A god of horror is taken over/met with by the Romans, with the name of Fear or Terror or Timor.

In the days of medieval Christianity, the fear of the invading alien is personified in the fear of the invasions of the Tartars. (Today, the horrors of war crimes are embodied in the fear of the Holocaust.)

Xenophobia could not be effectively stopped by the Christian principle of treating everybody like a loved one (‘Love your neighbour, like yourself!’). This vision was

⁴ According to psychiatry, *phobia (trauma)* severely affects identity. Steven L Berman, ‘Identity and Trauma’, *Journal of Traumatic Stress Disorders and Treatment* 5, no 2 (2016).

⁵ Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (New York: Rinehart & Co.,1955).

constantly confronted with a history of invasions and wars, throughout which a man had been a wolf to another man.

In conclusion, the word xenophobia, as it is known today, means: a) to be afraid of foreign enemies, barbarians, non-Christians, or even Christians (when they are different, schismatic, heretic, or reformers, as it happened in the open religious wars, or in the hidden ones; b) to face them.

A concept of xenophobia for public communication

Assuming a context

The concept of xenophobia is used today in the Romanian language with multiple meanings. Three of them seem the most relevant to us: 1. Political; 2. Legal; and 3. Cultural and media ones.

For the public communication, all of them are simply context. Public communication has to find a meaning that simultaneously includes relevant elements for exploring the political and legal fields, but also for the cultural ones. We do believe that only this way can the public be prepared to recognise and oppose: a) the xenophobic policies; b) serious xenophobic behaviour that can be condemned by criminal or civil law; c) cultural deviations that harass people and poison their relationships.

Political xenophobia is the result of those political actions of political agent(s)⁶ that consist of publicly launched political discourses, theories, ideologies, projects, programs, actions meant to promote:

- fears from the Others, without any other reasons than the political interest in manipulating the public
- hate toward the Others, without any other reasons than political forgery
- incitements to deny the Other's human dignity, to defame, to stigmatise them
- the treatment of Others as objects of exploitation, as *merchandise*,⁷ or subjects of medical experiments
- the chasing, or mass destroying of Others

⁶ In this sense, the notion of *political agent* refers to a: party, pressure group, lobby, political movement, political leader or politician, any political institution – parliament, government or components of government, head of state or equivalent, institution of local or regional power states, groups of states, coalitions, and so on.

⁷ In a narrow sense, xenophobia is the set of actions committed by an agent in case of hatred and violence against a target group considered 'foreign', that is, in its identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, language, and so on. Generally speaking, the target group can be any group. In 1939, Hitler decided that a group of people (the mentally insane) were to be eliminated by forced euthanasia. They alter the purity of national blood. Many attempts were stopped by the public protest of the Archbishop of Munich, who was interned in a camp for this, but was successful in stopping euthanasia. Cf. Christian Bernadac, *Devil's Doctors* (Geneva: Ferni Publishing House, 1978).

Usually, the above-mentioned theories, ideologies, projects, programs, actions, and so on, do not separate the acts committed by an individual belonging to a group from group actions, and transfer the responsibility for individual criminal acts to the entire group. Similarly, such theories do not take into account the possibility that some individuals of a criminalised group could be *de bona fide*.

When the political concept is codified – it takes the form of laws – it becomes a legal concept of xenophobia. This is the case, for example, with racial laws. (See more in *Manifestations of Legally Condemned Xenophobia and the Nuremberg Laws* on <http://comxen.ro>.)

The cultural concept of xenophobia encompasses all political and legal aspects of the phenomenon and its social dimensions, that is, horror, hatred and violence in the presence of foreigners accepted and developed as social normality.

When the phenomenon and the process are expressed culturally, artistically in works of art or in their equivalent, or when they are presented in formulas that imitate science, as a result of artistic form or pseudo-scientific forms, they strengthen and become a sustainable social reality. Consequently, they are also internalised by people who live in such an environment and become part of their psyche (that is, in their way of perceiving, thinking, feeling and wanting).

All these together become public opinions, ideas, ‘values’, attitudes, and behaviours. They become part of the public’s way of being, of relating to other people and expressing all this in the public sphere. As a result of this internalisation, it is difficult for the public to engage in critical analysis and very difficult to dislodge internalised xenophobia; to show them what their community would be like in a xenophobia-free environment; to show them that being comfortable with each other can only be achieved without phobias.

When all this is socially regarded as normal and ideal at the same time, the group pressure in favour of xenophobia will mobilise and the path of reconstruction will narrow down even more.

Like any notion circulating in public communication, the notion of xenophobia brings together fragments of scientific, pseudo-scientific, literary and religious concepts with popular meanings and fragments of deconstructions of commonplaces or prejudices about this phenomenon.

Nowadays, public communication is operating with multiple notions of xenophobia, some of them unarticulated and confusing. Among the articulated ones, two main political approaches have to be mentioned: identitarian and de-constructivist. They have the most influence on public opinion, on the casting of the ballot, and in the policies that rule our lives.

