

The heartland of the PVV

An overall examination of the electoral success of the PVV in
the province of Limburg





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Foreword and acknowledgements

I had no trouble deciding what to write my Master's thesis about. Ever since the electoral success of the radical right populist party the PVV in the province of Limburg – the region where I grew up and lived for several years - people have been asking me about explanations for this phenomenon. Although speculations are numerous, I never managed to present a clear-cut answer. Since the elections of 2010 Limburg is seen as a bulwark of radical right voters¹. Apparently, the electoral success of a radical right populist party is fascinating to a lot of people, not only to political scientists. Because of the numerous speculations and prejudices about the reasons for this electoral success, I decided to scientifically analyze the phenomenon. By doing this, I wanted to gain more knowledge on the situation of the PVV in Limburg, but also increase understanding of the factors that motivate people to vote for a radical right populist party in general. Although this thesis will not give a definitive and indisputable answer to my main question, it has made an important contribution to the knowledge about intra-country variation in radical right party success. Next to this scientific relevance it has strengthened my opinion that we have to take these parties and their voters seriously.

I would also like to use this foreword to thank all people who have helped me during the thinking and writing process of my thesis. First, I would like to thank dr. Andrej Zaslove for his supervision and his flexibility; he gave me a lot of independence and we had some interesting discussions about how to answer my main question. Next to this, I thank Niels Spierings for his statistical advice, which was very convenient (after not-using SPSS and my statistical skills for a while). I would also like to thank prof. dr. Hans Schmeets at the CBS, who made it possible for me to use the Dutch election survey data of 2010. Without this data, my main question would have been very hard to answer. Finally, I would like to thank Sjors and my parents for their overall support during my studies and for always believing in me.

¹ However, we have to keep in mind that almost 75% of all voters in Limburg did *not* vote for the PVV in 2010.

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Introduction

The Netherlands has long been seen as a deviant case in the sense that there did not exist a successful Radical Right Populist (RRP) party for a long time, while most of the conditions that usually explain the emergence of these parties were present (Rydgren & van Holsteyn, 2005: 41). However, nowadays this can no longer be stated. With the emergence of Pim Fortuyn and the List Pim Fortuyn (*Lijst Pim Fortuyn*) (LPF), the radical right became an important political actor within the political arena in the Netherlands¹. After Pim Fortuyn was assassinated in 2002, the 'List Pim Fortuyn' collapsed after a short period in government. Because of the departure of the LPF, there was a vacuum on the (radical) right of the political spectrum, ready to be filled by a new party. This new party entered Dutch politics indeed; the Freedom Party (*Partij voor de Vrijheid*) (PVV) of Geert Wilders. Since the PVV entered the political arena, it has been very successful. The party entered Dutch parliament by gaining nine seats in the national elections of 2006 (the first elections the party participated in), got four seats in the European Parliament in 2009 and after the parliamentary elections in 2010, the PVV got twenty-four seats in parliament. Next to this, the party has played a vital role in Dutch politics by supporting a minority government. Although the PVV has gained votes from

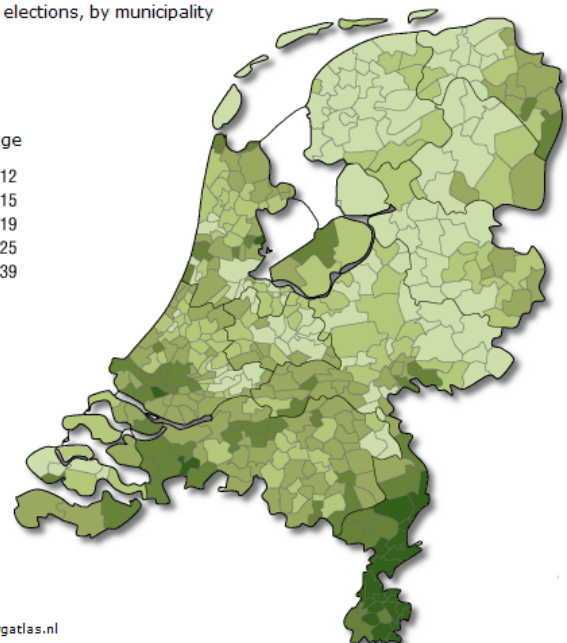
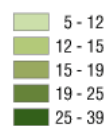
the entire country, the party has been weak in some regions, while very strong in others. When looking at the electorate of the PVV, it is striking that its main supporters are to be found in the southern part of the Netherlands, especially in the province of Limburg (see Figure 1)². In the national elections of 2010, the PVV received 15.45% of the total amount of votes. In Limburg, one out of four people voted for the PVV; the

Figure 1 : PVV-voting 2010, National Elections.

PVV-voters 2010

National elections, by municipality

Percentage



Source: Zorgatlas.nl

¹ However, the LPF has usually been seen as a deviant case in the sense that it does not represent a RRP Party in the classical sense (Rydgren & van Holsteyn, 2005: 41).

² See Table 1 in Appendix A for the exact percentages of PVV-voting by region.

party received 26,79 % of the votes in this province (Kiesraad, 2011A). In the recent provincial elections of 2011, the PVV became the largest party in Limburg and moreover, it became the largest party in sixteen municipalities, from which twelve are in Limburg (Trouw, 2011). Since the national elections of 2010, there have been numerous speculations on the reasons that can explain the huge success of the PVV in Limburg. The success of a Radical Right Populist party in a region with a relatively low amount of Muslims and non-western immigrants seems paradoxical to a lot of people. It seems to be that there are no a priori reasons why people in Limburg are more likely to vote for a RRP party than people from other regions. Then how can the huge success of the PVV in Limburg be explained? This thesis will examine and explain the regional variation in PVV-voting. By doing this, it will provide specific insights about the reasons why some RRP parties are very successful, while others fail. By examining the reasons for the variation in radical right-wing voting, more specific conclusions about radical right-wing voting can be made. Moreover, looking at the regional-level is an attractive way to examine radical right-wing voting because many (political) factors can be kept constant (for example, the charisma of the party leader) that cannot be kept constant in cross-national research (Lubbers, 2001: 6).

This thesis will explore and explain the reasons for the success of the PVV in Limburg. While doing this, a distinction will be made between demand and supply-side variables. The demand-side focuses on the perfect breeding ground for radical right populist parties, “..the supply side translates demand into practical party politics” (Mudde, 2007: 202). Regarding the demand-side of explanations, socio-economic and socio-cultural factors of Limburg, voters’ attitudes and motivations to vote for the PVV and background characteristics of the PVV electorate will be taken into account. By doing this, a distinction will be made between voters from Limburg and voters from the rest of the Netherlands, which makes it possible to state whether there are some important regional differences in the attitudes, motivations and background characteristics of the electorate and its influence on PVV-voting. The hypotheses about voters’ attitudes, motivations and background characteristics will be tested against a large amount of individual-level survey data of the Dutch national electoral survey of 2010 (NKO), provided by the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES). This foundation provides advanced electoral research of the Netherlands for further research of electoral phenomena.

Regarding the supply-side of explanations, first the political climate and culture in

Limburg will be examined, by focusing on party competition and how this influenced the success of the PVV. Furthermore, the party propaganda of the PVV itself will be analyzed; we will investigate whether the party has presented itself in a different way in different regions. In addition, the role of the regional news media in the image-building of the PVV in Limburg will be studied. The (news) media are often blamed for giving Wilders a stage and for overemphasizing the issues of the PVV. By looking whether the PVV has been framed in a different way in the regional news media than in the national news media, it will be possible to say something about the role the regional news media played in the success of the PVV in Limburg.

Central question & sub questions

The central question that will be answered in this thesis is:

Regarding the amount of votes for the PVV, how can the regional deviation of Limburg in comparison with the rest of the Netherlands be explained?

The central question will be answered by answering the following sub questions:

- 1) Are there any different voters' attitudes, motivations and/or background characteristics in Limburg that could explain the huge success of the PVV in Limburg?
- 2) Are there any differences in the political climate and culture in Limburg that could explain the huge success of the PVV in Limburg?
- 3) Are there any differences in the way the PVV has presented itself in Limburg that could explain the huge success of the PVV in Limburg?
- 4) Are there any differences between the framing of the PVV in the regional news media and in the national news media that could explain the huge success of the PVV in Limburg?

Structure of the thesis

Before answering the above questions, a theoretical chapter will examine the most important theories about radical right populist parties and the make up of their electorate. Next to this, theories about radical right-wing voting will be discussed. Using these main theories, hypotheses about voters' background characteristics, attitudes and motivations will be derived that can be tested empirically against the survey evidence. Subsequently, the research methods, the operationalization and measurement of the variables will be discussed. In the next chapter, the analysis of the Dutch Electoral Survey of 2010 and the

examination of the hypotheses will be presented. After the quantitative analysis of the demand-side variables, the relevant supply-side variables of RRP-voting will be presented and examined in a second theoretical chapter. By discussing the results of the different analyses and answering the central question, the thesis will conclude with some remarks for further research.

Relevance

Strikingly, since the rise of Geert Wilders and his party, only a handful of articles have been written about him (Vossen, 2008: 2). Because of this lack of scientific information about Wilders and the PVV, this thesis will make an important contribution to the scientific literature about the PVV and its electorate. Next to this, intra-country regional variation in radical right-wing voting has received relatively little attention in empirical radical right-wing voting research (Lubbers, 2001: 5). However, cross-national explanations of radical right-wing voting may not be useful in national contexts. There are some studies that take regional variation of radical right-wing voting into account, but mostly, these only include contextual-level characteristics like unemployment levels and percentages of immigrants. Individual-level data are usually not included (Lubbers, 2001: 6). This thesis will study these individual-level data. This way, the thesis will provide insight in processes of radical-right wing voting and it will be useful in making statements about the reasons why some RRP parties are successful, while others fail.

In addition, the thesis will take the role of the media into account. The way Wilders and his main issues are framed in the regional newspapers could have had an important role in the image-building of the PVV in Limburg. However, the role of the media in influencing voters preferences (and by doing this, influencing a party's success) has hardly been researched. It is recognized that the media play an important role in election times more and more, but the causality is hard to demonstrate (Walgrave & de Swert, 2004: 481). Since the role of the news media in framing the PVV in Limburg will be examined in this thesis, it can be a contribution to the knowledge about the influence of the media in election times, a research field that has not been widely developed yet.

Examining the electorate of the PVV in Limburg and the motivations for people to vote for the PVV is socially relevant because the deviant case of Limburg in PVV-voting is a very contemporary topic, especially after the provincial elections where the PVV became the

largest party in Limburg. There have been numerous speculations about the reasons of the huge success of Geert Wilders in Limburg, but no scientific answers have been given yet. By performing this research, questions will be answered.

The Party family of the Radical Right Populists

What are Radical Right Populist Parties and what are their main characteristics? Although the terms 'radical-right' and 'populist' are often used to describe certain types of parties, there is little agreement about the exact definition of the words. Besides the lack of consensus about what defines RRP parties, authors do not agree about the ideological characteristics of the party family either (Rydgren, 2007: 242). For some scholars, it even remains unclear whether there exists a certain party family of the Radical Right Populists (Norris, 2005: 43). According to Rydgren (2005), radical or extreme right populist parties do constitute a party family since these parties look alike in different political systems (Rydgren, 2005: 215). According to Mair & Mudde (1998), one way to determine whether there exist a certain party family and to define the family links, is to determine what parties are based on their ideological profile (Mair & Mudde, 1998: 226). Since it is possible to distinguish certain key elements that are characteristic for the RRP party ideology, I will argue that there does exist a distinctive category of parties which is called the Radical Right Populist party family. The key ideological elements of this family will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

First of all, RRP parties are focused on 'the nation'. Cas Mudde (2007) calls 'the nation' the core concept of RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 16). Because of their emphasis on the nation, RRP parties have a certain nationalistic³ element. As Mudde puts it: "... while all populist radical right parties are nationalist, only subsets of the nationalist parties are populist radical right. The populist radical right is thus a subfamily of a broader nationalist party family" (Mudde, 2007A: 29). According to Rydgren, this is mostly an ethno-nationalistic element (Rydgren, 2007: 242). Ethnic nationalism can be defined as a belief in a community of common descent. Nations are foremost the product of history; entities that are based on ancestry (Spencer & Wollman, 1998: 261). Because the state is defined in ethnic or in cultural terms, this state should be an expression of the ethnic community; the aim is to create an ethnically homogeneous nation. Those who do not belong to the ethnic community are basically excluded from the nation (Fennema, 2005: 5). This is why RRP parties stress the importance of protecting the national culture and identity and of safeguarding the interests of "the own people" (Betz, 2005: 33). RRP parties have a clear

³ Or, as Mudde calls; 'nativism' (Mudde, 2007A: 18).

sense of 'ethnic affiliation', that can be defined in terms of race and descent, but also in terms of religion, language or culture (Betz, 2005: 33). What is even more clear defined, is the 'nonnative' element, the people who do not belong to the nation and who are perceived as a threat. For most RRP parties, immigrants are the main threat, especially immigrants from Muslim countries (Rydgren, 2007: 244). Immigrants are perceived as a dangerous threat to the national culture and identity, to the social security and to the welfare states of Western European countries (Rydgren, 2007: 244). By framing immigrants as a threat, RRP parties mostly use the idea of ethno-pluralism. This is the notion that there exist *different*, not *superior* or *inferior* ethnicities and cultures (Rydgren, 2007: 244). Or, to put it differently; both the people and their ethnic communities are *unequal* but *equivalent* (Mudde, 2000: 171). According to ethno-pluralism, these different ethnicities and cultures are incompatible with each other and that is why they should be kept separated (Rydgren, 2007: 244). RRP parties believe that immigrants (who have a different culture and/or ethnicity) are unable to integrate into the western culture and society and cannot assimilate to the extent these parties demand (Betz, 2005: 35). Because of this, RRP parties strive for a so called "ethnocracy".

A second feature of RRP parties is a certain kind of authoritarianism (Mudde, 2007A: 22). The authoritarianism that is associated with radical right parties can be characterized by "the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely" (Mudde, 2007A: 23). Authoritarianism in RRP parties is usually expressed by a strong emphasis on law and order and the desire to return to traditional values (Betz, 1993: 680). This means for example a strong, authoritarian view on sociocultural issues like national identity, law & order and immigration policy.

Next to the nationalistic and authoritarian element, RRP Parties share some kind of antiestablishment feelings. The parties are hostile towards the way representative democracy and its institutions currently work and they claim to be the true democratic party who wants to bring the power back to 'the people'. Because of this hostility towards the establishment and the functioning of representative democracy, the RRP parties are classified as 'radical' (Rydgren, 2007: 243). The term 'radical' is sometimes confused with the term 'extreme'. However, the term 'extreme' is usually reserved for parties who take action outside the parliamentary arena and who oppose democracy *an sich* (Rydgren, 2007: 243). Generally, Radical Right Populist parties are not hostile towards democracy, but towards

some features of *liberal* democracy, especially towards the pluralistic values of liberal democracy and the extent to which minorities are protected (Rydgren, 2007: 243, Mudde, 2007A: 155).

The 'right' in RRP parties is harder to define. When it comes down to economic policies, most RRP parties are not right-wing in the sense that they believe in a 'laissez-faire' attitude of the government (the way 'right' is usually defined). Instead of this, a lot of RRP parties have become economically protectionist. Next to this, the economy issue is not one of the main features of the RRP party family (Rydgren, 2007: 245, Mudde, 2007A: 25). This is why Mudde defines the 'right' of RRP parties as an attitude towards egalitarianism; "... the right believes the main inequalities between people to be natural and outside the purview of the state" (Mudde, 2007A: 26). Rydgren on the other hand, defines the 'right' of RRP parties as right on sociocultural policies; "value laden issues such as national identity, law and order, immigration policy, abortion, and so on" (Rydgren, 2007: 243). RRP parties usually give priority to these sociocultural issues and are on the right side of the scale, which means that they are on the authoritarian conservative, instead of on the sociocultural liberal progressive side (Rydgren, 2007: 243,244). Nowadays, especially the anti-immigration issues are very important for RRP parties. Immigrants (and especially Muslims) are perceived as a threat to the ethno-national identity. The anti-immigration issues have become the central themes of RRP parties who want to protect the interests of "the own people" and the national culture and identity (Rydgren, 2007: 244, Betz, 2005: 33).

The last feature of RRP parties; 'populist', is defined by Mudde as a thin-centered ideology⁴ "... that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonist groups, the pure people versus the corrupt elite..." (Mudde, 2007A: 23). Furthermore, RRP parties argue that politics should be the expression of the general will of these 'pure people' and nothing is more important than this 'volonté general'. In this sense, RRP parties often refer to 'the common sense of the people', or, in the Dutch case, 'the man in the street'. According to Mudde, RRP parties are not antidemocratic, but they have a different kind of democracy in mind; the 'populist democracy'. Key features of this populist democracy are plebiscitary politics, personalization of power and primacy of the political

⁴ Within the literature about RRP parties, there also exists disagreement about whether 'populism' can be defined as an ideology, or whether it is a political style (Mudde, 2007B: 231). Because there are convincing arguments stating that populism is more than just a style, I will use Mudde's definition of populism as a 'thin-centered ideology' (Mudde, 2007A: 23).

(Mudde, 2007A: 151). Next to this, Mudde has noticed that a strong, charismatic leader often plays an important role in current populist parties, most often a leader that is not part of the establishment elite (Mudde, 2004: 560).

Although there are a lot of differences between the various parties within the RRP party family, most RRP parties share (most of) the features mentioned above. Parties within the party family are strongly focused on the nation and support an ethnocratic regime with strong authoritarian and plebiscitary elements and have an essentially antiestablishment worldview (Mudde, 2007A: 155, Rydgren, 2007: 245). According to Mudde, especially the emphasis on 'nativism' and the notion of the homogeneous, pure people against the corrupt elite makes that these parties belong to the RRP party family⁵.

The Dutch Radical Right

As already mentioned, the Netherlands have long been seen as a deviant case regarding the presence of Radical Right Populist parties. Although most of the conditions⁶ that usually explain the emergence of RRP parties were present, a successful RRP party has been absent for a long time (Rydgren & van Holsteyn, 2005: 41). During the 1990s the radical right-wing field of the Dutch political arena was described as some splintered groups, "led by a couple of fringes" (Lubbers, 2001: 16). The *Centrumdemocraten* (Centre Democrats) was the main radical right party, but this party never managed to leave the margins of the political field. Many quarrels and various splits within the radical right and poor charisma of the party leaders made the radical right in the Netherlands an unattractive option for voters. Next to this, there seemed to be some specific factors in Dutch society and history which inhibited the rise of radical right parties (Husbands, 1998: 190). However, this all changed with the rise and success of Pim Fortuyn and his LPF. Although authors disagree about whether the LPF was a RRP party in the 'classical' sense, the party was strongly focused on the Dutch national identity, used a strong anti-immigrant rhetoric and was explicitly hostile towards the way Dutch representative democracy worked at that time⁷, just as other Radical Right Populist Parties (Rydgren, 2008: 738, Rydgren & van Holsteyn, 2005: 49). After Pim Fortuyn was

⁵ However, Mudde rather likes to speak about the *populist radical right* instead of *radical right populism* (Mudde, 2007A: 26). Although he has reasonable arguments for doing this, in this thesis the term *radical right populism* will be used because this is the most conventional term that is used in the literature.

⁶ Rydgren & van Holsteyn (2005) argue that economic factors, political discontent, xenophobia and salience of the immigration issue and decline in party identification are the most important factors that favor the emergence of RRP Parties (Rydrngen & van Holsteuyn, 2005: 43,57).

⁷ Pim Fortuyn strongly criticized the so called Dutch 'Poldermodel' and 'Achterkamertjespolitiek'.

assassinated in 2002 just before the elections, the 'List Pim Fortuyn' gained a lot of votes and entered parliament as the second largest party and became part of a coalition government. However, this government and the success of the LPF did not last for long and the party collapsed after a while. Although the initial success of the LPF caused some shock waves in the political field and despite the very short political career of Pim Fortuyn and the LPF, the party had considerable influence on Dutch politics. The immigration issue and the anti-Islam notions were politicized and provoked debates within the political field. Next to this, it has been argued that after the departure of the LPF, there was a vacuum on the radical right of the political spectrum, ready to be filled by a new party. This new party entered Dutch politics indeed; the PVV of Geert Wilders. Since the PVV entered the political arena, it has been very successful. The party entered Dutch parliament with nine seats in the national elections of 2006 (the first elections the party participated in), got four seats in the European Parliament in 2009 and after the parliamentary elections in 2010, the PVV got twenty-four seats in parliament. Furthermore, it has played a vital role in Dutch politics by supporting a minority government. The main aspects of the PVV and to what extent it can be called a RRP party will be discussed in the next paragraph.

