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# Populist Radical Right Party Evolution: An Intra-Country Comparison of the Dutch Case

INSTITUTSKOLLOQUIUM / DEPARTMENTAL SEMINAR



**Wednesday, 14 May 2025 - 16:00 c.t.**

Room 124, Institut für Politikwissenschaft

Or join online via Zoom:

930 8975 0663 (Meeting ID), 142311 (Passcode)

Populist radical right parties (PRRPs) are united by core ideological elements — namely nativism, authoritarianism, and populism. However, while they share similar beliefs, there is considerable diversity in how these parties are organised. For instance, the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) has developed a leader-centric, memberless model, whereas others—such as the Flemish Interest Party *Vlaams Belang* (VB) and *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD)—have embraced more traditional ‘mass party’ structures. The reasons behind this organisational diversity remain unclear. Why do some PRRPs invest in mass party structures, while others opt for a more personalistic approach? This article addresses this question by analysing the strategic thinking behind organisational choices made by PRRPs in the Netherlands. The Netherlands offers an ideal case study: within two decades, the country witnessed the rise of several PRRPs, including the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF), the PVV, and Forum for Democracy (FvD). Despite ideological similarities, these parties differ significantly in their organisational models. In this paper, we argue that the FvD’s organisational structure is a synthesis of the LPF and the PVV. To avoid the internal conflict that led to the LPF’s collapse, the FvD adopted features of Geert Wilders’s tightly controlled ‘personal party’. At the same time, the FvD responded to the PVV’s financial limitations by building a broad membership base. Our findings offer clear evidence of institutional learning. By learning from the successes and failures of others, PRRPs are becoming more resilient and better equipped to withstand future challenges—making it less likely that they will fade away anytime soon.



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