The first group, the identitarian (not openly assumed to be xenophobic) utilises xenophobic contents as a national or Christian tool for our identity’s defence. It is composed of borrowings from seducible philosophers’ approaches and by arguments developed in the philosophically sophisticated exposures, with popular interpretations, many times inspired by radical political movements and ideologies. They frame the complex reality we

live in: a) the discomfort that the foreigners in our vicinity brought to us; b) the expenses that we have to pay for their presence; c) their dishonest intentions; d) their uncivilised manifestations in everyday life, and so on.

Assuming the contents

In its content, the European public sphere is attacked by the misty notion of xenophobia. It is a double mix. On the one hand, it combines the notes of the anti-xenophobia concept and the xenophobia concept. On the other hand, it melts the combination of populist items. (Such populist doctrines praise the superiority of autochthons, *teaching them that they deserve more and more, but aliens hinder their greater status.*)

Xenocracy is an obvious way to defend the political, economic and cultural power and to reject invaders. The invasion resulted in bringing us deprivation, poverty, injustice, cultural misfortune. Xenophobia is an irrational fear towards all/certain foreigners just because they are different and unknown.

Two effects are visible publicly: anti-xenocratic and xenophobic. Anti-xenocracy is a politico-military appeal to resist invaders, possibly to rebel against them when xenophobia is an irrational fear, which develops into irrational anger against the Others.

The populists' tenets add revanchism based on our 'natural' sense of supremacy or superiority. It urges to 'restore our pride' and claim rights to be the 'masters of the Others'. This behaviour results in not only the strengthening of the discomfort and risk, but also in lessening our level of empathy towards the people in distress, making us hostile towards them and distrusting them. According to the theory of the coup d'état, it is the time for instituting the dictatorship.

The second group, de-constructivists' xenophobia is a political construct, mainly used electorally by the extremist parties. As content, xenophobia is revealed to be composed of false ideas, prejudices and stigma towards the Others, as well as of a phobia. The group alerts against the spreading of fear and hate in the global arena, considering that generalised hate is the main obstacle in creating peace and advantageous relationship among the nations. It looks that xenophobia as a social illness involves prejudice, contempt, horror and hostility towards certain foreigners. It also involves populist tenets when it refuses to notice some xenophobic realities that endanger world cohesiveness. It is when they do not accept the extremist Islamic groups – others than the well-known terrorist ones – as a group responsible for the xenophobia against us.

In brief, a concept of xenophobia for public communication is insisting on the fact that xenophobia is a social disease – a process of altering social environment with prejudice, horror, hatred, insecurity and violence, even extreme violence – which manifests itself towards some strangers, not towards all of them. Its deep roots are nurtured by fears and insecurity.

Xenophobia is not to be confused with xenocracy (the power of strangers over us), or the mobilisation against the invaders (anti-xenocracy). It is not to be opposed to xeno-philia (love of strangers). It is the *hate towards* a different kind of people.

Tools for the general understanding of xenophobia

Descriptive approach to intolerant and xenophobic values, opinions, ideas, attitudes and behaviours

There is a large portfolio of xenophobic and intolerant manifestations in contemporary European societies. The well-known, common victims can easily quote at least a dozen such manifestations committed against them by their ‘oppressors’. The ‘hosts’, at their turn, can quote similar acts, ideas, opinions offered by those they support. The radicals – in both groups – permanently provide new ones and enrich the portfolio with actions committed by the Others and denounce them as xenophobes. The voices for reconciliation are needed, but unheard.

To take into account the vastness of such a portfolio of xenophobic manifestations, we propose a double approach. Firstly, we invite you to look for the agents of such manifestations, and secondly, to their effective contents, taken as frequency and ratio in the total manifestations.

We propose to look at the agents of xenophobia as:

- individuals
- groups (political parties and their associations being the most important)
- nations/EU

We invite those interested to look at the contents of xenophobia, as references to Other/s in terms of Our: 1. values and valorisation; 2. opinions and ideas; 3. attitudes; 4. behaviours.

We create xenophobic situations (xenophobic contents) when we deny the Others’ values and, consequently, we despise the Others as human beings or their deeds (cultural accomplishments), norms, morals, as well as when we do not take into account their sacred values and taboos.

We show xenophobic tendencies when we claim Our absolute superiority and supremacy and proclaim their inferiority or barbarity; when we diminish the values of other cultures and do not consider their sacred values.

When we claim: *‘They are racially inferior!’*; *‘They are cruel!’*; *‘They are dirty!’*; *‘Their religion is false!’*; *‘Their rituals and interdictions are immoral, uncivilised, stupid!’*. To sum up, when we attack their values, we are being xenophobic.

At the same time, when they attack our values they are being xenophobic as well. They must be stopped. They call for more xenophobia in society. They generate the xenophobia spiral.