The PVV; a classical RRP party?

To what extent can the PVV be called a Radical Right Populist party? First of all, it is clear that the PVV puts great emphasis on the nation, especially on the protection and reinforcement of the Dutch national identity. The resistance against Islamization and immigration and the strong focus on preserving the Dutch national identity have become dominant themes of the PVV's politics (Vossen, 2008: 17,21,22). When compared to Fortuyn, Wilders can be seen as much more radical on the anti-Islam and anti-immigration issues. He is not just more radical in his rhetoric, but also in his policy proposals and his analysis of the threat of the Islam (Vossen, 2008: 22, Lucardie, 2007a: 164). When looking at the party platform of the PVV⁸, the party often refers to a common descent of the Dutch people and a Dutch national identity. Next to this, there are a lot of statements that refer to the exclusion and/or expulsion of (non-western) immigrants, foreigners, Muslims etc. who are perceived as a threat to the identity of the Netherlands (PVV, 2010). Furthermore, Wilders explicitly demanded for a unification of the Netherlands and Vlaanderen, the Dutch-speaking part of

⁸ For this, the party platform for the national elections of 2010 has been used.

Belgium. This unification would be based on a common culture of the people (Vossen, 2008: 17, Elsevier, 2008). All these statements clearly refer to an ethnic nationalistic view. Furthermore, the party frames the Islamic threat by using an ethnopluralist view, the notion that ethnic communities are *unequal* but *equivalent*. Wilders has, more than once, stated that the Islam is not equal to other religions (Volkskrant, 2005); “inequal cases should not be treated as equal” (Nieuwsbank, 2005). These statements clearly show an ethnopluralist view, the view that different (cultural) communities are incompatible and should live separately from each other.

Second, the PVV distinguishes itself from other Dutch political parties because of its explicit antiestablishment notions (Lucardie, 2007b: 179,180). The party refers to the establishment as the ‘left elites’ who are blamed for the failure of the multicultural society and Wilders presents himself as a political outsider who listens to ‘the people’ (PVV, 2010). Next to this, Wilders and the PVV reject some very important features of (Dutch) liberal democracy. For example, Wilders has argued that ‘the freedom of education’ (article 23 of the Dutch constitution), the freedom to create religious schools (subsidized by the state), does not hold for Muslims (PVV, 2007). Such statements clearly show that the PVV is hostile towards aspects of liberal democracy, in this case the equality of religions. In this sense, the PVV is ‘radical’ in the radical right populist meaning of the word. Some scientists have defined the PVV as (moderate) extreme right (Davidović, Donselaar, Rodrigues & Wagenaar, 2008: 179). However, the PVV does not oppose democracy *an sich* and the party takes action within, instead of outside the parliamentary arena. Because of this, the PVV cannot be defined as an ‘extreme’ party, but ‘only’ as a radical party.

Regarding the ‘right’ in Radical Right Populist, it is harder to place the PVV. According to Mudde’s definition of the ‘right’ in RRP parties, it means that a party believes in a natural order with inequalities. Because this order is natural, active state involvement can and should not overcome these inequalities (Mudde, 2007A: 26). In the case of the PVV, this definition of ‘right’ does not hold for economic inequalities; the PVV is rather protectionist and puts high emphasis on the extensive welfare state of the Netherlands (Vossen, 2008: 18). However, most RRP parties share this protectionist notion on the economic domain (Mudde, 2007A: 25). When it comes to other inequalities though, we see a different picture. In this case, RRP parties, including the PVV, often believe inequalities to be natural. Although the PVV does not talk about inequalities between (ethnic) people, it does talk about

inequalities between religions, perceiving the Islam as not equal to other religions (Volkskrant, 2005). In this sense, it can be argued that the PVV can be defined as 'right', according to Mudde's definition. However, in this case he differs from other RRP parties in the sense that he sees religious inequalities, instead of ethnic inequalities between people as natural. As discussed before, Rydgren uses a different definition of the right than Mudde does. He describes the 'right' of RRP parties as right on 'value laden, sociocultural issues'. When it comes to these issues, most RRP parties can be placed on the right, authoritarian side. However, placing the PVV on the 'sociocultural politics scale' is more complicated. With 'value laden sociocultural issues', Rydgren means issues like national identity, law & order, immigration policy, abortion, gay rights, euthanasia etc. (Rydgren, 2007: 243). However, in the case of the PVV, distinction between sociocultural issues and ethical questions needs to be made. On the one hand, the PVV has, just as most RRP parties, a very strong authoritarian opinion about sociocultural issues like national identity, law & order and immigration policy (Vossen, 2008: 16, 17, PVV, 2010: 9). With this, the PVV also corresponds to the authoritarian characteristic of RRP parties. However, on the other hand, the PVV has a very libertarian view on ethical questions like abortion, gay rights, woman emancipation and euthanasia (Vossen, 2008: 20). With this libertarian notion of ethical questions, the PVV differentiates itself from most other RRP parties. The ethical-libertarian views of the PVV can be seen as necessary for a Dutch RRP party to be successful. By arguing that the Islam is a threat to the libertarian, tolerant notions of ethical questions that can be seen as typical for Dutch society, the PVV constructed itself as the protector of these values (Vossen, 2008: 20, Mudde, 2010). Accordingly, it is possible to call the PVV a 'right' party, in the sense that it perceives inequalities between religions as natural. Next to this, the party has a strong authoritarian view on sociocultural issues like national identity, law & order and immigration policy. Regarding these issues, the PVV is not much different than other RRP parties. However, the PVV clearly distinguishes itself from most other RRP parties with its libertarian view on ethical questions.

Concerning the 'populism' in Radical Right Populist, we need to look to what extent the PVV makes a distinction between a homogeneous 'people' and a homogeneous (corrupt) 'elite'. The PVV argues that it is opposed to the political elite, which is defined as a homogeneous, progressive block (Vossen, 2008: 12, Lucardie, 2007b: 180). There has been disagreement between scientists about the extent to which the PVV distinguishes a

homogeneous people (Lucardie, 2007b: 180). However, according to Paul Lucardie, the PVV does consider the Dutch people to be rather homogeneous. He often refers to “het volk” and “ons volk” (the people, our people) as opposed to ‘the existing system’. Although Wilders often claims to be the representative of ‘the man in the street’; and “Henk en Ingrid” (PVV, 2010: 5) and therefore sometimes makes a distinction between an under- and middle class, he can be seen as a populist who often makes a clear distinction between two homogeneous groups; ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ (Lucardie, 2007b: 180, Vossen, 2008: 17). Next to this, an important feature of the PVV is the strong and charismatic leadership of Geert Wilders. Although the PVV stands for more direct democracy in the Netherlands, there is no internal democracy within the party; Wilders is the only party member (Davidović et al., 2008: 182). Geert Wilders profiles himself as a strong leader, within and outside his party. This charismatic and authoritarian leadership can be seen as a characteristic of current populist parties (Mudde, 2004: 560).

Looking at the overall picture, it is possible to define the PVV as a Radical Right Populist party. Although there are some differences between most RRP parties and the PVV, they also share a lot of important RRP features. The PVV puts, just as other RRP parties, great emphasis on ‘the nation’ and on the protection of the Dutch national identity. Next to this, the party has a clear antiestablishment notion and it can be placed on the right side of the political spectrum when it comes to sociocultural issues. Finally, the PVV distinguishes two homogeneous blocks in society; ‘the people’ versus ‘the elite’. A main difference between most RRP parties and the PVV however, is its libertarian view on ethical questions. On this point, the PVV clearly distinguishes itself from other RRP parties. However, because of all the resemblances, the PVV can still be placed in the RRP party family.

The electoral success of RRP parties explained – Demand side

Since the late 1980's, radical right (populist) parties have been a central issue not only in European politics but also in the literature about political parties. A lot has been written about the Radical Right Populist party family and the reasons that can explain the success (or failure) of these parties. However, little consensus has been achieved about these numerous explanations (Norris, 2005: 4). In this part of the thesis, the main explanations of the success of RRP parties that could be useful in explaining the electoral success of the PVV in the Netherlands and in Limburg will be discussed. Since there are no a priori reasons why voters from Limburg are more likely to support the PVV than voters from the rest of the Netherlands, the analysis will focus upon RRP voters' motivations and attitudes in general. However, first the typical socio-economic background characteristics of RRP voters will be discussed. By using these general theories, hypotheses will be derived that can be tested empirically against the survey evidence.

When discussing theories about the explanations of electoral success of RRP parties, authors usually make a distinction between demand- and supply-side explanations. Both types of theories are usually derived from sociological and socioeconomic models that build on ideas of rational voters and rational parties and are based upon changes in the social structure of society (Norris, 2005: 4, 11). According to these theories, developments in society and in the mass electorate have facilitated the success of RRP parties. When looking at demand-side explanations, it is assumed that there are certain conditions in the mass electorate that facilitate the success of RRP parties, conditions that have changed the interests, attitudes and preferences of voters (Rydgren, 2007: 247). In other words, the demand-side focuses on the perfect breeding ground for radical right populist parties (Mudde, 2007A: 231). However, these conditions by itself are not enough to explain variations in RRP party success between or within societies. When explaining these variations, it is important to acknowledge that the success of RRP parties depends upon the complex interaction of public demand *and* party supply (Norris, 2005: 4); “..the supply side translates demand into practical party politics” (Mudde, 2007A: 202). Because this research is looking for conditions that can explain variations *within* a country, the (party) supply side (the issues the PVV addresses; the charisma of the party leader, the electoral system etc.) will initially be taken out of account. Because this thesis looks at regional-level variations, it is possible to keep these factors constant that cannot be kept constant in a cross-national

research (Lubbers, 2001: 6). The supply-side factors will be included in this research later.

When examining why people vote for Radical Right Populist parties, first it is important to know *who* votes for these parties. Although the electorate of RRP parties becomes more and more heterogeneous (Mudde, 2007A: 225), the image of the stereotypical RRP voter persists; young, lower-educated males who work in low-skilled, working-class labor segments are usually still overrepresented in the radical right populist electorate (Oesch, 2008: 359, Lubbers, 2001: 231). Whether the PVV electorate matches the stereotypical RRP electorate and whether there are important differences between the PVV electorate in Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands will be examined. First, the 'usual' social background characteristics will be taken into account; gender, age, education, occupation and income. Next to this, religion and union membership will be included in the analysis. In explaining Radical Right-Wing voting it is crucial to take these social background characteristics into account (Lubbers, Gijsberts & Scheepers, 2002: 348). The reasons to include all these variables will be discussed below.

Gender. Although the overall higher support for Radical Right parties, there has been an ongoing gender gap in voting for RRP parties (Givens, 2000: 1, Evans, 2003: 6, Norris, 2005: 144). The electorate of RRP parties predominantly consists of males. The gender gap in RRP voting has hardly been researched and there are only few explanations given for it (Norris, 2005: 134). One explanation states that it is due to women's' occupations; women are more active in "communicative and symbol-producing occupations" and in public-sector jobs, which is why they may be more sympathetic towards immigrants (Evans, 2003: 6, Gidengil & Hennigar, 2005: 2). Next to this, women may be in jobs that are less threatened by globalization and immigration, which is why they are less likely to vote for RRP parties (Givens, 2000: 1). Another explanation states that women are deterred by the anti-immigrant positions that RRP parties take (Givens, 2000: 1). By all means, most explanations emphasize structural differences between men and women to be the cause of the gender gap in RRP voting (Norris, 2005: 144). Although there are no clear explanations for this phenomenon, gender seems to be an important variable when we want to uncover the electorate of RRP parties. Because there are no reasons to assume that the gender gap in RRP voting will be different in the case of the PVV (in the Netherlands as a whole and in Limburg), I expect that the electorate of the PVV will predominantly consist of males.

Age. During the 1990's, Radical Right Populist parties especially attracted younger voters (Evans, 2003: 7). The main explanation for this phenomenon is that younger voters "are less likely to be integrated into social institutions than other people" (Lubbers, 2005: 63). They have not established close ties "to socialist parties, labor unions, and ancillary organizations surrounding them" (Kitschelt, 1995: 9). These young people are in search for their identity and therefore, nationalism could be attractive for them (Lubbers, 2005: 64). Next to this, young people without job securities (often male and lower educated) may be the most influenced by the influx of immigrants, which is why they may have a more negative view towards them (Aksoy, 2011: 8). However, when looking at the age profile of Radical Right voters across different countries, we see little consistency. In some countries especially the younger cohorts are attracted to RRP parties, in other countries it is the older generation that disproportionately votes for these parties (Norris, 2005: 147, Evans, 2003: 7). The attractiveness of RRP parties for older cohorts is usually explained by the conservativeness of older people. Because older people are more likely to be conservative - reflecting a nostalgic appeal to the past - and less open to societal changes, it is argued that they are less likely to welcome immigrants and are therefore more likely to vote for RRP parties (Aksoy, 2011: 8, Norris, 2005: 146). In the case of the PVV, I expect that especially the older cohorts will be overrepresented in the PVV electorate. The Netherlands is a shrinking and ageing society (CBS, 2010A) and an ageing society is likely to vote conservative (Luyten, 2011). The population in Limburg is the most shrinking and aging one within the Netherlands (CBS, 2011) and it is possible that part of the success of the PVV in Limburg can be explained by this strong population aging. The big amount of older (and retired) people might be more likely to vote conservative, to vote for the preservation of anterior norms and values (Luyten, 2011). Furthermore, the PVV advocated the preservation of social care, especially for the elderly. For example, together with the Socialist Party (SP), the PVV was the only party that advocated the preservation of the pension age of 65. The party explicitly invested in the target group of older voters (BKB, 2011) and for these reasons, I expect that the electorate of the PVV - in Limburg and in the rest of the Netherlands - will predominantly consist of older people. The analysis of the survey data will examine whether the regional variation in PVV-voting partly disappears once we control for voters' age.

Education, occupation and income. Some important explanations of RRP party voting are based upon modernization theories, assuming that RRP parties especially attract the so-

called 'modernization-losers'; blue-collar workers, the unemployed, the lower-educated and people from poorer social sectors. The transformations of modern, postindustrial societies (like globalization, the shrinkage of the welfare state, the decline of traditional working class organizations, immigration etc.) have benefitted large groups in society, – especially the high-educated middle and upper classes – with new economic and social opportunities, but have seriously disadvantaged a group of low-educated and low-skilled workers who saw their market position seriously weakened (Oesch, 2008: 351, Norris, 2005: 131-133, Rydgren, 2007: 248). These macro-level developments have caused increased economic and social inequality and insecurity within affluent societies. As a consequence, some groups in society (especially the 'modernization-losers') have become insecure about their jobs and financial situation and they seek protection against this economic insecurity. They find this protection in the "simple messages" of Radical Right Populist parties (Mudde, 2007A: 223). Mainstream parties have not always been able to answer the needs of those 'modernization losers', unlike Radical Right Populist parties. RRP parties are explicitly against economic modernization and are very economically protectionist; they are against the internationalization of labor and trade and are especially against work immigration (Mudde, 2007A: 25, Oesch, 2008: 351). Next to this, the ethnic competition thesis has to be taken into account. Previous research has found that ethnic 'out-groups' (immigrants) are mostly concentrated in the same labor segments as the 'modernization losers'; in low-skilled, working-class labor segments where unemployment levels are often relatively high (Lubbers, 2001: 51). Because of this, ethnic competition seems to be relatively high in the lower social strata; people in lower socioeconomic positions usually feel more deprived over their socioeconomic and expected future situation (Lubbers, 2001: 53). As a consequence, people from the 'in-group' may perceive immigrants as a threat since they compete for the same jobs and houses (Fennema, 2005: 14). According to the above theoretical arguments, lower social strata, lower-educated people, people with lower incomes, unemployed people, manual workers and lower white-collar workers (the 'modernization-losers') are more likely to be insecure about their jobs and financial situation and they feel more threatened by ethnic competition. Because of this, they are more likely to hold negative attitudes towards immigrants and are therefore more likely to vote for a RRP party. Next to these economic explanations, there are also theories that explain the attraction of the 'modernization losers' to RRP parties by using cultural determinants. It is assumed that especially the lower social

strata feel unease in the liberalized and modernized societies. These people cannot identify themselves with the modernized society and instead are looking for more order, tradition, identity and security (Ignazi, 1996: 557, Rydgren, 2007: 248). They are attentive to issues such as immigration, morality and national pride, issues that are often ignored by mainstream parties, but that are very important to Radical Right parties. For these people, the Radical Right proves to be an attractive alternative to the left-libertarian parties; a more authoritarian alternative that stands for a revitalization of traditional values like order, patriotism, family, authority and morality (Ignazi, 1996: 557,558, Oesch, 2008: 352). Furthermore, it is assumed that people from lower social strata are more appealed to authoritarian parties because of their occupational experiences and limited education (Kitschelt, 1995: 9, Evans, 2003: 7,8). The above theories may be useful in explaining the electoral success of the PVV in Limburg. Limburg is a province with relatively high unemployment rates and a relatively high number of low-skilled and low-educated workers (CBS, 2003, CBS, 2010B). The analysis of the survey data will examine whether the regional variation in PVV-voting disappears once we control for voters' occupation, economic situation and education. Looking at the overall RRP electorate, I expect that the electorate of the PVV - in Limburg and in the rest of the Netherlands - will predominantly consist of people from the lower social strata. Whether these people vote for RRP parties because of economic, cultural or other reasons will be discussed in the next section when we talk about voters' attitudes and motivations.

Religion. The relationship between Christian religiosity and voting for Radical Right Populist parties in Western Europe is not a clear one; there are competing findings and hypotheses, and it is a relationship that has received relatively little attention. However, church attendance still seems to be an important predictor of vote (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 986, Mudde, 2007A: 296). The main argument states that religious voters are less likely to vote for RRP parties than secular voters. The reason for this is that the church will probably convince its members to vote for a Christian or other conservative party (Lubbers, 2001: 63). However, with the increasing de-alignment in society, this effect will probably become weaker over time (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 985). Next to this, church involvement would have a positive effect on the attitude towards immigrants and therefore, RRP parties would less appeal to religious voters (Billiet, 1995: 303). There are, on the other hand, studies that suggest that religiosity is linked to greater support for RRP parties because, for

example, Catholics and Protestants have greater levels of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism than people with no religious affiliation (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 988,989). In the case of the PVV, I expect that the overall electorate will predominantly consist of non-religious people. Christian voters are probably more attracted to vote for a Christian Democratic party than for the PVV, because the main issues of the PVV will often be at odds with beliefs and values of these voters. For example, the dissension within the CDA (the main Christian Democratic party in the Netherlands) after the national elections of 2010 about whether the party should govern in cooperation with the PVV demonstrated that many Christian voters thought that the ideas of the PVV were not compatible with their own Christian values. However, the electorate of the PVV in Limburg may be an exception and will possibly mainly consist of Catholic voters. In Limburg, where 70% of the population is Catholic⁹, the CDA was traditionally the largest political party. This changed dramatically after the national elections of 2010, in which the PVV became the largest party in almost every municipality. Many people who traditionally voted for the CDA have switched to the PVV (Trouw, 2011B). The PVV proved to be a good alternative for many voters who probably originally voted CDA. Because the PVV in Limburg mainly gained votes from the CDA, it is likely that the electorate of the PVV in Limburg will mainly consist of Catholics. However, it is also presumable that (Catholic) religious affiliation does not have any influence on the likelihood of radical right voting and that a possible effect is due to socio-demographic characteristics like age or education¹⁰.

Union Membership. Next to the influence of the church on the voting behavior of its members, the same function is addressed to unions. Although the influence of unions on radical right-wing voting has received little attention, the role of the unions could work like the role of the church; unions will probably convince its members to vote for socialist, left parties (Lubbers, 2001: 63). It is assumed that non-union members have less traditional political loyalties and this is why they are more likely to see RRP parties as a 'natural' alternative (Oesch, 2008: 353). For this reason, non-union members are more likely to vote for a RRP party than union members. Because there are no reasons to assume that the influence of union membership on RRP voting will be different in the case of the PVV (in the

⁹ 70% of the population of Limburg considers him- or herself to be Catholic (Zuid Magazine, 2011).

¹⁰ Because religious people are usually older and tend to have lower levels of education (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 990).

Netherlands as a whole and in Limburg), I expect that the electorate of the PVV will predominantly consist of non-union members¹¹.

