Borbáth, Endre; Paxton, Fred

Movement parties in Europe: a comparative assessment

Acta Politica

Provided in Cooperation with:
WZB Berlin Social Science Center

Suggested Citation: Borbáth, Endre; Paxton, Fred (2024) : Movement parties in Europe: a comparative assessment, Acta Politica, ISSN 1741-1416, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Iss. Online First, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00381-3

This Version is available at:
https://hdl.handle.net/10419/308503

Acta Politica
https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00381-3

EDITORIAL

Movement parties in Europe: a comparative assessment

Endre Borbáth[1] · **Fred Paxton**[2]

Accepted: 13 November 2024

Abstract

Research on political parties and social movements has long developed independently, separated by the disciplinary boundaries of political science and sociology. We see the recent successes of 'movement parties' as a push to bridge the two disciplinary traditions in order to describe this new hybrid party type accurately. To this end, we ask to what extent and under what conditions do we observe movement parties in European party systems, and how can we define the various subtypes? In the introduction to the special issue, we make three contributions. First, we identify existing definitions and empirical examples in the study of movement parties based on a systematic review of the emerging literature. Second, we operationalize Herbert Kitschelt's influential definition of lower levels of programmatic and organizational investment coupled with a higher degree of protest mobilization. Third, we introduce the individual contributions to the special issue and situate them within the relevant theoretical debates. Utilizing a new set of quantitative indicators, we empirically assess how parties identified as movement parties in the existing literature score on programmatic, organizational, and protest dimensions. The analysis underscores the heterogeneity of movement parties, with only a few cases aligning with Kitschelt's comprehensive definition.

Keywords Movement parties · Political parties · Protest · Social movements · Europe

Introduction

While political party research points to the hollowing out of traditional parties and declining rates of participation in electoral politics (Mair 2013; Van Biezen et al. 2012), social movement studies emphasize the increasingly important role

✉ Endre Borbáth
endre.borbath@wzb.eu

[1] Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg & WZB Berlin Social Science Center, Heidelberg, Germany

[2] University of Glasgow, Glasgow, Scotland

Published online: 16 December 2024

of protests in mobilizing discontent (Giugni and Grasso 2019; Dalton 2008). The two strands of literature have lived largely separate lives (e.g., McAdam and Tarrow 2010; Tarrow 2021) and only recently have been combined in the study of parties that straddle both electoral and protest arenas: *movement parties*. In Europe, this new form of party has emerged amidst a wave of popular discontent, stoked by the financial crisis, the ensuing austerity, and long-term disenchantment with political institutions. Parties such as Podemos in Spain, the Movimento Cinque Stelle in Italy, and Jobbik in Hungary have captured aspirations for change, as well as anger and anxieties about globalization, migration and the socio-economic and cultural upheaval that a dynamic of cleavage formation have wrought. The rise of movement parties has also been studied in a variety of contexts outside of Europe, ranging from Latin America (e.g., Anria 2013, 2018) to the US and Canada (e.g., Schwartz 2006).

The recent flurry of research into 'movement parties' across Europe and beyond has been a bridge between two disciplinary traditions and granted valuable new insights across a broad, and ideologically diverse, range of cases. While the concept was initially centered on environmentally focused and left-wing parties, attention has since extended to centrist and radical right parties too (Pirro and Castelli Gattinara 2018; Caiani and Císař 2019). Considering various examples of this hybrid party form has granted a new understanding of the distinctive characteristics of these parties. Besides their 'dual track' of activities, straddling the—usually separate—party and protest arenas, they have promised innovations in organizational and programmatic terms. Yet, despite sharing the 'movement party' label, there are significant differences between many parties grouped under the label, both within and, especially, between ideological party families. It remains an open question regarding the extent to which movement parties, in all of their diversity, formulate an ideologically or strategically radical alternative to existing formations.

To address this gap, the special issue aims to address the various conceptual and empirical challenges in mapping and explaining their variation. More specifically, in the current introduction, we make three contributions to this emerging literature. First, we identify existing definitions and empirical examples in the study of movement parties, based on a systematic review of the existing studies. Second, we operationalize Kitschelt's (2006) influential definition of a low degree of programmatic and organizational investment coupled with a high degree of protest mobilization. Based on a new set of quantitative indicators, we score those parties which the existing literature has identified movement parties in a three-dimensional space and map various subtypes. Third, we introduce the individual contributions to the special issue and place them in the relevant theoretical debates.