We must assume part of the responsibility for their exacerbate retaliations, and for enrooting a xenophobia spiral.

They must assume the limits – and the requests – of Our culture when they try to live in such a culture. They must assume the responsibility for keeping it alive, in progress for the sake of their own wellbeing.

We create concerning xenophobic situations (xenophobic contents) when we do not make it clear for everybody from the very beginning that the philosophy of intolerance is intolerable in a culture of diversity and tolerance. We are wrong when we take the understanding of the principle of tolerance as granted. We are even arrogant when we assume that the Others quit their opinions and ideas (philosophies included), about their superiority and supremacy. The large majority inherited those from their cultures. When we ignore it, and pretend the Others abandoned those in favour of our own philosophies; when we ignore and distrust their culture and when we brutally call them to do the same, we pave the way for xenophobia.

In conclusion, we are responsible for xenophobic manifestations when we are hostile to the Others, when we treat them as enemies in a civil war that does not exist. But, similarly, they are xenophobic when they treat us as enemies in a civil war. Then they call for more xenophobia against them.

We must assume part of the responsibility for enrooting a xenophobia when we do not provide them access to our education system, to our perspective and failing not to tolerate intolerance. We must assume responsibility for xenophobia when we do not make clear that the principle of tolerance is not negotiable. We are responsible to let them follow the intolerant and exclusive commandments of their culture in a new milieu, to let them believe that they legitimately fight us back when we just call for tolerance and inclusion.

They must strive to accomplish the host culture's philosophy of tolerance, just to strengthen their own welcome in our culture. They must assume the responsibility for keeping tolerance alive and in progress for the sake of their own wellbeing.

We create severe xenophobic situations (very severe xenophobic contents), when we present xenophobic attitudes as facts. We manifest xenophobic behaviour when we create, organise/support forces that persecute, exploit, chase, take measures to destroy them.

Synthetic approach to the intolerant and xenophobic values, opinions, ideas, attitudes and behaviours in society

All the above-mentioned components related in one single schema are available in *Table 2*.

Table 2: A matrix of xenophobia in contemporary democratic societies

	Individual xenophobia		Group xenophobia		National or European xenophobia	
	Contents Examples	Frequency and ratio	Contents	Frequency and ratio	Content	N/ Fr&R E/ Fr&R
Negation of their values and negative judgements against other/s	Claims such as 'He/she came from a culture that is primitive; is barbarous, dangerous'.		<i>Similar to column 2 and: We deserve to decide about their fate.</i>		<i>Similar to the content of column 2 and 5 plus: Our Nation/ EU proved our superiority.</i>	
Expressing opinions and ideas against other/s publicly	They are lazy, brutal, villainous. They came with intentions to invade us.		<i>Similar to column 2, but supported in groups – tiny, medium, large⁸</i>		<i>Similar to column 2 and 4 but supported by the groups – mainly political parties large enough to get national/EU voice⁹</i>	
Taking attitudes and/or pressing for attitudes against other/s	<i>Keep them away from us! Chase them!</i>		<i>Similar to the content of column 2 but supported in groups – tiny, medium, large¹⁰</i>		<i>Similar but supported institutionally by the State¹¹</i>	
Behaviours against other/s	Transposing some or all the xenophobic attitudes into individual facts		Collective facts resulted from xenophobic attitudes		Institutional xenophobic facts (laws, institutions to chase, persecute, expel, eliminate Others)	

Source: compiled by the authors

The requested contents in the columns about their frequency in a delimited interval and about their ratio that occur in a concrete society would give a fair picture of their significance.

The ratio could be only estimated by experts in sociology, or political strategists.¹² To understand xenophobia trends in a given society, the electoral successes of xenophobic

⁸ When political parties take such ideas in their Manifestos and get elected *Xenophobic Ideas* become *Political Drivers*.

⁹ When such political parties get largely elected *Xenophobic Ideas* become part of the State Policies.

¹⁰ When political parties militate, spread such attitudes and get elected xenophobia becomes a politically acceptable attitude and ready to explode at the general scale.

¹¹ When the state or supra-national bodies do not supra-nationally sanction xenophobia, it becomes politically acceptable and the International Standards are breached and the Governance is in danger!

¹² A *grosso modo* image about the xenophobic phenomena *ratio* in a concrete social universe could be considered their *ratio* in the public opinion's picture at a specific moment. It could predict the electoral

parties are to be considered and they must be considered at least in three successive electoral processes.

The key notions in *Table 2* are Other and Us. Special attention is to be paid to ‘who’ is designated as Other. Anytime and anywhere, somebody could be unexpectedly designed as Other.

Looking at the contents, we can learn that among the people unaware of what xenophobia is about, meeting people who come from (or are connected to) other countries or cultures, can provoke different reactions: ranging from deliberated ignorance and indifference to extreme violence.