Using the above theories and arguments about voters' background characteristics and their relationship to RRP voting, the following testable hypotheses can be derived:

H1: Men are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H2: Older voters are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H3A: Voters in lower socioeconomic positions are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H3B: Voters with lower education are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H4: Non-religious voters are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H5: Non-union members are more likely to vote for the PVV.

In the above section, the most relevant social-demographic background characteristics for Radical Right-Wing voting have been discussed. Next to examining *who* votes for RRP parties, this thesis especially examines *why* people vote for these parties. By including voters' socio-political attitudes we can examine the influence of these particular attitudes on the likelihood of Radical Right-Wing voting. By looking at the prime motivations voters have to vote for RRP parties, we can discover the reasons why people vote for a RRP party and we can see whether voters support RRP parties *because* of their particular attitudes. The combination of including voters' attitudes and motivations makes this research exceptional since most studies fail to show whether voters' attitudes are indeed central in people's party choice (Mudde, 2007: 222).

Within the literature, there is considerable agreement about which voters' attitudes are the most important predictors for Radical Right-Wing voting.

First, *negative – or nativist - attitudes towards immigrants and immigration* are seen as one of the most important predictors of RRP voting (Lubbers et al., 2002: 348, Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 990, Oesch, 2008: 351, Mudde, 2007A: 220). Radical Right Populist parties distinguish themselves from other political parties mainly because of their anti-immigrant positions and it is argued that most people vote for a RRP party because of these positions (Mudde, 2007A: 220). "To believe that anti-immigration attitudes are a very important factor

¹¹ However, only 21% of the working labor force in the Netherlands is a union member (CBS, 2009A). When interpreting the results of the analyses, this should be taken into account.

for explaining the electoral mobilization of radical right-wing parties makes some intuitive sense (...) <the anti-immigration factor> is at the core of the radical right-wing parties' political programs and dominates the images voters have of these parties" (Rydgren, 2008: 740). Next to this, mainstream parties have ignored the immigration-issue for a long time and people who are worried about immigrants often did not have many options to choose from but the radical right (Golder, 2003: 439). Allied to the anti-immigrant attitudes are negative attitudes towards refugee policy and multiculturalism (Norris, 2005: 178).

Second, an authoritarian personality is often linked to the likelihood of voting for a RRP party (Mudde, 2007A: 216, Lubbers, 2001: 54-56, Lubbers et al., 2002: 348, Billiet & de Witte, 1995: 190). The influential theory of Adorno et al. (1950) that links an authoritarian personality to fascism and the radical right argues that people with a particular authoritarian personality are more susceptible to the radical right (Mudde, 2007A: 216). People with strong *authoritarian attitudes* are usually attracted by the law and order issues of RRP parties. This attraction is even stronger when a RRP party has a strong leader with authority (Mudde, 2007A: 221, Lubbers, 2001: 57).

Third, *political dissatisfaction* or political resentment is an important predictor of RRP voting (Mudde, 2007A: 221, Lubbers, 2001: 66, Lubbers et al., 2002). People who feel political powerless and who lost their trust in mainstream parties are likely to vote for a RRP party because they are attracted by the antiestablishment position of these parties. People who feel that they cannot affect politics or who do not understand the political decision-making and who feel alienated by established political parties are likely to be attracted by RRP parties who claim to listen to the citizens and who want to change political processes (Lubbers, 2001: 67). Therefore, voters with strong feelings of political dissatisfaction, disenfranchisement or with low political trust are more likely to vote for a RRP party. When people mainly vote for the Radical-Right because of these attitudes, it could be classified as a protest vote; a protest against the political system and the establishment (Lubbers, 2001: 69). "The prime motivation of a protest voter is to show discontent with the political elite by voting for a party that is an outcast in the political arena" (Van der Brug, Fennema & Tillie, 2005: 539).

The attitudes mentioned above; anti-immigrant attitudes, authoritarian attitudes and antiestablishment attitudes are usually the most important attitudes for predicting Radical Right-Wing voting (Lubbers et al., 2002: 348). Mudde even calls the combination of these

three groups of attitudes “the populist radical right ideology” (Mudde, 2007A: 222). The components of the populist radical right ideology might be very significant in explaining (the regional variation) in PVV-voting. Although I do not expect people from Limburg to have more negative attitudes towards immigrants than people from the rest of the Netherlands a priori, the thesis that voters from regions with small numbers of immigrants are likely to fear an influx of immigrants into their region and therefore vote for a RRP party (Golder, 2003: 440) may be relevant to Limburg. The presence of immigrants does not have to be ‘immediate’; not only direct contact with immigrants, but also rumor about immigrants can lead to resentment of them (Knapp, 2004: 306). Next to this, Limburg distinguishes itself from the rest of the Netherlands because of its pride of its own culture (Haagmans, Schaap & Strijards, 2010: 7, Provincie Limburg, 2010: 19). There is a strong sense of traditionalism among people from Limburg and the difference of the province is often emphasized¹², within and outside Limburg (Vellenga, 1975: 23). This strong sense of traditionalism and the emphasis on the ‘own culture’ of Limburg has led to a certain degree of cultural protectionism in Limburg; alien influences are averted because they are seen as a threat to the own community (Vellenga, 1975: 23). This cultural pride and protectionism may have influenced the attitudes towards immigrants. People who feel that their culture and identity have to be protected against alien influences are more likely to perceive immigrants and the multicultural society as a threat (Oesch, 2008: 352). Furthermore, recent studies of social capital found that the interpersonal trust in Limburg is lower than in the rest of the Netherlands (Schmeets & Arts, 2010: 59). Although the relationship between interpersonal trust and attitudes towards immigrants has hardly been researched, there are studies that have found a relationship between the two variables; arguing that attitudes towards immigration and immigrants partly depend on levels of interpersonal trust (Policy Network, 2010).

Regarding the authoritarian attitudes, there are studies that have found that people in Limburg have relatively stronger authoritarian sentiments than people from the rest of the Netherlands (Kuiper, 1994: 28). The reasons for this are not clear. It is possible that it is due to the high extent of Catholicism in Limburg and the authoritarian way the church used to act, and because of the authoritarian administration that governed Limburg for a long time

¹² For example, Limburg has its own dialect, which strengthens the connectedness between its population (Vellenga, 1975: 23).

(Vellenga, 1975: 23, 24). However, the regional variation in PVV-voting might be partly explained by a stronger sense of authoritarianism within Limburg.

When looking at political dissatisfaction and antiestablishment feelings, we see that political trust among people in Limburg is relatively low; people from Limburg have less trust in political institutions¹³ than people from the rest of the Netherlands (Schmeets & Arts, 2010: 59). People from Limburg feel less connected with political parties and often feel disenfranchised and ignored; they have the feeling that Limburg is of no importance within national politics and that politicians are only interested in 'de Randstad' (Korsten, 2010: 3). Furthermore, voters from Limburg felt abandoned and alienated from the CDA, the Christian Democratic party that used to be the largest political party within the province for a long time. Next to this, voter turn-out in Limburg is usually one of the lowest within the Netherlands (Schmeets & Arts, 2010: 58). This low voter turn-out can also be seen as an expression of political dissatisfaction and antiestablishment feelings (Lubbers, 2001: 66). Since feelings of political dissatisfaction and antiestablishment in Limburg are very clear, it is possible that this could partly explain the regional variation in PVV-voting.

Using the above theories and arguments about voters' attitudes and their relationship to RRP voting, the following testable hypotheses can be derived:

H6: Voters with negative attitudes towards immigrants are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H7: Voters with strong authoritarian attitudes are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H8A: Voters with strong feelings of political dissatisfaction are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H8B: Voters with low political trust are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H8C: Voters with strong feelings of disenfranchisement are more likely to vote for the PVV.

Next to the 'classical' attitudes above, there are other attitudes that may be relevant when examining the regional variation in PVV-voting. First of all, *anti-EU feelings*. RRP parties often see the European Union as a major threat to the sovereignty and independence of their own

¹³ By political institutions, political parties, politicians and Parliament are meant.

nation (Mudde, 2007A: 190). They want to protect their countries against globalization by closing borders and by putting a brake on European unification (Perrineau, 2009: 242,243). Next to this, there is increasingly Euroscepticism among citizens in the Netherlands. People perceive the enlargement of the European Union as a threat to the Dutch identity, they think the Netherlands pays too much and they are afraid of the influx of (Eastern European) immigrants (Lubbers & Jaspers, 2011: 36). Most political parties in the Netherlands advocate cooperation within and enlargement of the European Union, except for the PVV and SP (Socialist Party). For this reason it is likely that voters with strong anti-EU feelings are more likely to vote for the PVV. Although Limburg with its 'Euregio' benefits well from the cooperation with other EU-members, it does not seem to be the case that people from this province are less anti-EU than people from the rest of the Netherlands. Indeed, the majority of the population in Limburg voted 'no' against the constitution of the European Union in 2005 (Luyten, 2011), which is why it may be relevant to examine this variable.

Next to this, voters may vote for a RRP party because of reasons of *insecurity*. Some studies found a positive relationship between crime rates at the regional level and voting for a RRP party (Mudde, 2007A: 224). This could indicate that people who feel insecure about their neighborhood's safety are attracted by the law and order issues of RRP parties and are therefore more likely to vote for these parties. We will test whether this argument is true in the case of the PVV. Since crime rates and feelings of unsafetiness in Limburg are higher than the national average (Provincie Limburg, 2010: 20, Schmeets & Arts, 2010: 56, 59, Houben, 2009: 33), this may be a relevant hypothesis for explaining the regional variation in PVV-voting.

Another factor that may be central in influencing voters' party choice is *sympathy for the party leader*. Party leaders become more and more important, especially in election times. It is even argued that the image and personality of the party leader are increasingly emphasized over the ideology of the party (Campus, 2010: 219). By building an appealing image, establishing a direct and emotional link with the voter and creating media events, the process of the personalization of politics has taken place in most Western democracies (Campus, 2010: 222-224). People may have faith in a strong, (charismatic) party leader and therefore, these party leaders can count on people's vote. There is no agreement about whether Wilders has charisma¹⁴. Furthermore, in Limburg, Wilders has the plus of being "*een*

¹⁴ However, it has been argued that Wilders lacks the extent of charisma Pim Fortuyn had (Lucardie, 2007A:

van ons” (one of us). In this province, people usually have less ties with political parties, but primarily vote on candidates with which they can identify with (Korsten, 2010: 3, Luyten, 2011). These candidates are usually people from Limburg; they are often perceived as more trustworthy candidates than people from the rest of the Netherlands and they are considered to have the interests of Limburg in mind. Next to this, voters may have the idea that Wilders treats Limburg different: Wilders has recognized that Limburg has been ignored by national politics for a long time and he has argued that the PVV will change this. For these reasons, it might be possible that people in Limburg have more sympathy for the party leader Geert Wilders than people of the rest of the Netherlands and are therefore more likely to vote for the PVV. In the analysis, we will test whether this is the case.

Using the above theories and arguments about voters’ attitudes and their relationship to RRP voting, the following testable hypotheses can be derived:

H9: Voters with strong anti-EU feelings are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H10: Voters who feel insecure about their (neighborhood’s) safety are more likely to vote for the PVV.

H11: Voters who have sympathy for Geert Wilders are more likely to vote for the PVV.

Because we do not just want to know which people vote for RRP parties but also why people vote for these parties and especially, whether people vote for RRP parties *because* of their particular attitudes, voters’ motivations will also be included in the analysis. When looking at recent studies, it appears to be that ‘*the immigration issue*’ is often the key motivation to vote for a RRP party (Golder, 2003: 440). Next to this, it is argued that after the immigration issue, people vote for a RRP party because of feelings of *political dissatisfaction* (Mudde, 2007A: 224). Whether this is also the case for PVV-voters in the Netherlands and in Limburg will be examined by looking at voters’ motivations in election times.

In this chapter, we have used the most important theories about Radical Right-Wing voting to derive some testable hypotheses. These hypotheses will be empirically tested in the

following chapters. The data sources and methods we will use for this and the way the variables will be measured, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Method & Data

The survey

The hypotheses about voters' attitudes and background characteristics will be tested against an amount of individual-level survey data of the Dutch national electoral survey of 2010 (NKO), provided by the Dutch Parliamentary Election Studies (DPES). This foundation provides advanced electoral research of the Netherlands for further research of electoral phenomena. The survey is held before and after every parliamentary election in the Netherlands and it is a combination of interviews and a written or electronic questionnaire. The respondents in the NKO were randomly selected from a random sample. The respondents participated in two survey waves, one before and one after the parliamentary elections of 2010 (CBS, 2008: 17-18, 29). The response of the survey of 2010 for the first wave is 66,5% and 41,4% for the second wave and the data-file consists of 2621 respondents. This response is relatively high and has low selectivity. However - as in most electoral surveys - people who do not vote and people who are not interested in politics are usually underrepresented in the NKO (CBS, 2008: 11). In the NKO of 2010, we see a light underrepresentation of PVV-voters¹⁵ (N= 241). The underrepresentation of voters of Radical Right Populist parties is a constant feature of electoral surveys, which is usually explained by the fact that people do not always admit they voted for a RRP party (respondents show socially conformist behavior) (Oesch, 2008: 354, CBS, 2008: 39). Next to this, the underrepresentation of people who are not interested in politics can be an explanation of the underrepresentation of PVV voters in the NKO as well.

Measurement of the variables

The items that are used to measure the variables of this research are all derived from the NKO of 2010. Some items are recoded, or combined into a new variable. The items that are used from the NKO are all displayed in Appendix B. Also, the items that are used for every variable are demonstrated. The recoding and combining of the new variables will be illustrated below.

Because in this research we are only interested in the PVV-electorate, the dependent variable is recoded into a categorical variable; people who voted for the PVV are scored 1, people who voted another party or who did not vote, are scored 0.

¹⁵ 11,8% in the survey against 15,5% in the Netherlands as a whole.

The variable 'gender' is a categorical variable; male or female.

For the variable 'age', the years of birth of the respondents are recoded into six categories; ≥ 1985 , 1975-1984, 1965-1974, 1955-1964, 1945-1954, ≤ 1944 .

For the variable 'social class' we have used a variable about the self image of the respondent of their own social class with five response options.

For the variable 'education' a variable about the highest education completed has been used, which had five response options.

The variable 'religious' is a categorical variable; religious or not religious.

For the variable 'degree of religiosity' we have used a variable that asks respondents to their attendance of religious services. This variable had five response options.

The variable 'trade union member' is a categorical variable; member or non-member.

For the variable 'attitude towards immigrants', two items about the position of respondents towards foreigners and asylum seekers are combined. Both items had a scale of seven answers, which were combined into one variable. The higher people score on this variable, the more negative attitude towards immigrants they have (the Chronbach's Alpha of this scale is 0.697)¹⁶.

For the variable 'authoritarian attitudes', two items about the position of the respondents towards crime are combined into one variable. Because the second item had a scale of three answers, the first item - that had a scale of seven answers – has been reduced to a scale of three (the Chronbach's Alpha of this scale is 0.500¹⁷). The higher people score on this variable, the higher their authoritarian attitude is.

The variable 'political dissatisfaction' is created by combining two items about the position of respondents towards politics and government (Chronbach's Alpha: 0.705). The higher people score on this variable, the more political dissatisfied they are.

'Political trust' is measured by combining the trust of the respondent in the national parliament, government and political parties (Chronbach's Alpha: 0.829). The higher people score on this variable, the lower political trust they have.

'Disenfranchisement' is created by combining three items about respondent's own

¹⁶ The Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency. By using the Chronbach's Alpha it is possible to determine whether different items can be combined into one scale.

¹⁷ Although the value of this Chronbach's Alpha is relatively low, the variable will be included in the analysis because the correlations between the two items are relatively high and it could be an important variable in explaining PVV-voting.

position in politics (Chronbach's Alpha: 0.601). The higher people score on this variable, the more disenfranchised they are. By using factor analysis, it was determined that 'political dissatisfaction', 'political trust' and 'disenfranchisement' are indeed three different concepts.

For the variable 'anti-EU' we have used a variable that asks respondents to their evaluation of the Dutch EU membership. This variable had three response options.

For the variable 'insecurity', two items about the position of the respondents towards insecurity and vandalism were combined (Chronbach' Alpha: 0.618). The higher people score on this variable, the more insecure they are.

For the variable 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' we have used a variable that asks respondents to their sympathy for Geert Wilders. The variable had a scale of eleven response options.

Research Method

Since the dependent variable is a categorical, binary variable (people voted PVV, or not), the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable has been examined by using logistic regression. With logistic regression, the odds of voting for the PVV are calculated. By looking at these odds, the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is determined (de Vocht, 2006: 217). This relationship is examined by using three different models. The first model includes social (economic) background characteristics only. Model two also takes voters' 'classical' attitudes into account and model three includes all these variables, plus additional voters' attitudes. The results of the analyses are presented in the next paragraph.

Analysis of the Demand side

The results of the multivariate analyses are presented in Table 1. For every independent variable, the logistic regression coefficient (B-coefficient) and the standard error (s.e.) are displayed. The logistic regression coefficient shows how the logged odds of voting PVV increases or decreases for an increase of 1 on the independent variable. A positive value on the regression coefficient indicates a positive relationship, a negative value indicates a negative relationship. Whether the independent variable has a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of PVV voting is indicated by the number of stars (*) behind the B-coefficients. In addition, the Nagelkerke R-Square is displayed. Although this pseudo R Square measure is comparable to the R-Square used with linear regression, it has to be interpreted differently. The Nagelkerke R-Square indicates the quality of the model and has a value between 0 and 1 (de Vocht, 2006: 223). Next to this, the Chi-Square is relevant to show. The Chi-Square indicates whether including the independent variables significantly enhances the performance of the model (Pollock III, 2005: 176).

Interpretation of the Results

To determine the relationship between the social (economic) background characteristics of voters and the likelihood of PVV voting, we take a look at the first model. Model 1 shows that men are more likely to vote for the PVV than women. However, this relationship is not significant. Next to this, we find no significant relationship between age and the likelihood of PVV voting. Although we can see that almost all categories are less likely to vote for the PVV than people who are 25 years old or younger, this is not a significant relationship. The variables social class and education both appear to have a significant, negative effect on the likelihood of PVV voting. This is in accordance with the hypotheses: people in lower socioeconomic positions are more likely to vote for the PVV than people in higher socioeconomic positions and people with lower education are more likely to vote for the PVV than people with higher education. When we look at the variable 'religion', we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the likelihood of PVV-voting between religious and non-religious people. However, when we take the degree of religiosity into account, we see that there is a significant negative relationship between this independent variable and the likelihood of PVV voting. The more religious people are, the less likely they are to vote for the PVV. The difference in significance between the variables 'religion' and

‘degree of religiosity’ may be explained because the variable ‘degree of religiosity’ is a more accurate measure of religiosity than the variable ‘religion’, which requires a more black-and-white answer. Finally, trade union membership has no significant effect on the likelihood of PVV-voting. When we look at the Nagelkerke R-Square, we can see that background characteristics, – although some are related to PVV-voting – by themselves provide a less-than-complete explanation of it, the explanatory power of the first model is relatively small. This is why Model 2 and 3 also include other independent variables.

Next to the social (economic) background characteristics, Model 2 also takes voters’ attitudes into account. When looking at these attitudes, we see that there is a statistically significant effect of voters’ attitude towards immigrants and the likelihood of PVV voting. The positive relationship indicates that the more negative attitude people have towards immigrants, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. This is not the case for an authoritarian attitude; there is no significant relationship between having an authoritarian attitude and the likelihood of PVV-voting. Next to this, we see that political dissatisfaction and disenfranchisement do not have a significant effect on the likelihood of PVV-voting. However, political trust does appear to have a significant effect on the dependent variable. The positive relationship indicates that the more political distrustful people are, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. When we look at the Nagelkerke R-Square and the Chi-Square, we can conclude that the introduction of voters’ attitudes makes a significant contribution in the explanation of PVV-voting. Next to this, it is notable that the effect of education on the likelihood of PVV-voting is not significant anymore when voters’ attitudes are included in the model. After including the attitude towards immigrants, political dissatisfaction and political trust, the significant effect of education disappears and the effect is weakened. This indicates that the effect of education on the likelihood of PVV voting was mainly due to more political dissatisfaction, lower political trust and negative attitudes towards immigrants among people who are lower educated, which is why the effect of education disappears when including these variables. Next to this, after including voters’ attitudes the effect of social class on the likelihood of PVV-voting is strengthened.