As a first step, we seek to clarify the definition of movement parties and conduct a comparative assessment of their presence in Europe. While the flourishing literature on movement parties tends to be grounded on the article of Kitschelt (2006), no research has yet, to the best of our knowledge, attempted to systematically and comprehensively assess the existence of movement parties according to his definitional criteria. We conduct this assessment by breaking down Kitschelt's definition into three dimensions—an organizational, a programmatic, and a mobilizing one. We combine three party-level datasets to construct quantitative indicators of parties' organizational features based on the V-Party dataset (Lindberg et al. 2022), their

programmatic appeal based on the Manifesto Project Dataset (Lehmann et al. 2023), and their mobilization based on the PolDem Protest Dataset for 30 European Countries (Kriesi et al. 2020).

The empirical analysis shows that only a handful of parties live up to all three aspects of Kitschelt's definition. These are also the parties that have overwhelmingly been studied as movement parties by the literature. Apart from the few clear-cut cases, the analysis highlights movement parties' heterogeneity, many of which resemble ideal–typical cases on one dimension but not on the other. As a result, we argue the distinction between types of movement parties should play a vital role in the development of the literature. A number of contributions to the special issue then further elaborate on the differential use of movement party features and discourses by existing parties.

The rest of the article is structured in four sections. First, we describe our theoretical approach to movement parties and detail the definition that we follow and its constitutive features. Then, we outline the methods and data used to assess the presence of these features among political parties in Europe, before we present the empirical results. Finally, we conclude by introducing the individual contributions to the special issue. These contribute to various crucial topics of research regarding movement parties; their rise, their variety, and their consequences.

Theory: defining movement parties

The formation of hybrid organizations that share characteristics of both political parties and social movements has attracted the attention of scholars since the turn of the millennium. Various attempts have been made to define these 'movement parties' (Kitschelt 2006; Gunther and Diamond 2003; Schwartz 2006; Cervera-Marzal 2024). These definitions tend to bring together insights from the political science literature regarding parties with insights from the sociology literature regarding social movements. Fundamentally, parties and movements differ in terms of the arena in which they operate: while parties participate in formal institutions of democratic representation through competitive elections, movements instead operate outside of such institutions, typically resorting to street protests. So-called 'movement parties' attempt a 'dual track,' with their characteristics and activities combining aspects of both.

Movement parties, according to the foundational definition of Kitschelt (2006), present three distinctive attributes that differentiate them from either parties or movements. First, they invest little in formal organizational party structures. Institutionalized organizational routines can be replaced either by grassroots empowerment, where anyone who attends a meeting is allowed to participate or by granting extreme autonomy to the party leader in relation to the membership. Second, they are distinctive in their programmatic choices. They tend to focus on a small number of issues and neglect taking positions on more interconnected trade-offs in policymaking. Third, they are involved to a greater extent in contentious action repertoires, for example, protests (Peña 2020). As a result, these parties tend to interact more with associated social movement organizations, including through

the co-organization of protests (Borbáth and Hutter 2020). Such movement–party interactions are also facilitated by their aforementioned open organizational structures.

The emergence of movement parties of various forms is dependent on both political opportunity structures—that is, appropriate institutional access points for new parties—and discursive opportunity structures. Similar contextual conditions and processes have been cited for their emergence as for several other 'types' of party: populist, anti-system, and challenger parties. A confluence of socio-economic and political crises, which generated a combined decline of economic conditions and political trust, opened the door to new parties promising radical change (Della Porta et al. 2017: p. 65). We still lack, however, explanations for the non-emergence of movement parties in environments that seem to align with the aforementioned criteria.

Movement parties may appear across the ideological spectrum. In addition to existing studies of progressive movement parties in Europe (Della Porta et al. 2017) and in Latin America (Anria 2013, 2018), more recently, there have been increasing studies of far-right movement parties (Pirro and Castelli Gattinara 2018; Pirro 2019; Caiani and Císař 2019). The breadth of parties in Europe that have been given the 'movement party' label is demonstrated by the results of a comprehensive overview of the existing literature. We conducted a systematic search of the literature regarding movement parties, gathering all Google Scholar articles published up to and including 2024 that contain the term 'movement party'/ 'movement parties' in the title or abstract and have at least one citation. We also include all articles published within this special issue. The European parties considered as movement parties by these published accounts are shown in Table 1.

The differences between the diverse range of movement parties—with examples from the radical left, radical right, green, and center—extend beyond their ideological orientation. Those on the far-right are more likely to be plebiscitarian than participatory in organizational form (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016: p. 227; Art 2018). Moreover, far-right movement parties tend not to arise out of social movements but rather fit the label due to their '[application of] the organizational and strategic practices of social movements in the arena of party competition' (Kitschelt 2006: p. 280). When considering movement parties from both the right and left-wing, therefore, the conceptual boundaries seem somewhat elusive.