Individuals, groups and nations who could become intolerant or xenophobic, or who have already developed such manifestations prove to be:

- ignorant to reality, problems and sufferings of foreign victims in serious situations; when they find out, they tend to self-excuse with the universal: ‘But I did not know!’
- readily making fun of foreigners, without concerns of the injuries and damages they cause
- ready to keep an unreasonable distance from Others
- ready to embrace the ideas that all Others, even those persecuted, are invaders and must be neutralised, rejected

When such reactions are institutionalised, the institutions enter the vicious circle of xenophobia, or in the xenophobia spiral, that leads to more and more xenophobia imposed on society, with less and less space for opposition and protests. In a society with institutionalised xenophobia, institutions act for:

- keeping the public ignorant about the Others’ condition and about reality
- isolating Others from the local people, in special camps, Bantustans, and so on, presented to the general public as ‘No-Go’ areas
- depriving them of much needed employment, medical, educational and social opportunities
- at times, ignoring their enslavement and exploitation by criminals
- Public institutions do not develop effectively:
- concerns for foreigners; victims of threats of violence and physical attacks (beatings, molestation, kidnappings, rapes, and so on)
- protection against human trafficking, crimes, or mass crimes against those called foreigners (Rwanda case)

It has to be underlined again that anti-xenocracy is not xenophobia. The movements of Gandhi or Mandela against the oppressors of their people could not be and is not categorised as xenophobic. Such movements were inspired by universal values and were oriented towards achieving freedom to all the oppressed. Gandhi, in his South Africa

results of the xenophobic political entities – parties/alliances – in the near future. A fair *ratio* – the one not inflamed by the current political propaganda – is *post factum* acknowledgeable.

actions, fought against not only the expulsions, persecutions, discriminations of the Indian migrants, but he also embraced the cause of all the persecuted immigrants or natives exploited by the English and Dutch colonists in South Africa. Such movements did not ignore the cause of the most humiliated and persecuted people. Gandhi fought, back in India, for the ‘untouchables’, too.

Anti-xenocracy could become xenophobia. It does so when: a) the universal values are not on the horizon for freedom, or when such values are abandoned; b) when they militate against such values; c) when the aim of anti-xenocracy militants is only to replace the incumbents with themselves and to take revenge by persecuting their previous oppressors.

Special tools for recognising and ranking political parties’ xenophobia

A minimal internet research in English (“xenophobic parties in Europe”), brings up over 252,000 results. A similar quest done in French leads to 237,000 results. Even though many of the results are repeated several times, the number is scary either way. Europe seems to be in a darker age already. But is it the case? We try to rationally understand words, labels, stigmas; but they are far from fairly describing the real content. The meaning of a xenophobic party is automatically overlapped by the populist, radical, far-right terrorist groups. The key concept of being xenophobic is clearly unclarified in the overwhelming number of entries about it. More clarifications are needed, because such numbers instantly lead to label Europe as xenophobic. The minimal objections that Europe is not the Middle East do not come to the minds overwhelmed by numbers.

In order to try to bring some clarifications here, we have to: 1. introduce a simple differentiation (after their current political support) among parties labelled as xenophobic and alleged as major public dangers; 2. to make the criteria of the analysis that drives to their characterisations as xenophobic transparent; 3. to measure their degree of xenophobia and to provide a scale to indicate their degree of xenophobia.

Items in assessing political parties as xenophobic and a possibility of categorising them

Which are the items that could help the analysis of categorising a party as xenophobic?

Four features, each with two levels, characterise an absolutely xenophobic party:

1. a) open attacks on the universal values and human rights, or the abandonment of these; and b) the exacerbation of our identity’s values, legends and symbols; such parties expose these in their literature (philosophical and ideological writings), journals, sites, electoral Manifestos, political programs; legal and political proposals
2. political positions of constant attacks towards: a) democracy; and b) constant claims for their own supremacy as a race, nation, social group, and so on

3. the organisation: a) as a brotherhood; and b) total devotion and submission to the group leadership; it is impossible to criticise, challenge or replace, or even quit it
4. attached military/paramilitary forces:¹³ a) are ready to punish the Others for their immoral, illegal, or intolerant deeds to set an example; b) are ready to accept missions of imposing terror

Starting from the pattern of a very xenophobic party, the parties with xenophobic features can be identified and even classified. We propose such a pattern in *Table 3* with the aim of providing a tool for acknowledging the differences between such parties.

Table 3: Items in recognising the political parties' degrees of xenophobia

Score of the 'Colours' (in points)	Assumed positions and peculiar organisational patterns	Peculiar tenets
2	Syncretical	<i>Only recognised publicly as xenophobic, due to their names, alleged roots, or political opponents labelling them as such.</i>
1 x 8 = 8	No to universality	No to the universal values, No to equality
2 x 8 = 16		No to <i>Human Rights</i>
3 x 8 = 24	No to democracy	No to inclusion, Yes to exclusion
4 x 8 = 32	Yes to our supremacy	Yes, to our Race's, Nation's, Language's, Culture's, Social Group's supremacy
5 x 8 = 40	Monolithic organisation	Organisation 'in the brotherhood system' totally closed to Others
6 x 8 = 48		Organisation in total submission to the leader
7 x 8 = 56	Militarised groups attached	Paramilitary forces ready to become executioners
8 x 8 = 64		Military and Militia forces ready to become executioners
Total points 300		

Source: compiled by the authors

An absolutely xenophobic political party is one that totals a score close to 300, but not lower than 250 points.