In Model 3, additional voters’ attitudes are also included. In this model we see that anti-EU feelings and feelings of insecurity have no significant effect on the likelihood of PVV-voting. However, sympathy for Geert Wilders does have a very significant effect on the likelihood of

PVV-voting. Just as expected, the more sympathy voters have for the party leader Geert Wilders, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. Further, when we look at the Wald-statistics, we can determine which variables contribute the most to the explanation of the dependent variable (de Vocht, 2006: 224). With a Wald-statistic of 19.320, the variable 'sympathy for Wilders' has the most explanatory power in explaining PVV-voting, which indicates that the image of Geert Wilders has played a very important role in the elections. The variable 'church attendance' comes second (9.335), followed by 'social class' (8.188), 'political trust' (7.013) and 'attitude towards immigrants' (4.143). Next to this, the third model has a significant better fit than the first two models (Chi Square) and the explanatory power is relatively high; the Nagelkerke R-Square of 0.564 indicates that there exists a relatively strong relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

However, the explanatory factor of 'sympathy for Wilders' in explaining PVV-voting can be questioned. Although it is often said and found that there are significant differences between sympathy levels for the party, sympathy levels for the party leader and vote choice (Anker, 1998: 217), there are researchers who state that those variables are not that different from each other (Midtbø, 1997: 142). Although we assume that there does exist a distinction between sympathy for the party leader and vote choice, it could be possible that the effect of 'sympathy for Wilders' on the likelihood of PVV-voting is overestimated because the two variables are very closely correlated. Some researchers have found, for example, that "...liking a candidate is influenced by one's ideological preferences. A person can be extremely charismatic, but if a voter does not like his or her ideas, this voter will not give this person a sympathetic evaluation" (Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2010: 5). Next to this, when we test a model in which 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' is the only independent variable, we see that the Chi-Square of this model is 401.447, which indicates that this variable enhances the performance of the model the best, better than the variables in the other three models we have already tested for. However, since the independent variable 'sympathy for Wilders' and the dependent variable are possibly not that different from each other, this effect might be biased. This is why a fourth model is added, in which the variable 'sympathy for Wilders' is excluded. It is interesting to see which variable in the model is the most important predictor of PVV-voting when sympathy for Geert Wilders is not included in the analysis. The results of the analysis of Model 4 are presented in Table 2. When we look at this model, we see that when the variable 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' is excluded from

the analysis, the variable 'attitude towards immigrants' is strengthened and the significance of this variable is improved. Moreover, the Wald-statistics show that when excluding 'sympathy for Geert Wilders', the attitude towards immigrants becomes the most important predictor of PVV-voting (Wald-statistic of 18.760), followed by social class (6.868), political trust (6.692) and church attendance (5.579).

Table 1: Results of the Multivariate Analyses

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	B-coefficient	(s.e.)	B-coefficient	(s.e.)	B-coefficient	(s.e.)
Background characteristics						
Gender (Ref. = female)	0.519	0.309	0.684	0.471	1.134	0.580
Age (Ref. = ≤25)						
26-35	0.104	0.688	-1.716	1.137	-1.334	1.285
36-45	-0.248	0.617	-1.383	0.955	-1.140	1.093
46-55	-0.201	0.612	-1.000	0.840	-0.517	1.021
56-65	-0.261	0.601	-1.940*	0.869	-1.548	1.013
≥66	-0.842	0.643	-1.969*	0.872	-1.580	1.012
Social Class	-0.447**	0.164	-0.627**	0.230	-0.759**	0.265
Education	-0.467***	0.141	-0.110	0.205	-0.108	0.233
Religious (Ref. = religious)	0.176	0.368	0.006	0.544	-0.043	0.612
Degree of religiosity	-0.573***	0.142	-0.495**	0.199	-0.719**	0.235
Trade Union (Ref. = non-member)	0.004	0.352	0.064	0.511	0.502	0.599
Attitudes (1)						
Attitude towards immigrants			0.610***	0.136	0.346**	0.170
Authoritarian attitude			0.323	0.768	0.116	0.862
Political Dissatisfaction			0.327	0.173	0.415*	0.208
Political Trust			0.462**	0.180	0.554**	0.209
Disenfranchisement			-0.242	0.142	-0.303	0.175
Attitudes (2)						
Anti-EU					-0.254	0.378
Insecurity					-0.040	0.193
Sympathy Wilders					0.577***	0.131
Constant	1.429*	0.778	-10.760*	4.717	-9.443	5.135
Pseudo R ² (Nagelkerke)	0.210		0.441		0.564	
Chi-Square	69.078***		100.814***		131.590***	
N	746		560		549	

*** = p< 0.001, ** = p<0.01 * = p<0.05.

Table 2: Results of the analysis of Model 4

	Model 4	
	B-coefficient	(s.e.)
Background characteristics		
Gender (Ref. = female)	0.818*	0.483
Age (Ref. = ≤25)		
26-35	-1.711	1.156
36-45	-1.433	0.960
46-55	-1.089	0.856
56-65	-2.040*	0.880
≥66	-2.248 *	0.906
Social Class	-0.604**	0.230
Education	-0.188	0.210
Religious (Ref. = religious)	0.051	0.567
Degree of religiosity	-0.473**	0.200
Trade Union (Ref. = non-member)	0.063	0.520
Attitudes (1)		
Attitude towards immigrants	0.624***	0.144
Authoritarian attitude	0.213	0.785
Political Dissatisfaction	0.338	0.177
Political Trust	0.480**	0.185
Disenfranchisement	-0.249	0.144
Attitudes (2)		
Anti-EU	-0.213	0.319
Insecurity	0.177	0.164
Constant	-11.140*	4.944
Pseudo R ² (Nagelkerke)	0.458	
Chi-Square	104.285***	
N	550	

*** = p< 0.001, ** = p<0.01 * = p<0.05.

Hypotheses

When we look at the above analyses, we can make some inferences concerning the hypotheses about voters' background characteristics and attitudes.

Concerning the hypotheses about voters' background characteristics and their relationship to RRP voting, we can conclude that the analysis of the data is in accordance with hypothesis 3A; voters in lower socioeconomic positions are more likely to vote for the PVV than voters in higher socioeconomic positions. Further, we observed a significant, negative relationship between education and the likelihood of PVV voting. However, when voters' attitudes were included in the analysis this effect decreased and the significance disappeared, which indicates that education effects the likelihood of PVV voting via these attitudes. Next to this, the analysis shows that the other hypotheses about voters' background characteristics and their relationship to RRP voting are not corroborated. No significant relationship between the likelihood of PVV voting and gender, age and union membership has been found. However, when we look at hypothesis 4, we have to make some nuances. The analysis of the data is not in accordance with the hypothesis; non-religious voters are not more likely to vote for the PVV than religious voters. However, a significant relationship between PVV voting and 'degree of religiosity' is visible; the analysis shows that the less religious voters are, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. This can probably be explained by the theory that more religious voters are more attracted to vote for a religious party than for the PVV, because the main issues of the PVV will often be at odds with beliefs and values of these voters. The difference in significance between the variables 'religion' and 'degree of religiosity' and their relationship to RRP voting may be explained because the variable 'degree of religiosity' is a more accurate measure of religiosity than the variable 'religion', which requires a more black-and-white answer (are you religious: yes or no). As Kai Arzheimer and Elisabeth Carter also mention in their article (2009), religiosity is often operationalised in "a rather simple way" (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 987). Indeed, the importance to operationalise this variable in different ways appeared to be crucial in our research.

When we look at the hypotheses concerning voters' attitudes and their relationship to RRP voting we can conclude that the analysis of the data is in accordance with hypothesis 6; voters with negative attitudes towards immigrants are more likely to vote for the PVV than

voters with more positive attitudes towards immigrants. Next to this, the analysis corroborates hypothesis 8A and B, voters with strong feelings of political dissatisfaction are more likely to vote for the PVV and voters with low political trust are more likely to vote for the PVV. However, no significant relationship has been found between the likelihood of PVV voting and authoritarian attitudes or feelings of disenfranchisement.

Concerning the hypotheses about voters' additional attitudes and their relationship to RRP voting, we can conclude that the analysis of the data is in accordance with hypothesis 11, voters who have sympathy for the party leader Geert Wilders are more likely to vote for the PVV than voters who do not sympathize with him. Next to this, the analysis shows that the other hypotheses about voters' additional attitudes and their relationship to RRP voting are not corroborated; no significant relationship between PVV voting and anti-EU feelings or feelings of insecurity has been found.

When looking at the analyses it is possible to derive a 'typical PVV voters profile'. Who are the typical voters of the PVV and to what degree does this differ from the image of the stereotypical RRP voter? Model 3 and 4 show that the typical PVV voter is a person in a lower socio-economic position who is not very religious, who holds a negative attitude towards immigrants and has low political trust. Next to this, he or she has sympathy for the party leader Geert Wilders. This profile differs from the image of the stereotypical RRP voter in the sense that the typical PVV voter is not necessarily a lower educated man.

Regional variance

Since we are aimed to explain the electoral success of the PVV in Limburg, it would be interesting to know if and to what extent the electorate of the PVV in Limburg deviates from the electorate of the PVV in the Netherlands as a whole. Unfortunately, at the moment it is not possible to examine the differences in the electorate of the PVV between Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands because the data of the NKO of 2010 is insufficient for this. We already saw a small underrepresentation of PVV voters in the electoral survey, but there also seemed to be a relatively high underrepresentation of PVV voters from Limburg in the data of the NKO (N = 26). The reasons for this are unknown, but it is probable that it can be explained by the same reasons we saw for the underrepresentation of RRP voters in electoral surveys in general: socially conformist behavior of the respondents and

underrepresentation of people who are not very interested in politics (Oesch, 2008: 354, CBS, 2008: 39). Because of the relatively high underrepresentation of PVV voters from Limburg, it is not possible to statistically examine this group and to compare it with the PVV electorate of the rest of the Netherlands. This is why there has been chosen to compare the electorate of Limburg and the Netherlands in general (without looking specifically at the PVV electorate), for which the NKO does provide sufficient data. Although it would have been more interesting to compare the electorate of Limburg and the Netherlands specified to PVV voters, we can still derive some interesting inferences by looking at the two electorates in general.

The electorate of Limburg and the electorate of the rest of the Netherlands will be compared by using crosstabs. By using these crosstabs it will be possible to determine if and to what extent there exist important differences between the electorate of Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands. After determining these differences we can make some inferences about the factors which have – most probably – had some influence on the success of the PVV in Limburg. The electorates will be compared by looking at the key variables we distinguished in the previous analyses and which contributed the most to the explanation of PVV voting in the Netherlands; socio-economic position, degree of religiosity, attitude towards immigrants, political trust and sympathy for Geert Wilders.

As already mentioned, the data file of the NKO consists of 2621 respondents. 182 Of these respondents live in the province of Limburg, which is 6,9% of the total amount of respondents. This percentage is in correspondence with the actual spread of residents in the Netherlands; 6,7% of all residents in the Netherlands lives in Limburg (Overheid.nl, 2011, CBS, 2012). Since people from Limburg are well represented in the NKO survey data it is possible to derive some inferences when comparing the electorate of Limburg and the Netherlands. However, it is important to have in mind that 182 respondents from a population of 1 122 631 people who live in Limburg (Overheid.nl, 2011) is too small to make inferences about the whole population. This is why the results of the analyses of the NKO data will be complemented with other data from for example population screenings of Limburg of 2010 and 2011. By using the combination of these data sources it is possible to make some - but still no clear-cut - inferences about the factors that have played a role in the PVV success in Limburg.

After comparing the electorate of Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands it appeared to be that there is no significant difference between the two electorates when looking at socio-economic position and political trust. People in Limburg do not have significant lower socio-economic positions or lower political trust than people in the rest of the Netherlands. The data of the population screenings of Limburg also show that people in Limburg are not more politically dissatisfied or have lower political trust than people in the rest of the Netherlands (Provincie Limburg, 2010: 24, Provincie Limburg, 2011: 21). When linking these findings to PVV voting, it is possible to assume that the regional variation in PVV voting cannot be explained by these variables; the success of the PVV in Limburg cannot be explained by arguing that people in Limburg have lower political trust. In the case of socio-economic position it is harder to draw some explicit conclusions. When comparing the data in the NKO about socio-economic position with the actual situation in the Netherlands, we see an overrepresentation of the upper and middle class and an underrepresentation of the upper middle class, the upper working class, and the working class (Langenberg & Lautenbach, 2007: 36). Since the data about socio-economic position does not represent the actual situation in the Netherlands very well, it is difficult to make some inferences about this variable. However, when we look at the distribution of socio-economic positions in the Netherlands, we find that people in Limburg do not have lower socio-economic positions than people in the rest of the Netherlands (Zorgatlas, 2006, Limburgmonitor 2010: 9). When linking these findings to PVV-voting it is reasonable to assume that the regional variation in PVV voting cannot be explained by arguing that people in Limburg have lower socio-economic positions.

Next to the above findings the comparison of the electorate of Limburg and the Netherlands shows that there do exist significant differences between the two electorates regarding degree of religiosity¹⁸, attitude towards immigrants¹⁹ and sympathy for Geert Wilders²⁰. Tables 3, 4 and 5 in Appendix C illustrate these differences.

First, we see that in general, people in Limburg show relatively lower scores on degree of religiosity than people in the rest of the Netherlands. Although - in comparison with the rest of the Netherlands - more people in Limburg have stated they are religious, when looking at

¹⁸ $P < 0.01$.

¹⁹ $0.01 > p < 0.05$.

²⁰ $0.01 > p > 0.05$.

the degree of religiosity they show lower scores. These findings are supported by findings of CBS; although there are relatively more religious people in Limburg, they show a lower degree of religiosity (CBS, 2009B: 41, 43). The reason that people in Limburg have a relatively lower degree of religiosity is probably because the majority is Catholic and Catholic people in the Netherlands score relatively low on church attendance (CBS, 2009B: 44). When linking these findings to PVV-voting it could be possible that the relatively lower degree of religiosity in Limburg has had a positive influence on the success of the PVV in the province since we have already seen that degree of religiosity has a significant negative relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting.

When looking at the variable 'attitude towards immigrants' we can see that in general, people in Limburg show a more negative attitude towards immigrants than people in the rest of the Netherlands. Data of population screenings of Limburg also demonstrate that people in Limburg show relatively more negative feelings towards immigrants than people in the rest of the Netherlands (Provincie Limburg, 2010: 20, Provincie Limburg, 2011: 15). When linking these findings to PVV-voting it could be possible that the relatively more negative attitudes in Limburg towards immigrants have had a positive influence on the success of the PVV since we have already seen a significant positive relationship between negative attitudes towards immigrants and the likelihood of PVV voting.

When looking at the variable 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' it is noticeable that in Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands, the majority of the people does not have a lot of sympathy for Geert Wilders. However, the crosstab does demonstrate that in Limburg, relatively more people have sympathy for Wilders than people in the rest of the Netherlands. It is notable that beyond score '4'; the point from which the scale of sympathy turns positive, more people from Limburg than people from the rest of the Netherlands are represented. When linking these findings to PVV-voting it could be possible that the relatively more sympathy feelings for Geert Wilders in Limburg have had a positive influence on the success of the PVV since we have already seen a significant positive relationship between sympathy feelings for Wilders and the likelihood of PVV voting.

Although we have said that the data of the NKO is not sufficient enough to draw some clear-cut inferences about the PVV's electorate in Limburg and the differences with the electorate of the Netherlands, we have executed a logistic regression model with the variable 'region'

included. Even though the data of Limburg is not very extensive, testing a model for Limburg with the most important variables included can provide interesting insights about the value of these variables. For testing this model, we have first created a categorical variable for Limburg. People who live in Limburg are scored 1, people who live in other provinces are scored 0. When including this variable in logistic regression with 'PVV-voting' we see that, indeed, people in Limburg are more likely to vote for the PVV than people from the rest of the Netherlands²¹. After – separately - including the variables 'social economic position', 'degree of religiosity', 'attitude towards immigrants', 'political dissatisfaction' and 'political trust', we see that 'attitude towards immigrants' has a clear influence on the coefficient and the significance of the variable about Limburg; the coefficient decreases and the significance disappears. This indicates the importance of the variable 'attitude towards immigrants' in the explanation for the success of the PVV in Limburg. The same happens when including 'sympathy for Geert Wilders'; the importance of this variable is demonstrated again. However, as we have already seen, this variable has to be interpreted cautiously. In addition, we have executed this logistic regression with only those cases in the dataset that had no missing values on all the variables that were included in model 3 (N = 549). By doing this, we have made sure that this last model is based on the same data as the other models, and that bias can be excluded.

Next to the above key variables, there are other variables that are relevant to take into account when looking at the regional electorate of the PVV. First, religious affiliation. We have already seen that 'degree of religiosity' has a significant negative relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting. At the same time, the variable 'religious' was no significant predictor of PVV voting. However, it is possible that religious affiliation also plays a role in RRP voting. We have seen that there are theories that state that Catholics and Protestants are more likely to vote for RRP parties because they have greater levels of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism than people with no religious affiliation (Arzheimer & Carter, 2009: 988,989). The variable 'religious affiliation' may be relevant in the case of the PVV in Limburg since 70% of the population in Limburg²² is Catholic (Zuid Magazine, 2011, Kuiper, 1994: 26). This is why we have analyzed a fifth model, where the variable 'religious affiliation'²³ was

²¹ $P < 0.05$

²² By way of comparison: 30% of the population in the Netherlands as a whole is Catholic (CBS, 2009B: 42).

²³ This variable was measured in the NKO of 2010 by asking respondents their religious denomination.

included. However, this fifth model showed that ‘religious affiliation’ does not have a significant relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting and that Catholic people are not more likely to vote for the PVV than people with other religious affiliations. This is why it is reasonable to state that the regional variation in PVV voting cannot be explained by the fact that a relatively high percentage of the population in Limburg is Catholic.

Next to religious affiliation, it is relevant to take the variable ‘regional identification’ into account. In comparison with the rest of the Netherlands, the province of Limburg disassociates itself in the sense that people are very strongly attached to their region (Kuiper, 1994: 26). The feeling of being a citizen of Limburg is very strong; 89% of the population of Limburg claims to have the feeling of being a citizen of Limburg. In comparison, 57% of the population of the Netherlands claims to have this feeling for its own region (Provincie Limburg, 2010: 5). Next to this, 92% of the population of Limburg is proud to be a citizen of Limburg, 81% of the population of the Netherlands claims to be proud to be a citizen of its region (Provincie Limburg, 2010: 5). The variable ‘regional identification’ may be relevant in explaining the success of the PVV in Limburg since there are theories that state that people who are very strongly attached to their region are more likely to vote for a RRP party. A less national attachment among people in a specific region could indicate more negative feelings towards other populations, like people who are not from this specific region and immigrants (Dotinga & van Oudenhoven-van der Zee, 2010: 17). Since feelings of regional identification are very strongly present in Limburg, we have analyzed whether people with strong feelings of regional identification²⁴ are indeed more likely to vote for a RRP party. However, the analysis showed that ‘regional identification’ does not have a significant relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting; people with strong regional identification are not more likely to vote for the PVV than people without this identification. This is why it is reasonable to state that the regional variation in PVV voting cannot be explained by the fact that a relatively high percentage of the population in Limburg has strong feelings of regional identification.

Finally, it is important to examine whether people also vote for the PVV *because* of their particular attitudes. This is why we will look at voters’ motivations; why do voters vote for a

²⁴ This variable was measured in the NKO of 2010 by offering the following statement to the respondents: “I feel more attached to the region I live in than to the Netherlands”. The item had a scale of 5 answers, from “fully agree” to “fully disagree”.