A further definitional problem has been raised regarding whether the theorized features tend to align with empirical reality. According to Kim (2023: p. 3), it is both theoretically and empirically questionable whether a dual orientation toward movement and party politics (i.e., our 'activity' dimension) goes hand in hand with a lack of investment in a formal organization (i.e., our 'organization' dimension). There are prominent examples of so-called 'movement parties' that deviate from the expected convergence of these apparently core characteristics: for example, the German Greens, the archetypal movement party of the 1980s in Kitschelt's original formulation, who actually demonstrate very rigorous organizational structures. Another example of a movement party that challenges the assumed correlation between a dual electoral-protest orientation and a low level of formalized organization is provided by Saarts (2024) in this special issue. Rather than the lack of investment in

Table 1 List of movement parties in existing literature

Country	Movement party	Ideological orientation	Sources
Austria	NEOS—The New Austria	Liberal	(Rahat 2022)
Belgium	Agora	Participatory democracy	(Junius et al. 2021)
	Ecolo	Green	(Rahat 2022)
Denmark	The Alternative	Green	(Santos and Mercea 2024; Soneryd and Wettergren 2017)
	New right	Radical right	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
Estonia	EKRE (The conservative people's party of Estonia)	Radical right	(Saarts 2024)
France	LFI (France unbowed)	Radical left	(Vittori 2022)
	Renaissance (RE) (formerly 'The republic on the move' (LREM))	Centrist	(Barthold and Fougère 2021)
	National rally	Radical right	(Frigoli and Ivaldi 2019)
Germany	AfD (alternative for Germany)	Radical right	(Heinze and Weisskircher 2021; Kajta et al. 2023; Santos and Mercea 2024; Weisskircher 2024; Paxton 2024)
	The greens	Green	(Rahat 2022)
Greece	SYRIZA (The coalition of the radical left—progressive alliance)	Radical left	(Della Porta et al. 2017; Prentoulis and Thomassen 2019; Vittori 2022)
	ANEL (The independent Greeks—national patriotic alliance)	Radical right	(Fielitz 2019)
Hungary	Jobbik	Radical right	(Pirro and Castelli Gattinara 2018; Pirro 2019)
	Our homeland movement	Radical right	(Caiani et al. 2024)
	LMP—Hungary's Green party	Green	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	Párbeszéd (Dialogue—The greens' party)	Green	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	Momentum	Centrist	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	Együtt (Together—party for a new era)	Liberal	(Kim 2023)
Italy	Five star movement	Mixed	(Della Porta et al. 2017; Mosca and Quaranta 2017; Pirro 2018; Vittori 2022, 2020)
	CasaPound Italy	Radical right	(Pirro and Castelli Gattinara 2018)
Netherlands	D66 (Democrats 66)	Liberal	(Rahat 2022)
Poland	Confederation	Radical right	(Kajta et al. 2023)

Table 1 (continued)

Country	Movement party	Ideological orientation	Sources
Portugal	Left Bloc	Radical left	(Mosca and Quaranta 2017)
Romania	AUR (alliance for the union of Romanians)	Radical right	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	USR (save Romania union)	Centrist	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
Serbia	Dveri	Radical right	(Kralj and Tranfić 2024)
	NDB (Do not let Belgrade drown)	Green	(Kralj and Tranfić 2024)
Slovenia	Levica (the left)	Radical left	(Toplišek 2017)
Spain	Podemos	Radical left	(Della Porta et al. 2017; Mosca and Quaranta 2017; Prentoulis and Thomassen 2019; Vittori 2022)
Sweden	Sweden democrats	Radical right	(Peterson 2019)
UK	Brexit party	Radical right	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	Green party	Green	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	Labor	Center-left	(Prentoulis and Thomassen 2019)
	Sinn Fein	Radical left	(Santos and Mercea 2024)
	UKIP (United Kingdom independence party)	Radical right	(Hanna and Busher 2019; Paxton 2024; Santos and Mercea 2024)
Ukraine	Right sector	Radical right	(Kim 2023)

party organization expected by Kitschelt (2006), the Estonian party EKRE combines its protest activities with a formal party organization reminiscent of a 'mass party.'

A proposed solution to this conceptual problem is to disaggregate movement parties according to their organizational form and thereby offer a new approach distinct from the dominant 'interactive-mobilization' strand that builds on Kitchelt's definition. Kim's (2023) new 'discursive-organizational approach' centers on the organizational dimension and distinguishes between, on the one hand, movement parties, which operate through horizontal linkages with movements, and, on the other hand, so-called '*Volksparteien* of a new type' (VNTs)—many of which have been labeled as movement parties in the literature. The latter instead form plebiscitarian vertical linkages with a broad mass under a strong leadership. However, a clear distinction between these two forms is not always evident in empirical reality. Consider, for example, a party such as Podemos that combines features of both proposed types (Lisi 2019).