An extremely xenophobic political party is one that totals a score between 249 and 200 points.

A very xenophobic party is one that totals a score between 199 and 150.

A xenophobic party is one that totals a score between 149 and 100.

A moderately xenophobic party is one that totals a score between 99 and 50.

A party with some xenophobic tendencies, but essentially non-xenophobic is one that totals a score between 49–3.

A label that claims that a party is xenophobic indicates a party that totals only 2 points for xenophobia. They are due only to the label.

¹³ The leaders of the Golden Dawn party (Greece), inclusively Nikolaos Michaloliakos were convicted of leading a criminal organisation.

Table 4: Scale to assess political parties according to their degree of xenophobia

Totally xenophobic	Extremely xenophobic party	Very xenophobic party	Xenophobic party	Moderately xenophobic party	Party with some xenophobic tendencies	Falsely labelled as xenophobic
300–250 Xenophobic points	249–200 Xenophobic points	199–150 Xenophobic points	149–100 Xenophobic points	99–50 Xenophobic points	49–3 Xenophobic points	2 points maximum

Source: compiled by the authors

Ranking xenophobic political parties on the basis of their political position and of social peril

The categorisation of political parties (in general) is making it obvious that some of them are in power as Executives (at the Government); others are in power as part of the Legislative; others are out of power as non-parliamentary parties, but with some opportunities to come to such positions, and others are simply peripheral and ephemeral, with extremely limited chances to get to the legislative. Using such categorisation for political parties taken as xenophobic (and their ability to generate public danger of xenophobia), results in a general matrix of the xenophobic political parties and their ability to incite more xenophobia in Europe.

Rank I. Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Major, Infrequent Parties (from the EU's values' perspective), in Executive.

Rank II. Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Minor, Infrequent Parties (from the EU's values' perspective), in Executive.

Rank III. Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Major, Infrequent Parties (from the EU's values' perspective), with large support at a national and European level, but institutionally controlled and blocked in their attempts to generate xenophobia in the region/country and the EU at large.

Rank IV. Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Minor, Infrequent Parties (from the EU's values' perspective), with some support even at a national and European level, but isolated in Parliament and controlled institutionally not to generate radical and xenophobic programs.

Rank V. Xenophobic Non-Parliamentarian Minor Parties – out of the EU Legislative – with some representation in the national, regional legislatures, or local decisional bodies. They are parties without the capacity to produce concern for exploding public xenophobia, anti-immigration and harsh persecutions towards Others.

Rank VI. Xenophobic Non-Parliamentarian Peripheral Parties – out of the EP, out of national and regional legislatures – with some representation in the local decisional bodies. They are parties without significant popular support, which are prompted to, but out of capacity, to cause concerns for inciting public xenophobia, anti-immigration and harsh persecutions towards Others.

Table 5: Political parties' xenophobic ranks according to their capacity to cause harm in society

Rank	Political position	Examples
Xenophobic parliamentary parties		
1. Rank I	Major, Infrequent ¹⁴ Parties, in the Executive	Not identified in Europe
2. Rank II	Minor, Infrequent Parties, in the Executive	See the map of James Mayfield/Geo-Currents (Figure 3) for the 2013 political xenophobia in Europe. In 2019–2020 xenophobia is significantly decreasing. A possible example is in Lithuania: <i>Order and Justice Party</i>
3. Rank III	Major, Infrequent Parties – with large support at a national and European level, but institutionally controlled and blocked not to generate xenophobia in the EU.	Italy: <i>La Lega</i> (lead by Matteo Salvini)
4. Rank IV	Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Minor, Infrequent Parties, with some support even at a national and European level, but isolated in Parliament and controlled institutionally not to generate radical and xenophobic programs.	The Netherlands: <i>The Liberty Party</i> (lead by Geert Wilder)
Non-parliamentary parties at the EU level		
5. Rank V	Minor Parties – out of the EU Legislative, EP – with some representation in the national, regional legislatures or local decisional bodies.	Portugal: <i>Chega (Enough)</i> of Andre Ventura won 1 seat in the current National Parliament
6. Rank VI	Peripheral parties, out of the EP, out of National and regional legislatures – with some representation in the local decisional bodies.	Poland: <i>Party of Lesek Bubel, National Party (SN)</i> and the <i>National Revival of Poland (NoP)</i> of Adam Gmurcsyk
7. Rank VII	Other parties, especially Minor Parties only labelled as xenophobic by their political opponents.	