RRP party? By looking at the issue that voters have identified as the most important national problem in 2010, we can identify the importance of issues to voters; the salience of specific issues to the public can be examined. Although issue importance is not necessarily an explicit motivation for people to vote for a specific party; it has been argued that when people perceive a certain issue as important, they “are more likely to rely on their attitudes towards that issue when evaluating candidates and deciding whom to vote for” (Fournier, Blais, Nadeau, Gidengil & Nevitte, 2003: 51). Issue importance is demonstrated to have powerful impact on candidate preference and vote choice (Fournier et al., 2003: 53). To operationalise ‘issue importance’ we look at the variable in the NKO that asks respondents to the most important national problem in the Netherlands in 2010. This question was open-ended, so respondents could mention any issue they perceived as the most important national problem. In Appendix D, the issues that were most mentioned are displayed. Furthermore, we have made a distinction between issues mentioned by people in Limburg and issues mentioned by people in the rest of the Netherlands. When we look at both tables, there are a couple of things that are notable. First, we see that the first three issues are the same, people in Limburg and people in the rest of the Netherlands perceive ‘the economy’, ‘(ethnic) minorities/ foreigners’ and ‘healthcare’ as the most important national problems. However, when we look at the following issues it is remarkable that issues like ‘decreasing welfare services’ and ‘pensions’ are higher rated by people from Limburg than by people from the rest of the Netherlands. Next to this, we see that some issues that are mentioned by people from Limburg are not mentioned at all by the rest of the people; ‘bureaucracy’, ‘poverty’ and ‘class differences’. Also, it is interesting that the issue ‘crime’ is less perceived as a problem in Limburg and that the issue of ‘safety’ is not mentioned at all by people in this province. The overall picture seems to be that people in Limburg worry more about economic issues (by this we mean not only ‘the economy’, but also welfare services, poverty and class differences) than people in the rest of the Netherlands. Although the number of respondents from Limburg in the NKO is too small to make inferences about the whole population, the tables in appendix D might indicate that economic factors have played a more important role in the success of the PVV in Limburg than we expected. There are numerous theories that have argued that “nativist economics” is an essential feature of RRP parties’ ideology and success. A nativist economy is “at the service of the nation and only the nation” (Mudde, 2007A: 122, 125, 132). To examine whether economic factors are

significant predictors of the likelihood of PVV-voting, we have included some economic variables in our model. Three variables have been included; one variable about taxes, one variable about foreign aid and one about government interference in the economy²⁵. After including these variables in the analysis, we saw that the explanatory power of the model was only slightly improved and only the variable about foreign aid turned out to be a significant predictor of the likelihood of PVV-voting²⁶. However, it is questionable whether this variable is a 'truly' economic variable, or whether this variable indicates a certain extent of welfare state chauvinism; the idea that the welfare state of the nation "... can only be sustained at the required level when it is limited to the own people" (Mudde, 2007A: 132, Oesch, 2008: 352). Cas Mudde argues that the economic program of RRP parties is often a secondary feature, also for their electorates. He states that "most of the time, populist radical right parties use their economic program to put into practice their core ideological positions (nativism, authoritarianism, and populism) and to expand their electorate" (Mudde, 2007A: 120). In this case, it seems to be the case that the economic program of the PVV has indeed been secondary for its voters.

Conclusion – Demand side explanations

When we link the above results to the expectations we had concerning the factors that might have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg, we first see that the expectations about socio-economic position, political trust and political dissatisfaction turned out to be false; people in Limburg do not have significant lower socio-economic positions or lower political trust and are not more politically dissatisfied. We have seen that these variables are predictors for PVV voting in the Netherlands, but after examining the differences between the electorates of Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands, we do not have any plausible reasons to assume that these three variables make a significant contribution to the explanation of the success of the PVV in Limburg. Most likely, these variables have not played a significant role in the success of the PVV in the province.

When looking at the variable 'religiosity' we saw that the less religious people are, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. Next to this, our findings demonstrated that in

²⁵ These variable were measured in the NKO of 2010 by offering the following statements to the respondents: "taxes should be cut", "more money for foreign aid" and "the government should not interfere in the economy". The first two variables had a scale of 4 answers, from "fully agree" to "fully disagree" and the last variable had a scale of 5 answers, also from "fully agree" to "fully disagree".

²⁶ With a B-coefficient of 1,058 and $0.01 > p < 0.05$.

comparison with the rest of the Netherlands, people in Limburg are less religious. This is why it is possible to assume that the relatively lower degree of religiosity in Limburg has had a positive influence on the success of the PVV. It is interesting to see that unlike our expectations, 'religion' is not a significant predictor of PVV-voting, but 'degree of religiosity' is. After examining the differences between the electorates of Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands, we do have plausible reasons to assume that 'degree of religiosity' has played a significant role in the success of the PVV in Limburg. We saw that one theory behind this phenomenon states that people who are less religious have less ties with religious political parties²⁷ (or other conservative parties) and are therefore more likely to see a RRP party as an acceptable alternative (Lubbers, 2001: 63). Next to this, we argued that the reason that people in Limburg have a relatively lower degree of religiosity is probably because the majority is Catholic and Catholic people in the Netherlands score relatively low on church attendance (CBS, 2009B: 44). Because of the relatively high amount of Catholics in Limburg and since there are theories that state that Catholics are more likely to vote for a RRP party, we have tested whether religious affiliation is a significant predictor for PVV voting. However, the analysis showed that religious affiliation does not have a significant relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting and that Catholic people are not more likely to vote for the PVV than people without religious affiliation. This is why it is reasonable to state that the regional variation in PVV voting cannot be explained by the fact that a relatively high percentage of the population in Limburg is Catholic.

Concerning the variable 'attitude towards immigrants' we saw that the more negative attitudes towards immigrants people have, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV. Next to this, our findings demonstrated that in comparison with the rest of the Netherlands, people in Limburg have relatively more negative feelings towards immigrants than people from the rest of the Netherlands. Reasons for this are unclear, but the combination of a high sense of traditionalism and cultural protectionism in the province (Vellenga, 1975: 23) and negative rumors about immigrants from other cities in the country (Knapp, 2004: 306) might be a partly explanation for this. Next to the cultural threat, people may perceive immigrants as an economic threat. Although some sectors within the labor market in Limburg are dependent from migrant workers, people may perceive the high amount of migrant workers

²⁷ In the next chapter the supply side variables that have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg will be discussed and we will elaborate further on ties between religious people and the CDA in the Netherlands.

from Eastern Europe as a threat to their own jobs and especially wages. Because these migrant workers often work for lower wages than Dutch workers, people feel their economic (market) position threatened. By all means, after examining the differences between the electorates of Limburg and the rest of the Netherlands, we do have plausible reasons to assume that the variable 'attitude towards immigrants' has been a significant factor in the success of the PVV in Limburg.

Next to this, we saw that relatively more people in Limburg have sympathy for Wilders than people in the rest of the Netherlands. A reason for this might be that people in Limburg often have less ties with political parties, but primarily vote on candidates with which they can identify with (Korsten, 2010: 3, Luyten, 2011). These candidates are usually people from Limburg; they are often perceived as more trustworthy candidates than people from the rest of the Netherlands. When looking at this argument Wilders had the plus of being 'one of us', a reason why people in Limburg might have had more sympathy for him than people from other parts of the Netherlands. Since we saw that the more sympathy people have for Geert Wilders, the more likely they are to vote for the PVV, there are plausible reasons to assume that the variable 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' has played a significant role in the success of the PVV in Limburg. However, we have also seen that we have to reflect on this variable very careful, since the effect of 'sympathy for Wilders' on the likelihood of PVV voting might be biased. Nevertheless, sympathy for the party leader often proves to be a significant predictor of RRP party voting (Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2010: 14). For example, sympathy and fascination for the party leader Jean-Marie Le Pen of the Front National in France appeared to have played a very important role in explaining FN-voting in France, fascination for Le Pen was "l'ingrédient de base du vote FN" (Allemand, 1999). "Large parts of the votes for populist parties can be explained by positive evaluations of their leaders" (Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2010: 14) and this is why it is very reasonable to assume that the relative positive evaluation of the party leader Geert Wilders in Limburg has played a significant role in the success of the PVV in the province.

Furthermore, we saw that the variable 'regional identification' does not have a significant relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting. Although people in Limburg do have relatively strong feelings of regional identification, these feelings are no significant predictor of PVV voting and therefore it is plausible to state that the success of the PVV in Limburg cannot be explained by referring to strong feelings of regional identification in the province.

Finally, we saw that economic variables are no significant predictors of the likelihood of PVV-voting and therefore we assume that the regional success of the PVV in Limburg cannot be explained by these variables. Although the variable about foreign aid did turned out to be significant on the likelihood of PVV-voting, it is questionable whether this is a 'truly' economic variable or whether it is a variable that indicates a certain extent of welfare state chauvinism. This is why we will state that economic variables cannot explain the regional success of the PVV.

Although there are plausible reasons to assume that the factors 'degree of religiosity', 'attitude towards immigrants' and 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' have played a significant role in the electoral success of the PVV in Limburg, it is not possible to draw some clear-cut conclusions. Since the data about voters from Limburg is not directly linked to PVV-voting, we can only assume and not directly demonstrate that these variables have influenced the success of the party in the province. However, this research has made an important contribution in exploring and partly explaining radical right-wing voting in the Netherlands. In future research, additional data has to be used to establish some more clear-cut explanations for the regional deviation of PVV success in Limburg.

Next to the above variables that have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg, other factors have most probably been of influence; factors that were not included in the quantitative analyses. Because it is crucial to include demand and supply side variables when explaining RRP voting, the next part of this thesis will focus on the supply side factors that might have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg.

The electoral success of RRP parties explained – Supply side

As Lubbers (2001: 27) points out, the supply side of voting has hardly been empirically researched. However, several authors have stressed the importance of including these supply side explanations, especially in the case of RRP parties (for example: Mudde, 2007A: 232, Norris, 2005, Kitschelt, 1995). Lubbers defines the supply side of RRP voting as “the extent to which extreme right-wing parties position themselves in the political field” (Lubbers, 2001: 27). This definition focuses only on internal supply side factors; “those directly related to the populist radical right parties themselves” (Mudde, 2007A: 232), such as party organization, party policies or the way the party presents itself. However, it is also very important to take external supply factors into account; “those not inherent to the populist radical right parties” (Mudde, 2007A: 232). Since the goal is to give an explanation for the success of the PVV in Limburg as complete as possible, both internal and external supply side factors will be taken into account. This means that the analysis will not only focus upon characteristics of the RRP parties themselves, but also upon political opportunity structures (Mudde, 2007A: 232, Van der Brug et al., 2005: 539). By doing this, this research will make an important contribution to explanations of radical right-wing voting since there are only few studies who have included both internal and external supply side factors in their analysis (Van der Brug et al., 2005: 539),

Internal supply

When looking at internal supply side factors that are important in explaining RRP success, we mean characteristics of RRP parties themselves. Political opportunity structures play an important role in explaining RRP voting, but the role these parties play themselves in their electoral success should not be underestimated (Mudde, 2007A: 256). In general, the most important internal supply factors are party ideology, leadership and party organization (Mudde, 2007A: 256, Lubbers, 2001: 28). Next to this, image production by RRP parties is important to take into account; the way these parties frame themselves in the political arena (Mudde, 2007A: 256). Party ideology (and policies), leadership and party organization are important factors that influence the success or failure of RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 256). However, in the case of the PVV these factors are less interesting since they do not vary in different regions; we are only looking at one party, so the ideology, leadership and organization of this party are constant in every region and are therefore not relevant to take

into account. Nevertheless, it is interesting to examine the image production of the PVV; the way the ideology and policies of the party are presented through party propaganda (Mudde, 2007A: 259). Although there is no variance in the ideology and leadership of the party, it is possible that these factors are framed differently by the PVV in different regions. Since “extensive professional propaganda campaigns can be very effective in generating electoral success” (Mudde, 2007A: 259) and RRP parties often are very successful in their campaigns, it is relevant to take this factor into account. It could be possible that the PVV applied a different or more extensive *propaganda strategy* to Limburg, which might have influenced PVV’s success in the province. Whether this is the case will be examined in the next part of this chapter.

External supply

Concerning external supply side factors there are more variables that can be taken into account, since most of these variables can vary in the case of the PVV. The external supply side of voting consists of a number of political opportunity structures. Both Rydgren (2007: 252) and Mudde (2007A: 233) use Sydney Tarrows definition of political opportunity structures; “... consistent – but not necessary formal, permanent, or national resources that are external to the party or movement in question” (Rydgren, 2007: 252). A certain number of structures in the political field, but outside the political party present opportunities for (new) political parties to gain success. However, it is important to have in mind that these structures are facilitating, and not determining in the success or failure of RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 253). There are a number of political opportunity structures that are assumed to specifically benefit radical right-wing parties (Rydgren, 2007: 252). First, several authors have claimed that the *institutional context* is important in explaining the rise of RRP parties. The institutional context includes the electoral system and thresholds (Mudde, 2007A: 233, Van der Brug et al., 2005: 544, Rydgren, 2007: 252). However, in the case of the PVV this factor is less interesting since the electoral system in the Netherlands is the same in every region. This is why the institutional context will not be taken into account. Next to the institutional context, the *political context* is very important; the arena in which RRP parties play (Mudde, 2007A: 237, Kitschelt, 1995: 14). There are a couple of characteristics in the political context that are claimed to be essential for RRP parties to gain electoral success. Important in the case of the PVV in Limburg is the degree of electoral competition the party

faces (from right-wing parties and moderate conservatives) (Van der Brug et al., 2005: 545, 548, Kitschelt, 1997: 14). Next to this, there has to be space for a RRP party and this depends largely upon dealignment processes and electoral volatility (Rydgren, 2007: 253, Mudde, 2007A: 238). A political context where processes of dealignment have taken place and where voters are not very loyal to a specific party can be very favorable for (new) RRP parties. Since the “political context often varies in important ways between regions” (Andersen & Heath, 2003: 302), it is possible that the political context in Limburg concerning processes of dealignment and electoral volatility differed from other regions in the Netherlands and that this specific political context favored the PVV. Whether this is the case will be examined in the next part of this chapter. Next to processes of dealignment and electoral volatility, it has been argued that the degree of convergence between established parties is influencing political opportunities for RRP parties (Rydgren, 2007: 253, Mudde, 2007A: 238). When mainstream parties cluster around the centre, people may get the idea that all established parties are the same and with this, these parties create a “political opportunity space” for RRP parties (Eatwell, 1997: 174, Rydgren, 2007: 253). However, since this possible degree of convergence between established parties would be the same in all parts of the Netherlands²⁸, this part of the political context is less relevant in the case of the PVV and will therefore not be taken into account.

Linked to the political context, there is one more context that has to be included; the *cultural context* (or: *political culture*) (Mudde, 2007A: 243). Linked to the political climate of a certain country or region, this cultural context consists mainly of political values and it is argued that some cultures are more favorable for RRP parties than others. However, it is not very clear of what a ‘favorable’ culture exactly has to consist or “what makes one culture ‘damp’ populist radical right party success, and others ‘aggravate’ it” (Mudde, 2007A: 244). By the cultural context the political culture in a country or region is meant; “...national²⁹ traditions and the role of the country’s past in the political discourse of the present...” (Minkenberg, 2001: 5). Although it is hard to precisely define favorable cultural conditions

²⁸ Since we are looking at national elections, the participating political parties are the same in all regions in the Netherlands. This is why it is thought to be that the degree of convergence between established parties is also the same in every region. What could be different is the perception of voters; it might be the case that people in one region have the idea that there is a high degree of convergence between established parties, while people in other regions think there is a low degree of convergence. However, differences in perceptions of voters is no supply-side variable, but belongs to the demand-side of voting. Unfortunately it was not possible to include this variable in the demand-side analysis, since there was no sufficient data available.

²⁹ In this case, we can replace the word ‘national’ by ‘regional’.

for RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 244), we will examine whether there are some typical conditions in the political climate of Limburg that might have been favorable to the rise and success of the PVV. Since the political context and the political culture are highly linked to each other, these two features will be examined together.

Next to the institutional, political and cultural contexts that are mentioned above, it is important to take one more external supply side variable into account; *the media*. The role of the (mass) media on the emergence of RRP parties is thought to be very powerful. However, the influence of the media on the success of RRP parties has hardly been researched (Mudde, 2007A: 248. Rydgren, 2007: 255). As Mudde already points out, this is remarkable since it is assumed that the media has a lot of power in influencing politics, and the radical-right in particular (Mudde, 2007A: 248). For example, it has been argued that RRP parties partly owe their electoral successes to the popular press (Akkerman, 2011: 932). It is assumed that the media can contribute to (or hinder) the electoral success of RRP parties through different mechanisms. First, the media can give RRP parties visibility and with this they “...produce the first and most basic selection mechanism in the public sphere...” (Koopmans, 2004: 373). By visibility, the extent to which a message is covered by the mass media is meant; it “...depends on the number of communicative channels by which a message is included and the prominence of such inclusion” (Koopmans, 2004: 373). Some theories claim that the amount of media attention to an issue or to a political party influences the way people perceive this issue or this party and that extensive media attention to specific issues “...produces issue concern in public opinion” (Walgrave & de Swert, 2004: 481). Furthermore, by discussing specific issues that are similar to the issues RRP parties address, the media takes part in the agenda-setting and framing of political issues and creates “...a public agenda highly favorable to populist radical right parties...” (Mudde, 2007A: 349, Rydgren, 2007: 255). For example, it has been argued that – especially the popular press – made a huge contribution in reinforcing anti-establishment sentiments by sharing the anti-establishment position of RRP parties (Akkerman, 2011: 932, Rydgren, 2007: 255). By doing this, the (popular) press would offer favorable opportunity structures for RRP parties (Akkerman, 2011: 931). Related to the agenda-setting influence of the media is the concept of issue-ownership (Mudde, 2007A: 249). The issue-ownership thesis holds that certain parties are associated with certain political issues and are also perceived to be

the best to deal with these policy questions. The media plays an important role in this process; it helps creating issue-ownership and it influences the importance of these issues by making the public agenda. “By combining the issue-ownership thesis with agenda-setting theory, the media can be considered as affecting voting behavior” (Walgrave & de Swert, 2004: 482). Next to this, it is argued that the personalization of politics through the media favors RRP parties. These parties are more tended to give the party leader an important role than other parties and they may benefit from the focus of the media on personalities (Rydgren, 2007: 255, Akkerman, 2011: 934). The mass media have played an important role in emphasizing leadership and personal characteristics by focusing on politicians rather than on the political parties themselves (Campus, 2010: 220,221). Since RRP parties are often highly dependent on their strong, charismatic leaders and they tend to focus upon this leader more than other political parties (Mudde, 2007A: 260), it is assumed that the concentration of the media on individuals specifically benefits the RRP parties (Akkerman, 2011: 934).

In short, the media can influence a party’s success³⁰ in three ways: the party (or the politicians) receives extensive (positive) media attention, the issues of the party are overexposed and the framing of the news in general favors the party (Walgrave & de Swert, 2004: 481). In the case of the PVV in Limburg, it might be possible that the regional press has given the party more, or more favorable attention than national newspapers. The regional press in Limburg is very popular, 78% of the total newspaper circulation represents the regional press from which ‘Dagblad de Limburger’ is the largest (Cebuco, 2011). When classifying this important regional newspaper, it seems that it is more of a popular newspaper than a quality newspaper. It contains more sensational articles, sports and gossip pages (Akkerman, 2011: 934) than the quality newspapers and it makes use of significant present headlines and photographs. Furthermore, most attention goes to home and regional stories; it does not devote a lot of space to foreign news. These indicators can all be seen as characteristics of more popular newspapers (Akkerman, 2011: 934, 935). Since ‘Dagblad de Limburger’ can be seen as a popular newspaper, it is possible that this newspaper might have facilitated a positive environment for the PVV in Limburg. After all, most theories “have

³⁰ However, we have to have in mind that the media can also have negative influence on the success of RRP parties. Some researchers have found that in general, the media is hostile towards these parties; especially the so-called “elite media”. This media is assumed to be more supportive of the political elite and often challenges RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 249,251, Akkerman, 2011: 933).

linked the success of populist parties to the popular press” (Akkerman, 2011: 932). Whether the regional media might have facilitated the success of the PVV in Limburg will be examined in the next part of this chapter.

In the above section all relevant supply side factors and their theoretical argumentation are discussed. Whether these factors have influenced or facilitated the success of the PVV in Limburg indeed will be examined in the next part of this chapter.

Analysis of the Supply side

Internal supply – Party Propaganda

Although factors like media attention are often more important for generating support than the campaign of a political party itself (Norris, 2005: 102), the image production of a party; the way the ideology and policies of the party are presented through party propaganda can be very effective in generating electoral success, especially for RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 259). Since political parties design their election campaigns very precisely by specific target groups, it might be possible that the PVV applied a different, or more extensive propaganda strategy to Limburg, which might have influenced the PVV's success in the province. This is why we will examine whether the party framed itself differently or more extensively in Limburg than in other regions. By looking at the different election programs of the PVV for the provincial elections³², speeches of Wilders and the PVV website we can compare the (extent and way of) framing in different regions.

Table 8: Attention for provinces on PVV-website

Province	Hits on PVV website ³¹
Drenthe	15
Flevoland	9
Friesland	14
Gelderland	19
Groningen	30
Limburg	50
Noord-Brabant	6
Noord-Holland	15
Overijssel	1
Utrecht	50
Zeeland	28
Zuid-Holland	16

examine whether the PVV has developed specific policies for different regions or whether the party only addresses 'general problems'.

When looking at the propaganda of the PVV for the provincial elections of 2011, it is

³¹ The number of 'hits on PVV website' indicates the number of articles about the specific province on the general PVV website (www.pvv.nl).

³² These elections have taken place in March 2011.

interesting to note that the party has won a prize for the best party campaign in the provincial elections; the party was very visible in the different regions and invested a lot in especially reaching the older cohorts of the electorate, which has been very strategic (Elsevier, 2011, BKB, 2011). Although it was the first time the PVV participated in the provincial elections, the party was very successful and gained 12,44% of the votes (Kiesraad, 2011B); apparently, the party campaign has been very effective. When examining the election programs of the PVV for the provincial elections, we have checked whether the party directed itself to specific regions by presenting specific policies for these regions, or whether it addressed more general issues. After examining all twelve election programs we could conclude that the PVV addressed a lot of attention to specific regional issues in the provinces of Flevoland, Friesland, Overijssel, Limburg and Zeeland. In Limburg for example, the party developed specific policy proposals for issues like drugs criminality, youth employment and the preservation of the culture and dialect of the province. In the remaining provinces, the election programs were more general and addressed more 'general' PVV-issues like immigration, criminality and anti-establishment issues, but no (or very little) specific issues and/ or policies concerning these regions.

When we look at the provinces the PVV developed specific policies for, it is notable that these provinces (except for the province of Flevoland) all have strong regional cultures; Friesland, Overijssel, Limburg and Zeeland are all provinces that are familiar for their regional culture and dialect. Moreover, the PVV responded to this by emphasizing these regional cultures, stating that the regional cultures and dialects of these regions should be preserved and arguing that these provinces deserve more attention from the political centre. Next to this, specific character traits of the people from these regions are underlined, saying that these character traits are essential for Dutch society. Besides this emphasis on the regional culture of these regions, we saw that Geert Wilders was present at the presentation of the list of candidates for the provincial elections in only two provinces; Friesland and Limburg (PVV, 2010C, Trouw, 2011C). At these presentations he gave a speech about the uniqueness of the two regions, even calling Limburg the 'heartland' and the first province of the Netherlands (PVV, 2010C) and complimenting Friesland for protecting its culture against oppression (Trouw, 2011C). Next to this, he emphasized that the two provinces have been neglected by politicians in The Hague, but that they are clearly on the map for the PVV. Furthermore, the party frequently used the slogan 'give Limburg back to its

people' (van Gageldonk, 2011). It seems to be that the party endeavored to stir up regional feelings of pride and uniqueness in provinces that already had a strong regional culture. The PVV did this by "playing the identity-card" (van Gageldonk & de Beek, 2012A); by referring to a homogenous regional people and underlining the status of 'neglected'; intensifying the sense of us versus them, a feeling that was often already strongly present in these regions. This focus of the PVV on the own identity of specific regions goes hand in hand with the intolerance of everything that is perceived to be a threat to this identity; the political centre in The Hague and the accompanying mainstream political parties, the European Union, foreigners and Muslims, globalization and, in the case of Limburg, people from the Randstad (van Gageldonk & de Beek, 2012B). It appears to be that the PVV not only invested a lot in reaching the older cohorts, but also invested extensively in reaching regions with strong regional cultures like Limburg (Overheid in Nederland, 2012: 4). This relatively extensive propaganda attention for regions with strong regional cultures might have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg. The party has been very visible in this region and specifically addressed issues that were important for the province. This 'special attention' might have favored the party's image in Limburg, creating more sympathy for the party and the party leader. Playing "the identity card" in Limburg seems to have been very strategic. (van Gageldonk & de Beek, 2012A, van Gageldonk & de Beek, 2012B).

External Supply – Political Context and Political Culture

The political context in which a RRP party has to operate is very important for its success or failure. It includes the degree of electoral competition the party faces (from right-wing parties and moderate conservatives); there has to be space for a RRP party in the political system and this depends largely upon dealignment processes and electoral volatility (Van der Brug et al., 2005: 545, 548). When we look at the source of the votes for the PVV in the Netherlands as a whole, we see that the largest amount of voters originally comes from the LPF; one-third of the people that voted LPF in 2003 voted for the PVV in 2006 (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 128). Looking at the votes for the PVV in 2010, we see that 12% voted CDA in 2006, 12% voted PvdA, almost 16% voted VVD and about 10% voted SP in 2006. Approximately 19% of the people that voted PVV in 2010 did not vote at all in 2006 (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 130). These numbers are unknown for the province of Limburg, but in this part of the chapter we will examine the political context and political

culture for the case of Limburg and we will determine whether they have favored the success of the PVV. Furthermore, we will examine the political source of the votes for the PVV in Limburg.

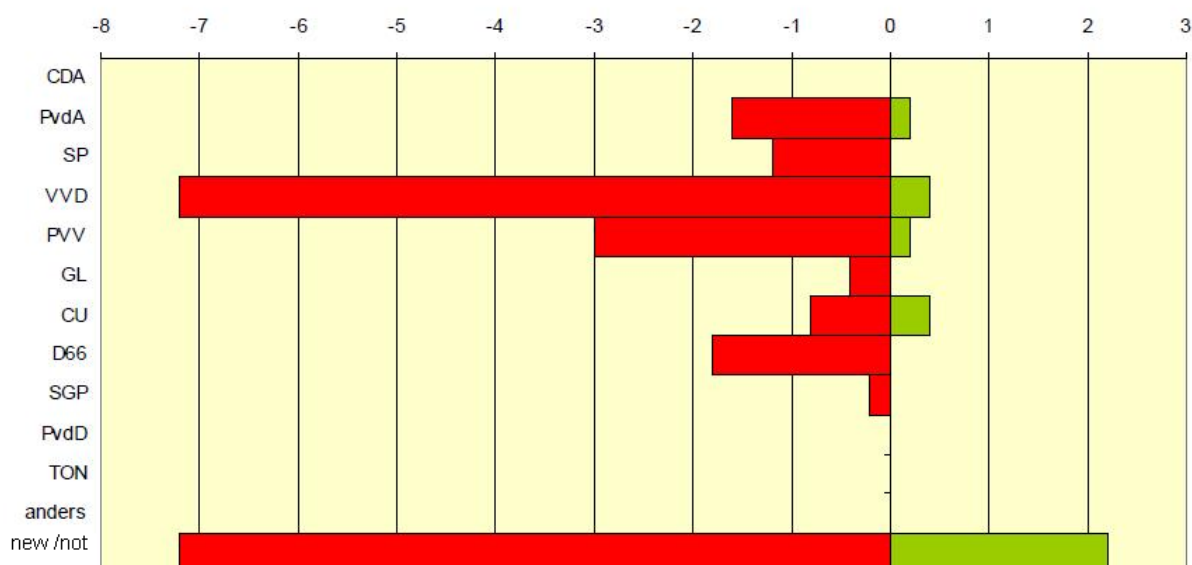
To understand the political context and culture of Limburg, we have to look at the political conditions in this province and how they have developed. In the first years after the Second World War, the political conditions in the Netherlands were strongly 'pillarised' and as a consequence, the Catholic People's Party (Katholieke Volkspartij; KVP) was massively supported by people from Limburg, it obtained scores of 80% in national and provincial elections (Kuiper, 1994: 29). Catholics were convinced by their churches to vote for a Catholic party and it was 'the natural thing to do' for them (Kuiper, 1994: 29,30). Other political parties could not receive a lot of votes in Limburg at this time. In the period of 1963-1972, the KVP lost a lot of support and at that time, it 'only' obtained scores of 40% in Limburg. This loss of votes can mainly be explained by the depillarisation in the Netherlands; the amount of Catholics decreased but the self-evident mechanism that Catholics had to vote for a Catholic party also disappeared (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 103). Next to this, there were other political parties that presented themselves in the province and especially the PvdA obtained electoral success (20,2% in 1972) (Kuiper, 1994: 30,31). Although the factors that have caused the electoral losses of the KVP were still present, in the years after 1972 the amount of votes stabilized and after the establishment of the CDA³³ the Christian party gained some electoral success again. Explanations for this success of the CDA in Limburg emphasize factors in the party itself (like the performance of the party leader) and the new strategy of the CDA of reaching a more extensive target group and of not aiming for restoration of the pillarised society (Kuiper, 1994: 32,33). While most other parties have faced some periods of powerful gains and losses in Limburg, the percentage of votes for the CDA have been relatively stable during the 90's. In short, the overall trend in Limburg is that the Catholic and later the Christian-Democratic party has always been the political party with the biggest amount of followers (Kuiper, 1994: 34, de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 131). Almost 50% of all voters in Limburg voted for the CDA in the 80's and 90's, a considerable higher percentage than the national average (around one thirds) (Kuiper, 1994: 151). This was the case for the national and provincial elections, but since

³³ Which is a merge of the old KVP, CHU (Christelijk-Historische Unie; Christian-Historical Union) and the ARP (Anti-Revolutionaire Partij; Anti-Revolutionary Party).

1982 the CDA has also been the biggest party in two-thirds of all municipalities in Limburg (Kuiper, 1994: 52). However, this dramatically changed after the 2006 and 2010 national elections. In 2003, the party still gained 38% of the votes in Limburg. After the national elections of 2006, this percentage decreased to 29% and in 2010 it only gained 16% of all votes in Limburg (Kiesraad, 2011A). A comparable pattern is visible for the provincial and municipal elections; the CDA lost a huge amount of votes in all last elections. Since the CDA has been the largest political party in Limburg for years, it seems relevant to examine this decrease in votes for the party when we are looking at dealignment processes, electoral volatility and the political competition the PVV faced in Limburg.

First, it is important to note that in the national elections of 2010 the CDA lost votes in all of the Netherlands and not only in Limburg. At the national level, the percentage of votes for the CDA decreased with more than 50%. According to research of the CDA itself, 39% of the voters who voted CDA in 2006 voted for another party in 2010. Most of these people (17%) voted VVD instead of CDA (CDA, 2010: 6). In 2006, the CDA was the biggest party in 330 municipalities (of a total of 430), after the elections of 2010 this was the case for only 74 municipalities (CDA, 2010: 6). Although the decrease of votes for the CDA in 2010 was relatively low in the southern part of the Netherlands, when we take the elections of 2006 into account we see that the CDA already lost a huge amount of votes in Limburg before the 2010 elections. The overall picture shows that in Limburg, the party decreased the most within seven years (Kiesraad, 2011A).

Figure 2: CDA: gains and losses (number of seats in parliament) after 2010 elections



Source: Synovate

The CDA itself examined the reasons for the huge loss of votes in the elections of 2010 and found several important factors. First, the party did not clearly profile itself, it was not clear where the party stood for. In addition, some important issues were relatively neglected by the CDA, like immigration, integration and problems of the big cities; issues that were essential in the 2010 elections (CDA, 2010: 63). Next to this, the party lost the attachment to the citizens, it became too technocratic and its primary focus was on politics and on The Hague, instead of on society (CDA, 2010: 59, 64). Furthermore, the CDA experienced difficulty in translating its Christian-democratic principles to contemporary society (CDA, 2010: 64). Another important factor was the recruitment of candidates; there were only few recognizable and new candidates on the election list and voters could not identify themselves with these candidates (CDA, 2010: 64). According to the CDA, the above factors have played an important role in the drop-out of voters that traditionally voted CDA. When we look at the factors that have played a role in the decrease of votes for the CDA in Limburg, we see that these factors are largely the same. The absence of recognizable candidates has been estimated as very important. We have already seen that in Limburg, people usually have less ties with political parties, but primarily vote on candidates with which they can identify with. These candidates are usually people from Limburg (Korsten, 2010: 3, Luyten, 2011). However, on the 2010 election list of the CDA the first candidate from Limburg was placed on number eleven, the second on number twenty-three. Furthermore, these people were not very familiar; they were no vote-getters like former Camiel Eurlings and Maria van der Hoeven³⁴ (Korsten, 2010: 3). Most likely, the absence of recognizable candidates and an identifiable party leader has been an important factor in the decrease of votes of the CDA in Limburg (Korsten, 20120: 3, Overheid in Nederland, 2011: 1). Next to this, it is often heard that people in Limburg felt abandoned by the CDA. The governments (and its policies) in the years before 2010 (in which the CDA was always a part of since 2002) were hardly visible in the rural areas of the country (Korsten, 2010: 3,4). In these rural areas, the attachment between the people and the government was very weak and as a consequence, people became especially tired of the prime minister (Jan Peter Balkenende) and its party; the CDA. Next to this, people in Limburg did not believe anymore

³⁴ These former CDA-candidates were both from Limburg and were quite popular in the province. In illustration, 38% of CDA-officials in Limburg wanted Camiel Eurlings to be the next leader of the party (Overheid in Nederland, 2011: 1).

that the CDA and other mainstream parties could solve their problems (Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau, 2011: 13). As a consequence, people have voted PVV, partly as a protest against mainstream politics and partly in the hope that this party can bring perspective (van Dyck, 2011). Furthermore, looking at the first two factors the CDA has defined as the reasons for the electoral loss of the party; we see that these reasons can be linked to the electoral success of the PVV: the neglect of the issues like immigration, integration and problems of the big cities and the loss of attachment with society are factors that most likely have favored the position of the PVV since these were important issues for this party.

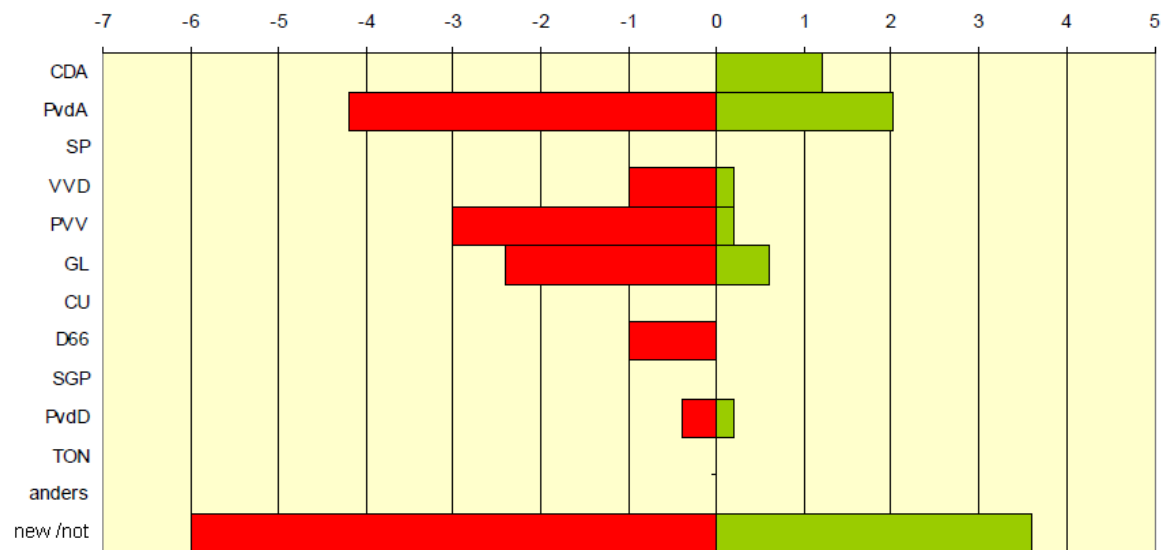
In short, we see a clear process of dealignment when we look at the position of the CDA in Limburg. The party has been the traditional 'commander-in-chief' in Limburg for years, but has been seriously weakened after the two last elections. Factors that have initiated this dealignment are the decatholisation and the fact that voting for the CDA is no longer the 'natural thing to do' for Catholics. Next to this, a great amount of people in Limburg felt abandoned by the party, they lost their trust in the CDA. This overall weakening of the CDA in Limburg has created a favorable political context for the PVV; it has created a political opportunity structure for new parties and the PVV has exploited this very strategically and successfully.

Next to the CDA, it is relevant to examine the position of the SP (Socialist Party) in Limburg when we want to know the political competition the PVV faced in this province. The centre of gravity of the SP is traditionally situated in the southern part of the Netherlands, especially in the north-eastern part of Noord-Brabant and in the north of Limburg (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 127). The rise of this party in the '70's and '80's coincided with the depillarisation and decatholisation in this part of the Netherlands and the SP used a strong, populist rhetoric directed at mainstream parties. The party was mainly aimed at reaching protest voters and since the southern part of the Netherlands has always been a favorable political climate for new political parties (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 121), it was relatively successful. In 2006, the party gained a lot of votes in Limburg; 20,6% of all votes. It has been argued that these votes were mainly protest votes against the political establishment and against the CDA (van Dyck, 2011). However, in the elections of 2010 the SP only gained 12,9% in the province (Kiesraad, 2011A). Since voters of the SP have approximately the same profile as voters of the PVV, it is interesting to take this loss of votes

into account. When we look at the left-right profile of PVV voters, we see that the PVV attracts voters from both the left and right of the political spectrum (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 129). Despite the differences between the SP and the PVV, a lot of voters take both parties into consideration when determining their vote (Synovate, 2012). For example, when we look at the PVV electorate as a whole, 17% also takes the SP into account (Synovate, 2012). According to research from Synovate (2012), people in the southern part of the Netherlands take both the SP and PVV more often into consideration than people from other parts of the Netherlands (Synovate, 2012). However, the SP lost a big amount of votes in the 2010 elections (in Limburg and in the Netherlands as a whole), especially due to the PvdA and the PVV (Synovate, 2010).

When looking at the situation in Limburg, it is most likely that a lot of people that voted SP in 2006, voted PVV in the 2010 elections. In the Netherlands as a whole we see that the PvdA has played an important role in the loss of votes of the SP. However, in Limburg the PvdA lost a relatively big amount of votes in 2010, so it is not very reasonable to assume that the PvdA has influenced this loss of votes of the SP in Limburg. In this province, the PVV and VVD - together with some smaller parties like GroenLinks and D66 – are the only parties that have won in the 2010 elections. Since the VVD plays a marginal role in the loss of votes of the SP, it is most likely that the huge loss of votes of the SP in Limburg is mainly due to the PVV. The exact reasons for this ‘re-routing’ of voters are unknown, but when we look at the traditional voting pattern of Limburg, it is clear that the right of the political spectrum has always had a stronghold in the province (“Wispelturig maar rechts”, 2011). Political protest parties are relatively successful in Limburg, but at the same time, most voters are very loyal to the right of the political spectrum. Furthermore, the province has always been a breeding ground for movements and parties that profile themselves with order, security and social security (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 121, van Gageldonk, 2011). This may explain the loss of votes of the SP to the PVV: when there are two political parties that are rebelling against mainstream politics, globalization and the European Union, people in Limburg are more tended to vote for the right alternative instead of the left one.

Figure 3: SP: gains and losses (number of seats in parliament) after 2010 elections



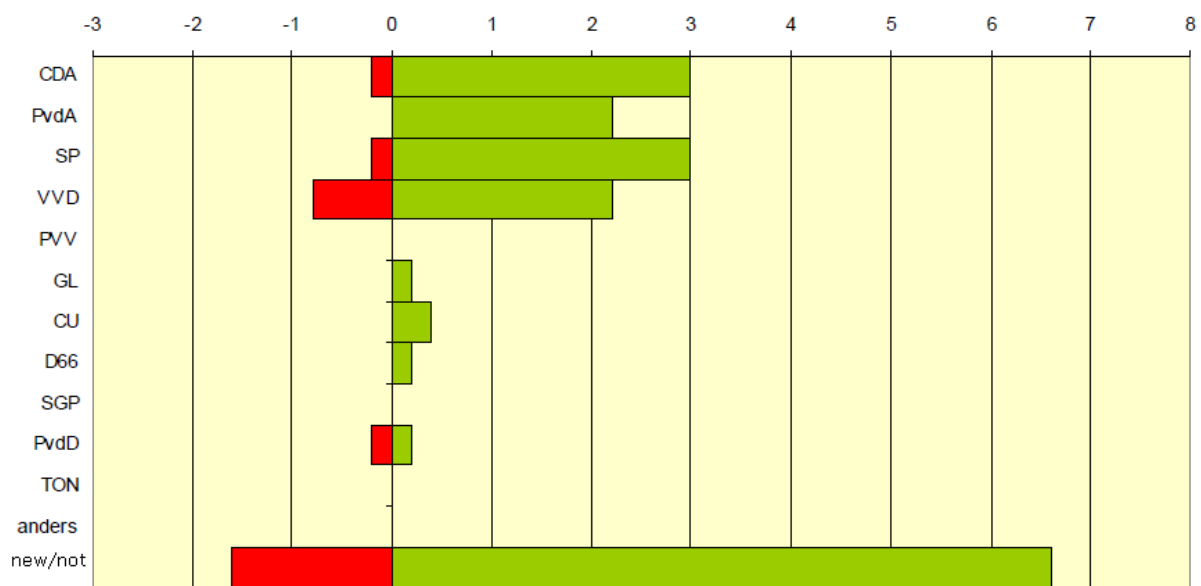
Source: Synovate

Besides the CDA and SP, it is relevant to reflect on the competition between the PVV and the liberal party, the VVD. The electoral success of the PVV since 2006 is not only coming from the CDA and SP, but also largely from the VVD (van der Meer, van Elsas, Lubbe & van der Brug, 2011: 5). The electoral success of the VVD in the 2010 elections conceals this, but the VVD has actually lost a big amount of voters to the PVV (van der Meer et al., 2011: 5); the two parties partly fight for the same group of voters. In Limburg, the support for the VVD has been lower than the national average for a couple of years and these lower percentages of votes for the VVD since 2002 are most probably caused by the LPF and PVV (de Jong & van der Kolk, 2011: 225). Next to this, the liberal party has never been very popular in the province of Limburg, the VVD has always been mainly successful in the western part of the Netherlands (de Jong & van der Kolk, 2011: 222, 225). Although the VVD is an important competitor for the PVV nationally, when regarding the electoral competition for the PVV in Limburg, we can state that the VVD is no big competitor for the party and the reverse is more legitimate to state.