Source: compiled by the authors

Looking at the xenophobic points totalled by a political party/alliance together with its rank, the perils for a social consensus and for an inclusive Europe can be more accurately predicted.

We believe that a pattern to evaluate when a political party is xenophobic and when it can produce harm in society is useful. It is useful for politicians, journalists, civil society exponents, the public and political scientists alike. That is why we proposed the above tools. Of course, the experts' critiques would improve them. The sociologists' calibrations would give them measurable dimensions.

¹⁴ The term infrequent is used here for a party/alliance that does not observe the values on which the EU is founded.

The instruments in action: Political parties' xenophobia and how they are seen in public communication

EU 2019–2020

Political parties' xenophobia estimated with the concept provided and with the proposed tools. A simplified analysis directed by the orientations provided and conducted with the proposed tools offers the following view on the stage of xenophobia in Europe in 2020.

Xenophobic parties of Rank I: In the EU, we did not identify such parties. Among the world's democracies, the position is illustrated by the Turkish governing party, Justice and Development Party (AKP), with its firm position against opposition, minorities and free speech, as well as with its populism and neo-Ottomanism.¹⁵ Some of the parties in power, categorised as xenophobic by their political opponents are assumed by their European political families as frequentable parties of the right-wing groups.

Xenophobic EP Parties of Rank II: Xenophobic Parliamentary-Minor, but Infrequent parties (from the EU's values perspective), in the Executive is a category hardly to be identified in today's EU, except for the Bulgarian Ataka.

Xenophobic EP Parties of Rank III: Xenophobic Parliamentary-Major, but Infrequent parties (from the EU's values perspective), in the Legislative is represented by La Lega, firstly.

In France, the National Rally assumed open attacks on Human Rights – anti-refugees stands mixed with anti-immigration positions and pro-nationalist approaches. Recently, the party made changes in its ideology and political programs. They changed the name The Front¹⁶ National to National Rally; they transformed the previous slogan '*France for the French People!*', to '*France First!*'. The National Rally assumed political positions of an anti-federal European Union, in favour of the Europe of Nations, and abandoned the plan of the Frexist program. (They gathered the ID group in the EP.) Comparatively, with its history, the party moderated its positions and moved towards the ideology of new-nationalism. At the current stage of research, we did not identify supremacist claims; neither brotherhoods or totalitarian organisations, nor military organisations are attached to their party. We estimate that in 2020 it totals around 150 xenophobic points, being in the middle of the scale of the xenophobic parties. Being out of the National Executive, their xenophobic capacity (to impose xenophobic policies and to seriously harm the society) is not major, but still concerning.

Xenophobic EP Parliamentary-Infrequent Parties of Rank IV: They have support in some regions. The Alliance for Germany (AfD), which enjoys massive support in the regions of East Germany, is the most obvious example. (The AfD has some support, even at a national and European level. They gathered the ID group in the EP.) They are isolated (with other political mechanisms and major political parties' positions, which regard AfP

¹⁵ *Justice and Development Party* (AKP) in Turkish, *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, abbreviated officially AKP, known under the acronym AKP.

¹⁶ The word front suggests bellicose or, at least, military connotations.

as infrequent), because of their radical and xenophobic programs. They are prompted in a political capacity to cause concerns for inciting xenophobia, anti-immigration and harsh persecutions towards Others. We estimate that in 2019–2020, each of them totals more than 150 xenophobic points. Not having any chance to access the National Executive, their capacity to impose xenophobic policies and to harm society is minor. At the regional level, where they have substantial electoral support, concerns on their capacity to destroy the social consensus are to be taken seriously at the regional level.

Xenophobic Non-EP Parliamentary Minor Parties of Rank V: They are, in many cases, out of national and regional executives. They mobilised some support and got into regional legislatures. They are political parties without the capacity to cause concern for inciting xenophobia or anti-immigration at a national and EU level, because they are minor and possibly easy to be blocked in their xenophobic intentions by the major parties or other EU institutions. FPO (Austria) and Jobbik (Hungary) illustrated this category until the recent 2019 EU elections.

The European Panorama of Xenophobic political parties can be easily understood if we take a look at the maps (compelled in the current decade) provided below from reliable sources.

EU 2019–2020 – The decrease in electoral support for the political parties known as xenophobic and their capacity to destroy the current political consensus

The three maps below introduce serious alerts on an political xenophobia in the EU. Member States' positions in the Council of European Union during the immigration crisis (2015–2018) confirmed it. The policy of sharing the burden of asylum seekers on a commonly agreed ratio/Member State failed and revealed the non-solidarity among the Member States and unexpected xenophobic views.

Reviewing the maps below helps to understand how public communication lets the public perceive xenophobia in the EU.