The above analyses show that the PVV has faced a relatively favorable political context in Limburg. The CDA was already weakened after the 2006 elections; a clear pattern of dealignment had taken place. This created a political opportunity structure for the PVV and the party adapted to this very strategically. Although the SP, that can be seen as a serious

competitor for the PVV, was very successful in 2006, the PVV had the advantage that the right of the political spectrum has always been more popular in Limburg than the left. This made the PVV for a lot of voters a more ‘natural’ option to vote for than the left SP. Next to this, the VVD has never been very successful in the province and was therefore no serious threat to the success of the PVV in Limburg. In figure 3, the competition between the CDA, the SP and the PVV is clearly visible.

Figure 4: PVV: gains and losses (number of seats in parliament) after 2010 elections



Source: Synovate

Former analyses confirm the picture of a favorable political context and culture in Limburg for the PVV; the southern part of the Netherlands has always been a favorable political climate for new political parties, especially on the right (“Wispelturig maar rechts”, 2011). Furthermore, the province has always been a breeding ground for movements and parties that profile themselves with order, security and social security (van Gageldonk, 2011). The tendency of voters in Limburg towards the right side of the political spectrum originates from the period in which the political climate in the province was dictated by the Catholic church, that was explicitly anti-socialist and anti-left (Vellenga, 1975: 32, 34). As a consequence, a vote for the left side of the political spectrum was taboo for a long time in Limburg and there existed a certain anti-left sentiment (Vellenga, 1975: 32, 34).

Furthermore, according to research of 1996³⁵, voters in the southern part of the Netherlands are relatively uncommitted and there does exist a tradition of reluctance against mainstream politics and political parties (de Jong, van der Kolk & Voerman, 2011: 121). Next to this, Limburg is known for its unpredictable and non-faithful voters (“Wispelturig maar rechts”, 2011). For example, before the provincial elections in 2011, the most floating voters were found in the southern provinces: Limburg, Noord-Brabant and Zeeland (Eenvandaag, 2011). Finally, we have already seen that in Limburg, people have less ties with political parties, but they primarily vote on candidates with which they can identify with. These candidates are usually people from Limburg (Korsten, 2010: 3, Luyten, 2011). In this sense, the concept of clientelism is relevant. Clientelism can be seen as a certain bond between voters and a candidate. This bond is based on a certain form of exchange: the political candidate offers his voters some benefits in exchange of political support (Kuiper, 1994: 98, 99). In Limburg, clientelism has always been clearly present; the personal devotion of political candidates to the (own) community has been very important to voters (Kuiper, 1994: 95, 100). Next to this, political candidates in Limburg have often used this local clientelistic bond to gain electoral success; by promising certain benefits for the province they ensured themselves of political support from the region (Kuiper, 1994: 102, 103). For the voters, candidates from Limburg are often perceived as more trustworthy than people from the rest of the Netherlands and they are considered to have the interests of Limburg in mind. This clientelistic bond between voters and the candidate might have favored the position of Geert Wilders and his PVV in Limburg. We have already seen that Wilders had the plus of being ‘one of us’. Next to this, we saw that he explicitly recognized that Limburg has been ignored by national politics for a long time and he has argued that the PVV will change this, even calling Limburg the ‘heartland’ of the Netherlands (PVV, 2010C). The clientelistic model in Limburg seems to have been favorable for the PVV; by promising to ‘put Limburg back on the map again’ (PVV, 2010C), the party has successfully made use of the clientelistic bond between candidate and voter that is still important in the southern province.

The above factors show that in general, Limburg has always been a favorable political climate for new political parties, especially when they are on the right side of the political

³⁵ Mamadouh, V., Passchier, N.P. & van der Wusten, H. (1996). Hetzelfde maar toch verschillend. De verkiezingskaart van Nederland na de ‘aardverschuiving’. In Voerman, G. (Ed.), *Jaarboek 1995 Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen* (pp. 149-167). Groningen.

spectrum and when they are emphasizing issues of order, security and social security. Next to this, the clientelistic model especially favors candidates from Limburg itself. The PVV has faced relatively favorable political conditions in the province and has successfully made use of them.

External Supply – Media

As we have already discussed, the media are supposed to have significant influence on a parties failure or success, especially on radical-right wing parties (Mudde, 2007A: 248). The media often gives (new) political parties visibility through media coverage, but it also takes part in the agenda-setting; it can create a favorable agenda for certain parties by highlighting specific issues (Mudde, 2007A: 349, Rydgren, 2007: 255). Furthermore, it can activate and support issue-ownership; the thesis that certain parties are associated with certain policy questions and that these parties are also perceived to be the best to deal with these questions (Mudde, 2007A: 249). Next to this, the personalization of politics through the media is assumed to be especially favorable for RRP parties (Akkerman, 2011: 934, Rydgren, 2007: 255). Through the above mechanisms, the (popular) press is assumed to have offered favorable opportunity structures for RRP parties.

In the case of the PVV, it is possible that the regional media in Limburg have facilitated the success of the party. The regional press is very popular in the province and it might be the case that these regional media have created some specific favorable opportunity structures for the party. Whether the regional press has had a favorable influence on the success of the PVV in Limburg will be examined in this part of the chapter. By doing a content analysis of three different newspapers we will compare whether the most important regional newspaper in Limburg has given more (favorable) attention to the PVV and 'PVV issues' than national newspapers. The newspapers that will be analyzed are 'Dagblad de Limburger', 'De Telegraaf' and 'De Volkskrant'. 'Dagblad de Limburger' has been chosen because this is the most popular (regional) newspaper in Limburg (HOI, 2012, Cebuco, 2011). This regional newspaper will be compared with two national newspapers; 'De Telegraaf', the largest Dutch newspaper that can be classified as a representative of the popular press and 'De Volkskrant', that can be seen as a mainstream quality newspaper (Akkerman, 2011: 934-936). To acquire an image of the possible facilitating role of the regional newspaper in the success of the PVV as complete as possible, 'Dagblad de Limburger' will be compared with

both a popular and a quality newspaper. Furthermore, by making this comparison we can check the thesis that the popular press is more favorable for RRP parties than the mainstream press is.

As already mentioned, the three newspapers will be compared by doing a content analysis. When doing a content analysis, the frequency of certain mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories (that are constructed in advance) will be observed and with this, documents can be analyzed (Johnson & Reynolds, 2005: 223). First, we will look at the news coverage of the PVV; the way the newspapers report about the party and its politicians. There are some authors who state that RRP parties always profit from media attention, no matter whether this attention is positive or not (Mudde, 2007A: 252). However, many authors have found a link between positive media coverage and success of RRP parties as well as negative media coverage and a marginal role for RRP parties (Rydgren, 2005: 425, Akkerman, 2011: 934). For this reason, we will also examine the *content* of the news coverage; we will look whether an article mentions the PVV and its politicians in a favorable, neutral or unfavorable way. This is a customary way of analyzing press coverage; most studies not only examine the amount of coverage, but also investigate the way parties and their candidates are presented (Johnson & Reynolds, 2005: 223, 226). Next to this, we will examine news coverage concerning 'radical right issues'. We have already seen that the media can be related to a party's success by emphasizing specific issues; the agenda-setting role of the media. Therefore, we will check whether 'PVV-issues' were frequently covered in the media during election times and whether there exist some significant differences between the regional and national newspapers. After doing this, it is possible to determine whether the regional media have created a public agenda more favorable to the PVV than the national media.

First, we have conducted the content analysis concerning the way the PVV and its candidates are presented in the different newspapers during election time. To determine the time span of this content analysis, we have checked the moment on which most (PVV-)voters have decided their party choice in the 2010 elections. In the data of the NKO of 2010, people were asked when they have decided their vote choice and it appeared to be that most voters (PVV –voters and others) have decided their final vote choice in the last days before elections³⁶, or

³⁶ In 2010 45% of all Dutch voters decided their final vote choice one week before elections and 9% decided on election day. However, this phenomenon is not only visible in the 2010 elections, but already exists for years: people are tended to decide their final vote later and later (van der Meer et al., 2011: 8).

a few months before/ longer beforehand. This is why we have chosen to analyze all newspaper articles about the PVV two weeks before the elections on June 9, 2010 and to analyze all newspaper articles about the PVV on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday two months³⁷ before the elections. Due to practical reasons, it was not possible to analyze all newspaper articles about the PVV two months before the elections and this is why we have chosen to analyze all Saturdays (since this is the most extensive print of the week), Tuesdays (since Mondays' print is less extensive after the weekend) and Thursdays. Using Lexis Nexis, we have searched for articles in the three newspapers that mention the word 'PVV'. After this, we removed the articles that only scarcely mentioned the party since they were mainly about topics not relevant for the analysis. Therefore, when we talk about 'articles about the PVV' we mean articles that frequently (more than three times) mention the party or party candidates. To determine whether the article about the PVV is favorable, neutral or unfavorable, we looked at the overall tone of the article. It is hard to explain the measurement of the overall tone since "tone pertains not simply to the explicit message offered by the journalist but the implicit message as well" (Johnson & Reynolds, 2005: 229) and this partly depends on the researcher's own interpretation. In the analysis, we applied the 'rule' that when an article contained more positive than negative information about the PVV, it was classified as favorable and when the article contained more negative than positive information about the party it was classified as unfavorable. When the article was purely informative and objective, without any positive or negative values it was classified as neutral. To highlight this explanation of these content categories we have made a coding sheet during the analysis. In this coding sheet there are some examples of why articles are classified as favorable, neutral or unfavorable. This coding sheet can be found in Appendix E. In tables 8 and 9, the results of the first content analyses are presented. For these first analyses we have analyzed 131 articles.

³⁷ Since all articles two weeks before the elections are analyzed (from May 26, 2010 until June 9, 2010), this means that all articles on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from April 9, 2010 until May 25, 2010 are analyzed.

Table 10: Examination of the overall tone of the articles about the PVV two months before the elections

Overall Tone of the article	De Volkskrant (N=25)	De Telegraaf (N=16)	Dagblad de Limburger (N=19)
Favorable	24%	50%	52,6%
Neutral	8%	18,7%	15,8%
Unfavorable	68%	31,3%	31,6%

Table 11: Examination of the overall tone of articles about the PVV two weeks before the elections

Overall Tone of the article	De Volkskrant (N=31)	De Telegraaf (N=26)	Dagblad de Limburger (N=14)
Favorable	12,9%	65,4%	35,7%
Neutral	32,3%	11,5%	28,6%
Unfavorable	54,8%	23,0%	35,7%

When we look at these tables, we see that the results of these first content analyses support the thesis that the popular press presents RRP parties in a more favorable way than quality newspapers. The tables show that in general, the quality newspaper 'De Volkskrant' contains more critical – and therefore, more unfavorable – articles about the PVV than the two more popular newspapers. This was already noticeable during the analyses: it was remarkable that in 'De Volkskrant' there were mainly articles about the (statements of) VVD and CDA. For example, it contained a couple of interviews with the party chairmen Mark Rutte (VVD) and Jan-Peter Balkenende (CDA), but there were no interviews with Geert Wilders. This was almost the other way around in 'De Telegraaf' and in 'Dagblad de Limburger' where (statements of) Geert Wilders got much more attention and where, in the case of 'De Telegraaf' the newspaper sometimes openly took sides with statements of the PVV. Furthermore, when we compare both analyses we see that two weeks before the elections the news coverage about the PVV of 'De Volkskrant' and 'Dagblad de Limburger' gets more neutral and the articles of 'De Telegraaf' get more favorable than two months before the elections. However, the differences between the quality press and the more popular press are clearly visible in both analyses.

As already mentioned, there is a clear difference between the way the PVV and its

candidates are presented in 'De Volkskrant' and 'Dagblad de Limburger', but differences between 'Dagblad de Limburger' and 'De Telegraaf' are not that clear. When we look at the analysis two weeks before the elections there are some distinctions; where 'De Telegraaf' is much more favorable than neutral or unfavorable in its news coverage about the PVV, the articles of 'Dagblad de Limburger' are more equally balanced. However, when we take the analysis two months before the elections into account, the distinctions between the two newspapers are negligible. This means that, based on the above analyses, it is not possible to state that the regional press in Limburg has given more favorable attention to the PVV than national newspapers. The only statement that could be made is that the news coverage about the PVV of 'Dagblad de Limburger' is more favorable than the coverage of 'De Volkskrant'. However, this indicates a difference between the popular and quality press rather than a difference between the regional and national press.

The second content analysis concerns 'radical right issues' and examines whether 'PVV-issues' were frequently covered in the media during the election campaign and whether there exist some significant differences between the regional and national newspapers. For doing this, we first had to determine the 'PVV-issues'. In a research of Stefaan Walgrave and Knut de Swert (2004), issues of the Belgium RRP party 'Vlaams Blok' (VB) had to be determined. By doing a party manifesto analysis and an exploration of voters' perception of the VB's issues, they concluded that immigration, crime/ crime policy, antipolitics and Flemish nationalism are the core issues of the VB (Walgrave & de Swert, 2004: 485, 486). These four issues highly correspond to the RRP description we saw in the first theoretical chapter; RRP parties all have a certain (ethno-)nationalistic element; they stress the importance of protecting the national culture and identity (Betz, 2005: 3). Linked to this nationalistic element is the importance of the immigration-issue; immigrants are seen as a threat to the culture and identity of the nation and immigration should therefore be strictly limited (Rydgren, 2007: 244). Another important feature of RRP parties is the authoritarianism, expressed by a strong emphasis on law and order issues like crime (policy) (Betz, 1993: 680, Mudde, 2007A: 23). Next to these features, RRP parties share some kind of anti-establishment feelings; a certain hostility towards the establishment and the functioning of current representative democracy (Rydgren, 2007: 243). The features of RRP parties make that nationalism, immigration, crime and anti-establishment are in general the

main issues for RRP parties. Since we have demonstrated that the Dutch PVV can be seen as a RRP party, it is reasonable to assume that these issues are the most salient issues for the PVV as well. Looking at the PVV's party manifesto, this seems to be the case indeed; there is a clear emphasis on the issues mentioned above. However, there is one more issue that is relevant to include in the 'PVV-issues' category. The anti-EU position of the PVV also seems to be very important for the party (and for other RRP parties too (Mudde, 2007A: 190)); the PVV sees the European Union as a major threat to the sovereignty and independence of the Netherlands and it should therefore be strictly limited (PVV, 2010A: 17). Since the anti-EU issue is a very permanent and continuously returning subject in PVV's statements, we will define this as a PVV-issue as well.

Once we determined the PVV issues (nationalism, immigration/ integration, anti-establishment, crime/ security and anti-EU), the coding of the three newspapers could begin. Since we had to code the newspaper articles through physical browsing, it was not possible to analyze all articles two months before the elections like we did in the previous analysis. Due to practical reasons we have chosen to analyze all front page and 'home affairs' articles one month before the elections on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. This resulted in a total amount of 1189 coded articles. The front page section has been chosen since this is practically the most important page of a newspaper; it "...is an important cue to readers, visually suggesting what the newspaper considers the day's most important stories" (Reisner, 1992). Furthermore, a newspaper's front page is the page that – in general – is mostly read (Peake, 2007: 58). The home affairs section ('Binnenland') has been chosen since this is the most relevant section for the defined issues; if newspapers report about Dutch immigration and crime policy, nationalism and anti-EU feelings, they will most probably do this in the home affairs section (and not, for example in the foreign affairs or economy section). By reading all articles in these two sections during the time span we mentioned, we coded the main subject of an article. For this, we used the following subject categories: 1) Nationalism 2) Immigration/ Integration 3) Anti-establishment 4) Criminality/ Security 5) Anti-EU 6) Other. The sixth category 'Other' was included because with this, it is possible to examine the relative importance of the other five categories. The results of the second content analysis are presented in table 10 and 11.

Table 12: Examination of the news coverage, one month before the elections, Home affairs section.

Subject	De Volkskrant (N=190)	De Telegraaf (N=286)	Dagblad de Limburger (N= 261)
Nationalism	1,1%	0,3%	1,5%
Immigration/ Integration	2,6%	3,5%	1,9%
Anti-establishment	4,7%	1%	0%
Criminality/ Security	12,6%	18,5%	18%
Anti-EU	0%	1%	0,7%
Other	78,9%	75,5%	77,7%

Table 13: Examination of the news coverage, one month before the elections, Front page section.

Subject	De Volkskrant (N=32)	De Telegraaf (N=68)	Dagblad de Limburger (N= 352 ³⁸)
Nationalism	0%	1,5%	0,9%
Immigration/ Integration	0%	2,9%	1,4%
Anti-establishment	0%	0%	0,9%
Criminality/ Security	3,1%	8,8%	17,6%
Anti-EU	6,3%	4,4%	0%
Other	90,6%	82,4%	79,3%

When we look at these tables, we see no clear pattern like in the former content analysis; based on these results we cannot state that the popular press has given more attention to PVV-issues than the quality press. In the home affairs section, more than three-quarters of the articles of all three newspapers are not about PVV-issues, but about other subjects. There are only small differences between the newspapers; the two popular newspapers have given slightly more attention to criminality/ security issues, but the quality newspaper contained of more anti-establishment articles. However, the overall picture does not show important differences between the three newspapers. Looking at the front page section, it is

³⁸ The amount of front page articles of 'Dagblad de Limburger' is much more higher than the amount of articles of the other two newspapers. This is because 'Dagblad de Limburger' has different front pages for different regions in Limburg and all these different front pages have been analyzed.

remarkable that 'Dagblad de Limburger' has given much more attention to criminality and security issues than the other two newspapers. However, we also see that the two national newspapers have reported more about anti-EU issues than the regional press. Using these results, it is hard to make some clear-cut statements. The only clear difference visible in the results of this second content-analysis is the observation that 'Dagblad de Limburger' reports more about criminality and security in its front page section than the national newspapers. This could have had the consequence that crime and law and order issues have been more salient in Limburg, creating a favorable political agenda for the PVV. However, based on the above results it is not possible to draw such a strong conclusion. Since we have only compared three newspapers we can only demonstrate a general pattern; there is a possibility that the crime-issue has been more salient in Limburg than in the rest of the Netherlands. However, more elaborate research has to be done to make a more clear-cut conclusion. Unfortunately, due to a lack of time this was not possible in this Master's thesis.

Looking at the results of the above content analyses, there are no significant indications by which we can conclude that the regional press has given more favorable attention to the PVV and its candidates, or has emphasized PVV-issues more than the national press. However, the first analysis does demonstrate the thesis that popular newspapers are – in general – more favorable in their news content about RRP parties than quality newspapers. Nevertheless, this does not count for RRP-issues; our findings do not indicate that the popular press highlights specific RRP-issues more than the quality press.

In the case of the PVV, it is not clear what effect the media have had on the success of the party. The results of our analyses do not indicate that the regional press has facilitated a favorable environment for the PVV in Limburg. There is a slight indication that the crime-issue has been more salient in the regional press than in the national press. However, our findings cannot fully demonstrate this and more elaborate research has to be done to make more clear-cut conclusions. However, we also have to hold in mind that it is very hard to empirically test the effect the media have on the success or failure of RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 252, 253).