The two sources are not singular in alerting on an increasing number of xenophobic political parties in Europe after 2010. A historian from Stanford University, James Mayfield, posted in 2013 maps with xenophobic parties in the Executive in 2013 – as minor partner – Europe.¹⁷

¹⁷ www.geocurrents.info

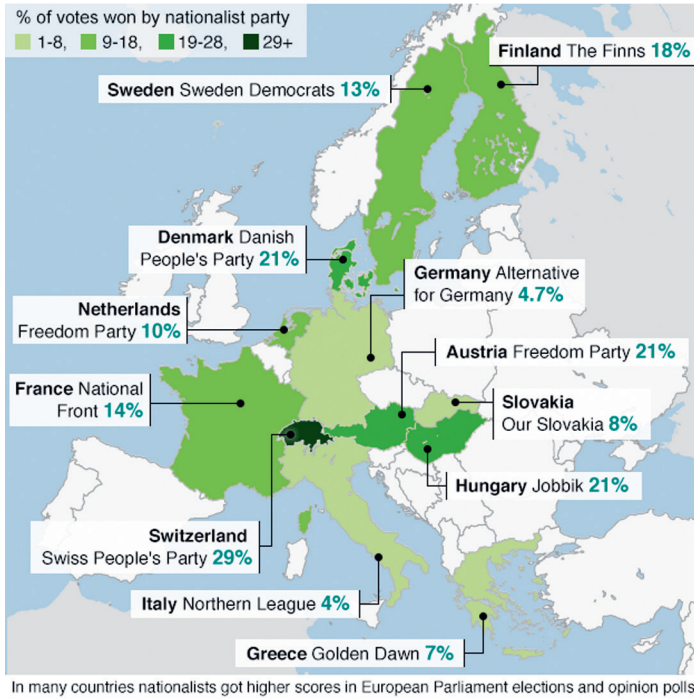


Figure 3: 2013: map of xenophobic political parties in Europe

Source: <https://assets.rbl.ms/18406880/980x.png>



Figure 4: James Mayfield map of elected xenophobic parties in Europe

Source: compiled by the authors

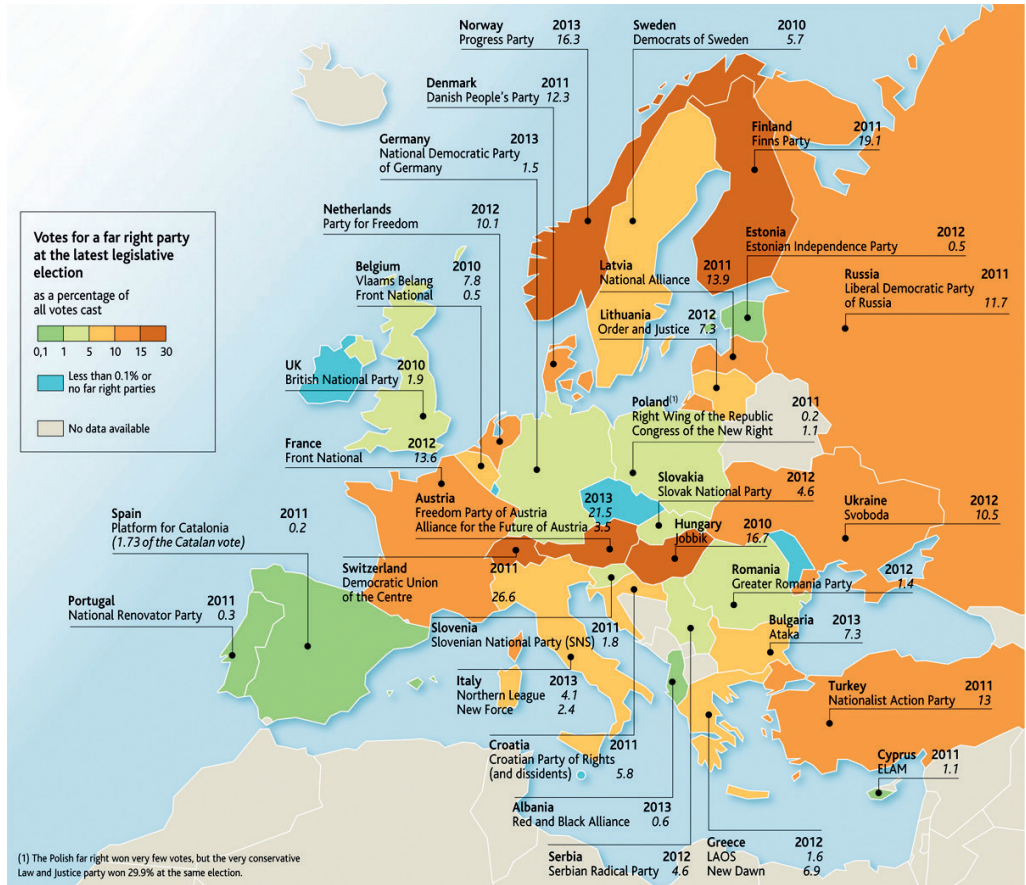


Figure 5: 2013: map of xenophobic political parties in Europe provided by Le Monde diplomatique
 Source: Philippe Rekacewicz, www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cartes/europeextreme

The myth attached to the image explains that the ‘Green colour refers to countries where the xenophobic party is in executive. Grey means not in power. (It does not explain the meaning of the different shades of grey.)’