Conclusion – Supply side explanations

In this chapter, the supply side of RRP-voting has been researched, both the internal and external supply side factors have been examined. This means that the analysis has focused not only upon characteristics of the PVV itself, but also upon political opportunity structures, which is a number of structures in the political field, but outside the political party that presents opportunities for (new) political parties to gain success. For the internal supply side the *party propaganda* has been examined; the way the ideology and policies of the party are presented through party propaganda of the PVV itself. For the external supply side the *political context* and the *political culture* have been analyzed, which means that the political climate of Limburg was explored. Finally, the role of the regional *media* has been examined. We have analyzed whether these factors have created some favorable conditions for the PVV in Limburg by which they might have facilitated the success of the party in the province. Although it is hard to draw some clear-cut conclusions about the influence these factors had on the success of the PVV in Limburg, we have found some interesting results.

First, we have seen that concerning *party propaganda*, the PVV has extensively focused its attention on regions with strong regional cultures; Friesland, Overijssel, Limburg and Zeeland. The party specifically emphasized these regional cultures, stating that these cultures should be preserved and arguing that these provinces deserve more attention from the political centre. It has been said that by doing this, the PVV played the ‘identity-card’; intensifying regional feelings and the feeling of ‘us versus them’. This relatively extensive attention for regions with strong regional cultures might have played a role in the success of the PVV in Limburg, it might have favored the party’s image in the province, creating more sympathy for the party and the party leader. Although it is hard to fully prove, the extensive propaganda strategy for regions with strong regional cultures has most probably facilitated the success of the PVV in Limburg.

For the external supply side, the *political context* and *political culture* of Limburg have been examined. Our findings demonstrate that there are some factors in the political climate of Limburg that might have facilitated the PVV’s success in the province. First, concerning the position of the CDA in Limburg, a clear process of dealignment had taken place. The CDA has always been the most successful party in Limburg, but its position has been seriously weakened in the last years. This overall weakening of the CDA in the province created a

favorable opportunity structure for a new political party on the right side of the political spectrum, which has been exploited by the PVV very successfully. Next to this, the PVV faced no strong competition of other parties in Limburg. Since people in Limburg are usually tended to vote for a party on the right side of the political spectrum, the SP was no serious threat for the PVV. Neither was the VVD. This party is an important competitor for the PVV on the national level, but it has never been very successful in the province of Limburg. Therefore, it did not seriously threaten the position of the PVV in the province. Furthermore, we have seen that Limburg has always been a favorable political climate for new political parties, especially when they are on the right side of the political spectrum and when they are emphasizing issues of order, security and social security. Together with the relatively uncommitted voters and the tradition of reluctance against mainstream politics and political parties, these factors constituted a favorable environment for a RRP party. Finally, we saw that the PVV has successfully made use of the clientelistic bond between candidate and voter that is still important in the southern province and that especially favors candidates from the province itself. All the above findings indicate that the PVV has faced a relatively favorable political climate in the province and that the party has successfully made use of this.

Finally, the role of the regional *media* on the success of the PVV in Limburg has been examined. By doing a content analysis of the news coverage, the regional newspaper 'Dagblad de Limburger' was compared with two national newspapers. The results of the analyses support the thesis that the popular press presents RRP parties in a more favorable way than quality newspapers; these differences between the quality press and the more popular press were clearly demonstrated. However, the findings did not indicate that the regional press in Limburg has given more favorable attention to the PVV than national newspapers, or has emphasized PVV-issues more than the national press. Using the results of our content analysis we can therefore say that there are no indications that, when compared to the national press, the regional press in Limburg has facilitated the electoral success of the PVV.

The above findings have demonstrated that there have been some factors that might have created some favorable political opportunity structures for the PVV in Limburg. However, we must emphasize that these opportunity structures "...are facilitating rather than determining

factors in the success and failure of populist radical right parties” (Mudde, 2007A: 253). Furthermore, it is hard to empirically test whether these factors have had some influence on the success of the PVV in Limburg. With the above findings it is possible to demonstrate some indications. However, no clear-cut conclusions about the role of these factors in the electoral success of the PVV in the province can be drawn. Next to this, many authors have argued that these opportunity structures play an important role “in the electoral breakthrough stage; particularly with respect to political and cultural factors” (Mudde, 2007A: 253). The above factors might have favored the electoral breakthrough of the PVV in Limburg in 2006 and 2010 and it will be interesting to examine whether these factors will play a facilitating role in the electoral persistence phase too. Since these factors can change in content and in impact, it could be possible that factors that have been favorable in 2010 lose (some of) their importance during next election times (Mudde, 2007A: 254). Whether this is the case will be an interesting question after the coming elections in September 2012.

Conclusion

In this Master's thesis, we have examined the regional success of the Dutch radical right party the PVV in the southern province of Limburg. The success of this party in Limburg was striking; the link between a radical right populist party and a region with a relatively low amount of Muslims and non-western immigrants seems paradoxical at first. By combining different data sources and by applying different research methods, we have attempted to find an answer to the central question: *Regarding the amount of votes for the PVV, how can the regional deviation of Limburg in comparison with the rest of the Netherlands be explained?*

By examining the results we have found concerning the four sub questions, we will now answer this central question.

First, it is relevant to note that data about the demand *and* supply side has been used; to give an answer as complete as possible it was necessary to examine characteristics of the PVV-electorate as well as factors concerning the PVV itself and the political and cultural landscape of Limburg.

For the demand side, background characteristics, attitudes and motivations of the PVV-electorate in the Netherlands and in Limburg have been analyzed. Using these variables we wanted to find out *who* votes for the PVV, but also *why* people make this vote choice. This first examination resulted in a 'typical PVV voters profile'; the typical PVV voter is a person in a lower socio-economic position who is not very religious, who holds a negative attitude towards immigrants and has low political trust. Next to this, he or she has sympathy for the party leader Geert Wilders. It was interesting to see that this Dutch RRP voting profile differs from the image of the stereotypical RRP voter in the sense that the typical PVV voter is not necessarily a lower educated man. The logistic regression analyses have demonstrated that the attitude towards immigrants, sympathy for Geert Wilders, social class, political trust and church attendance are the most important predictors of PVV-voting in the Netherlands. These variables have not all played a role in the success of the party in Limburg as well. The analysis demonstrated that there are no indications that socio-economic position and political trust have played a significant role in the success of the PVV in Limburg. However, the variables 'degree of religiosity', 'attitude towards immigrants' and 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' have most probably influenced the electoral success of the PVV in the province.

Especially the importance of the variables 'attitude towards immigrants' and 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' has been demonstrated more than once in this case. Furthermore, we saw that the variable 'regional identification' did not have a significant relationship with the likelihood of PVV voting.

Concerning the supply side, both internal and external supply side variables have been examined. Therefore, we have focused upon characteristics of the PVV itself, as well as upon political opportunity structures. For the internal supply side, we saw that the party propaganda of the PVV has been specifically focused on regions with strong regional cultures. By emphasizing these regional cultures, stating that they should be protected and arguing that these regions deserve more attention from the political centre, the PVV has clearly played "the identity-card" of intensifying regional feelings and the feeling of 'us versus them'. This relatively extensive attention for regions with strong regional cultures has most probably favored the party's image in Limburg, creating more sympathy for the party and its party leader. In this way the extensive propaganda strategy has most probably facilitated the success of the PVV in Limburg. Although we have not found a significant relationship between the variable 'regional identification' and the likelihood of PVV-voting, the strong regional culture in Limburg seems to have been important in the party campaign of the PVV and has therefore played a significant role after all. For the external supply side we first examined the political context and political culture of Limburg. This resulted in some findings that demonstrated that there are some factors in the political climate of Limburg that might have facilitated the PVV's success in the province. We saw a clear process of dealignment; the overall weakening of the CDA in Limburg created a favorable opportunity structure for a new political party on the right side of the political spectrum. Furthermore, the PVV has faced no strong competition of other parties in Limburg. Next to this, there are a couple of characteristics in the political culture of Limburg that created a relatively favorable political environment for the PVV. The province has always been a favorable political climate for new political parties, especially when they are on the right side of the political spectrum and when they are emphasizing issues of order, security and social security. Together with the relatively uncommitted voters, the clientelistic bond between voter and candidate and the tradition of reluctance against mainstream politics and political parties, this indicates a positive political climate for a RRP party in Limburg. Finally, the role of the regional media

has been analyzed. However, there were no indications that, when compared to the national press, the regional press has facilitated the electoral success of the PVV in Limburg.

The above findings make clear that there is no one clear-cut answer to the central question. However, the testing of a high amount of variables has resulted in some important indications about why the PVV has been this successful in the most southern province of the Netherlands. Concerning the demand side we see that the importance of the variables 'degree of religiosity' and especially of 'attitude towards immigrants' and 'sympathy for Geert Wilders' has been demonstrated. It is interesting to see that the attitude towards immigrants does prove to be an important factor in explaining the PVV's success in Limburg. Several authors have argued that the anti-immigrant issue was no factor of importance here and that people in Limburg do not have more negative feelings towards immigrants than people in the rest of the Netherlands (Korsten, 2010: 5, van Eeten, 2010, van Gageldonk & de Beek, 2012A). However, the findings of our analysis demonstrate that people in Limburg do have relatively more negative feelings towards immigrants. Reasons for this are unclear, but our results show that the presence of immigrants does not have to be immediate to lead to resentment of them. For example, rumor about immigrants might cause the fear of an influx of foreigners among people who live in regions with small numbers of immigrants (Knapp, 2004: 306). Next to this, some labor segments in Limburg are confronted with a high amount of migrant workers from Eastern Europe. This phenomenon might cause that people in these labor segments feel their economic position threatened. Whether this is the case, or whether people in Limburg perceive immigrants more as a cultural threat cannot be answered in this Master's thesis, due to limited data sources. More elaborate research has to be done to give more clearness about this. Next to the attitude towards immigrants, we see that sympathy for Geert Wilders has played an important role too. Although we have to be careful that we do not overestimate the influence of this variable, we do know that parts of the votes for populist parties can be explained by positive evaluations of its leaders (Schumacher & Rooduijn, 2010: 14). It seems to be that this has been an important factor in the success of the PVV in Limburg, especially since Geert Wilders had the plus of being 'one of us'.

Concerning the supply side we see that there are indications that the PVV has specifically focused its attention on regions like Limburg with strong regional cultures. Next to this, we

have demonstrated that there are some important factors present in the political climate of Limburg that have created some favorable political opportunity structures that might have facilitated the success of the PVV in the province.

Although we have some important indications that the above variables have played an important role in the electoral success of the PVV in Limburg, we cannot draw some clear-cut conclusions about the exact reasons that have caused the regional deviation. However, this research has made an important contribution in exploring and partly explaining radical right-wing voting in the Netherlands and it has provided significant insights for cross-regional research of the electoral success of RRP parties. It has proven to be very valuable to combine different data sources and different research methods for the explanation of RRP party success. We have seen that there do exist differences between regions that are significant for RRP's failure or success, differences that would have been unnoticed in cross-national research. Furthermore, research at the regional level has the advantage of keeping many (political) factors constant that cannot be kept constant in cross-national research, such as charisma of the party leader and electoral systems (Lubbers, 2001: 6). By keeping these factors constant we can obtain more elaborate information about the effects and significance of some important variables. Looking at these advantages of cross-regional research, it is striking that although there are numerous examples of RRP parties that are specifically successful in certain regions, while less successful in others (France, Austria, Belgium), intra-country regional variation in radical right-wing voting has received relatively little attention in empirical radical right-wing voting research (Lubbers, 2001: 5). By doing a cross-regional analysis, this Master's thesis has made an important contribution and has provided important insight in processes of radical right-wing voting. However, in future research, additional data has to be used to establish some more clear-cut explanations for the regional deviation of the PVV's success in Limburg. Furthermore, we have to have in mind that – especially the supply side factors – are mostly facilitating rather than determining when it comes to the success and failure of RRP parties (Mudde, 2007A: 253). Next to this, variables might have some effect in the electoral breakthrough of a RRP party, but this does not mean that they will have the same effect in the next phases of a political party as well. Whether the variables that we have found to be significant in the success of

the PVV in Limburg will have equal importance in the following elections will be an interesting question for further research.

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Appendix A

Table 1: Parliamentary Election Results 2010, PVV-voting in %.

Region	PVV
NETHERLANDS	15,45
Oost-Groningen	16,92
Delfzijl en omgeving	13,97
Overig Groningen	8,96
Noord-Friesland	11,49
Zuidwest-Friesland	11,32
Zuidoost-Friesland	11,2
Noord-Drenthe	10,4
Zuidoost-Drenthe	16
Zuidwest-Drenthe	13,24
Noord-Overijssel	10,28
Zuidwest-Overijssel	10,57
Twente	14,42
Veluwe	11,99
Zuidwest-Gelderland	18,05
Achterhoek	12,61
Arnhem/Nijmegen	14,01
Flevoland	16,23
Utrecht	12,52
Kop van Noord-Holland	16,09
Alkmaar en omgeving	13,06
IJmond	16,85
Agglomeratie Haarlem	11,66
Zaanstreek	17,22
Groot-Amsterdam	12,47
Het Gooi en Vechtstreek	12,09
Agglomeratie Leiden en Bollenstreek	13,85
Agglomeratie's-Gravenhage	16,54
Delft en Westland	16,1
Oost-Zuid-Holland	14,39
Groot-Rijnmond	19,39
Zuidoost-Zuid-Holland	15,58
Zeeuwsch-Vlaanderen	19,28
Overig Zeeland	13,48
West-Noord-Brabant	19,42
Midden-Noord-Brabant	16,41
Noordoost-Noord-Brabant	16,19
Zuidoost-Noord-Brabant	17,46
Noord-Limburg	24,51
Midden-Limburg	26,4
Zuid-Limburg	27,97
Binnenmaas	16,06
Kaag en Braassem	15,82
Zuidplas	14,86

Source: NSD, European Election Database, 2011.

Appendix B

Items used from the NKO

Dependent variable

Which party did you vote for in the 2010 parliamentary elections?

- 1: CDA
- 2: PvdA
- 3: VVD
- 4: Groenlinks
- 5: SP
- 6: D66
- 7: ChristenUnie
- 8: SGP
- 9: Partij voor de Vrijheid
- 10: Partij voor de Dieren
- 11: Trots op Nederland
- 12: blank
- 13: Invalid
- 14: Other party

Gender

- 1: male
- 2: female

Age

Year of birth respondent

Social economic position

social class – self image of respondent

- 1: working class
- 2: upper working class
- 3: middle class
- 4: upper middle class
- 5: upper class

Education

Highest education completed of respondent

- 1: elementary
- 2: lower vocational
- 3: secondary
- 4: middle level vocational, higher level secondary
- 5: higher level vocational, university

Religion

Respondent is religious

- 1: yes
- 2: no

Degree of religiosity

Attendance of religious services

- 1: (almost) never
- 2: several times a year
- 3: once a month
- 4: two or three times a month
- 5: once a week or more

Union Member

Member: Trade Union

- 1: yes
- 2: no

Attitude towards immigrants

Item 1: Foreigners - position of respondent

scale 1-7

- 1: keep own culture
- 7: adjust to Dutch culture

Item 2: Asylum seekers - position of respondent

scale 1-7

1: admit more

7: send back more

Authoritarian attitudes

Item 1: Crime - position of respondent

scale 1-7

1: too strict

7: more strict

Item 2: Crime - are crimes punished too severe, too light, or precisely correct?

1: too severe

2: precisely correct

3: too light

Political Dissatisfaction

Item 1: Dutch politics does stand up for everyone's interests

Item 2: The government has the most honorable intentions

1: fully agree

2: agree

3: agree nor disagree

4: disagree

5: fully disagree

Political Trust

Item 1: Trust: political parties

Item 2: Trust: National Parliament

Item 3: Trust: Government

1: very much

2: fairly much

3: not so much

4: no trust at all

Disenfranchisement

Item 1: Consider myself qualified for politics

Item 2: Good understanding of political problems

1: fully agree

2: agree

3: disagree

4: fully disagree

Item 3: Politics too complicated for people like me

1: fully disagree

2: disagree

3: agree

4: fully agree

Anti-EU

Evaluation of Dutch EU membership

1: a good thing

2: neither good nor bad

3: a bad thing

Insecurity

Item 1: I am worried that my neighborhood will deteriorate

Item 2: I am afraid of increasing violence and vandalism in the Netherlands

1: fully disagree

2: disagree

3: agree nor disagree

4: agree

5: fully agree

Sympathy for Geert Wilders

Sympathy score: Geert Wilders

scale 0-10

0: unsympathetic

10: very sympathetic

Appendix C

Crosstabs: comparison of the electorates of Limburg and the Netherlands.

Table 2: Crosstab Degree of religiosity

	From Limburg			
		no	yes	Total
Attendance of religious services	Once a week or more	222 (21,6%)	15 (13,8%)	237 (20,9%)
	2/3 times a month	90 (8,8%)	9 (8,3%)	99 (8,7%)
	Once a month	93 (9,1%)	17 (15,6%)	110 (9,7%)
	Several times a year	181 (17,6%)	31 (28,4%)	212 (18,7%)
	(almost) never	441 (42,9%)	37 (33,9%)	478 (42,1%)
	Total	1027 (100%)	109 (100%)	1136 (100%)

Table 3: Crosstab Attitude towards immigrants

	From Limburg			
		no	yes	Total
Attitude towards immigrants (the higher, the more negative)	2	14 (0,6%)	0 (0%)	14 (0,5%)
	3	29 (1,2%)	1 (0,6%)	30 (1,2%)
	4	46 (1,9%)	3 (1,7%)	49 (1,9%)
	5	93 (3,9%)	10 (5,6%)	103 (4,0%)
	6	154 (6,4%)	4 (2,2%)	158 (6,1%)
	7	211 (8,8%)	10 (5,6%)	221 (8,5%)
	8	334 (13,9%)	19 (10,6%)	353 (13,7%)
	9	329 (13,7%)	25 (14,0%)	354 (13,7%)
	10	330 (13,7%)	29 (16,2%)	359 (13,9%)
	11	316 (13,1%)	25 (14,0%)	341 (13,2%)
	12	224 (9,3%)	15 (8,4%)	239 (9,2%)
	13	143 (5,9%)	14 (7,8%)	157 (6,1%)
	14	184 (7,6%)	24 (13,4%)	208 (8,0%)
	Total	2407 (100%)	179 (100%)	2586 (100%)

Table 4: Crosstab Sympathy for Geert Wilders

	From Limburg			
		no	yes	Total
Sympathy Geert Wilders	0: unsympathetic	493 (21,5%)	24 (14,2%)	517 (21,0%)
	1	328 (14,3%)	22 (13,0%)	350 (14,2%)
	2	307 (13,4%)	18 (10,7%)	325 (13,2%)
	3	269 (11,7%)	14 (8,3%)	283 (11,5%)
	4	202 (8,8%)	19 (11,2%)	221 (9,0%)
	5	244 (10,6%)	28 (16,6%)	272 (11,1%)
	6	181 (7,9%)	11 (6,5%)	192 (7,8%)
	7	143 (6,2%)	17 (10,1%)	160 (6,5%)
	8	68 (3,0%)	8 (4,7%)	76 (3,1%)
	9	29 (1,3%)	4 (2,4%)	33 (1,3%)
	10: very sympathetic	28 (1,2%)	4 (2,4%)	32 (1,3%)
	Total	2292 (100%)	169 (100%)	2461 (100%)

Appendix D

Table 5: Most important national problem according to people in Limburg

Most important national problem - Limburg
1. Economy/ Decreasing growth
2. (Ethnic) Minorities / Foreigners
3. Healthcare
4. Ethics/ Moral: Decline traditional morals
5. Decreasing Welfare Services
Crime
6. Employment
7. Bureaucracy
8. Poverty
Class Differences
Pensions

Table 6: Most important national problem according to people in the rest of the Netherlands

Most important national problem - Netherlands
1. Economy/ Decreasing growth
2. (Ethnic) Minorities / Foreigners
3. Healthcare
4. Crime
5. Ethics/ Moral: Decline traditional morals
6. Safety
7. Employment
8. Decreasing Welfare Services
9. Education
10. Pensions
11. Housing Prices

Appendix E

Table 9 : Content Analysis, Coding Sheet

	Examples
Favorable	Costs mass-immigration, Wilders about PVV statements, crisis within the EU, interview with Wilders, criticizing criticism about the PVV, Wilders talking about Limburg, radical Muslims...
Neutral	Objective information about what happened in The Hague.
Unfavorable	Racism, disputes within the PVV, other politicians about the PVV, discussions of the word 'kopvoddentaks', negative publicity about new PVV candidates, disproving PVV statements, desecrating Turkey, calling the PVV radical, calling the PVV a 'disaster for Dutch economy'...