Currently, the xenophobic parties in power in those times (among the EU Member States) are not in power at a national level anymore. They do not influence the policies of the Council of the European Union anymore.

In Bulgaria, the Atakka Party, in alliance with the Union of Patriots, as a junior partner of Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria GERB, has been in power from 2017, but no member of the Cabinet was nominated by the party.

In Greece, the Golden Dawn, which had 18 seats out of 300 in the National Parliament, did not win any seats in the Parliament elected in 2019.

In Italy, La Lega is in perpetual Opposition and it is seen as an infrequent party.

In France, the National Rally is in Opposition and it is seen as an infrequent party, despite it moving slowly out of extremist positions.

In Portugal, the People's Party of Portugal was falsely labelled as xenophobic. In 2014 it was a party in power in a Coalition Government. The Chega is the xenophobic party in Portugal.

In the Netherlands, the Party of Freedom (Geert Wilder) lost an important part of its electoral support. In 2014 it won 4 of the 26 apportioned seats in the EP; in 2019 it got only 1 seat out of 29.

A comparable dynamic is visible in almost all the Nordic Countries, as well as in the entire EU.

Taking the map of xenophobic parties case by case, completed by Mayfield, and comparing it with the 2020 EU Member States governments, the conclusion is the following: there are no similarities. There are not xenophobic parties in power at a national level, except the Attaka. There are less xenophobic parties in the EP.

Reviewing the entire situation of the xenophobic parties and their EP representation in comparison with the previous legislature it is to note that:

1. The parties of Rank VI remained peripheral.
2. The parties of Rank IV still receive support. They increased their representation in the EP. In this group, there are the Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Infrequent Parties FPO (Austria) or, AFP (Germany).
3. The parties of Rank III – Xenophobic EP Parliamentarian-Infrequent Parties receive substantial support to become seriously represented in the EP. (It is large compared to what they received in the previous legislature.)

Accordingly, a peripheral xenophobic party gathering some extremism is not concerning for now, at a European level. It is not concerning, because it is situated in the periphery of political confrontations, and in the periphery of public preferences. The parties like PEGIDA (with divisions in many EU states) is not concerning the EU policies in the current legislature. After 2015, it kept a low profile. However, in 2020, it is organising virtual marches of protests. What about the future? The analysts of the political culture in the EU Member States could provide serious predictions of its dynamic. For now, we rationally can expect to assist in its increasing as well as to its decreasing. The Nigel Farage party was extremely peripheral at the beginning, but like Brexit, it severely damaged the UK and the EU; Hitler's party followed the same trajectory.

The parties of Rank IV – Xenophobic Parliamentarian-Infrequent minor Parties succeeded to increase their support even at a national and at European levels. They are still isolated because of their radical and xenophobic programs. But how long will they remain isolated? Or, how long will they get support?

The parties of Rank III – like the National Rally (France), or the Lega (Italy), they are favoured in the two of the oldest democracies in Europe. They triumphed, but with a little bit more moderate discourse. They are not anti-immigration, but anti-illegal immigration. Is this a sign of their tendencies moving towards the Centre of the political spectre and lowering their xenophobia?

Conclusions

The following four conclusions have to be underlined:

1. Public communication on the dynamic of xenophobia in Europe needs a conceptual framework and a holistic approach, hence why we proposed such instruments.
2. The concept of xenophobia, the matrix, the assessment scale meant to suggest a holistic approach that we proposed. We believe it could be useful for future research and, especially, for the policies' designs. Naturally, they proved to be refinable after academic reviews and critics. By taking on a holistic approach, the dynamic of the public support for political parties is more predictable.
3. The tools that we proposed to capture the dimensions and the real social meaning of the political xenophobia seem to be more accurate predictors of public support for the xenophobic forces.
4. In public communication, xenophobia is contagious and vicious. Any step that is perceived as xenophobic is immediately followed by others, done by those that see themselves as targets or victims of the 'first' step. It becomes largely communicated as a dispute. In the dispute, xenophobia increases gradually. It expands in the explorations for resemblance, roots in other social phenomena with destructive potential, and more and more combatants. The circle is vicious and extremely difficult to break. What is even harder is to turn it into a virtuous one. Political xenophobia is even harder to be fought because it mobilises people, bring votes and seats. That is why we invite the experts to be mindful of the traps of xenophobic language, reports and so on.

Based on these conclusions, we invite the academia to get involved in spreading the FRA and ECRI Reports publicly on xenophobic manifestations, and to face hate speech early; to remind the public of the *EU Strategies to limit racism and xenophobia under the EU Framework Directive*.

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