In the process of extending the application of the movement party label across an increasingly broad range of cases, a significant risk of conceptual stretching arises. Many of the cases that have been considered as movement parties not only differ ideologically but also, more crucially to the topic at hand, in terms of the features that are central to the definitional criteria of movement parties. Across organizational, programmatic, and activity aspects, many, if not most of these parties actually seem to have little in common. We therefore propose to conduct a comprehensive and systematic analysis of parties in Europe and their demonstration of the three features constitutive of Kitschelt's definition of a movement party and thereby identify the various subtypes of movement parties.

Data and methods

Despite apparent similarities among movement party examples, the literature remains dominated by case studies or small-n comparisons. Case studies can enable in-depth assessment of various aspects of movement parties. However, their capacity to facilitate comparisons across space and time is more limited. Such comparative analyses are crucial for situating movement parties within a broader context and highlighting the distinguishing features of otherwise separately examined instances. To address this gap, we render quantitative measures in line with the dimensions distinguished by Kitschelt (2006). We combine indicators from three different datasets: V-Party (Lindberg et al. 2022), the Manifesto Project Dataset (Lehmann et al. 2023), and the PolDem Protest Dataset for 30 European Countries (Kriesi et al. 2020).

To study parties' organizational investment, we rely on one of the items included in the V-Party expert survey: "Does this party maintain permanent offices that operate outside of election campaigns at the local or municipal-level?" (v2palocoff). Respondents are asked to use five-point scale answer categories: "The party does not have permanent local offices" (0); "The party has permanent local offices in few municipalities." (1); "The party has permanent local offices in some municipalities." (2); "The party has permanent local offices in most municipalities." (3); "The party has permanent local offices in all or almost all municipalities." (4). To capture

low investment in the organizational dimension (typical of movement parties), we reverse the item, assigning higher scores to parties without permanent offices.

To construct the indicator of the programmatic dimension, we calculate the effective number of manifesto issues based on the Manifesto Project Dataset (Lehmann et al. 2023). This indicator has been introduced by Greene (2016) to "measure the mathematical diversity of issues in parties' campaigns" (p. 810) based on Shannon's H entropy index. Similarly to the conceptualization of the programmatic dimension by Kitschelt (2006), the measure allows us to distinguish parties that devote their attention to a limited number of issues. We define our measure of the programmatic dimension as the reversed score of the effective number of manifesto issues. Accordingly, we assign higher scores to parties that come closer to how movement parties are defined by investing little in formulating comprehensive programs.

To account for the protest involvement of parties, we follow Borbáth and Hutter (2020) and rely on the PolDem Dataset for 30 European Countries (Kriesi et al. 2020). We updated the original dataset to cover the 2000–2021 period, following the same procedure as described by Lorenzini et al. (2022). This is a dataset on the level of individual protest events. We aggregate the dataset on the party year level and calculate the sum of all events sponsored by a specific party.

To map out how movement parties score on the three dimensions, we narrow the sample to those 15 party systems in which movement parties have been empirically studied (see Table 1) and are covered by all three datasets. These are Austria, Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. We take the latest election for each party in these countries for the organizational and programmatic dimensions when the movement party was covered. For protest action, we take the total number of protest events, averaged across the years in which the party existed in the 2000–2021 period.[1] The resulting dataset covers 95 individual parties in the respective party systems in the period between the 2010 Belgian elections and the 2021 German elections.[2]

Findings

We first investigate the relationship between the three dimensions of the movement party concept: lack of organizational investment, programmatic narrowness, and involvement in protest. The three dimensions are mostly independent of each other. None of the pair-wise Pearson correlation coefficients are statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, but one weak correlation comes close to this threshold. Specifically, there is a weak negative correlation (-0.2) between protest action and the organizational dimension, suggesting that a hierarchical organizational structure may assist parties to mobilize in protest (Saarts 2024).

[1] Missing years, when the party existed but it did not protest, are filled with zeros.

[2] To gain comparable values on all three dimensions, the values are standardized (grand mean-centered and divided by the value of its standard deviation).

Next, we turn to the location of parties across the different dimensions. Figure 1 shows the position of movement parties on pair-wise scatterplots defined by the different combinations of the three dimensions. To ease the interpretation of these figures, Table 2 summarizes the results according to the nine configurations defined by the three dimensions, which we use to distinguish types of movement parties.

As the results show, there are only a handful of parties that correspond to the type that demonstrates all three elements of Kitschelt's definition: the Five Star Movement in Italy, the Left Bloc in Portugal, and Podemos in Spain. These are the parties that combine limited investment in a formal organization, with a party program specialized on a few issues, and a high level of protest mobilization. Apart from these three, the only other party that belongs to this type, but has not

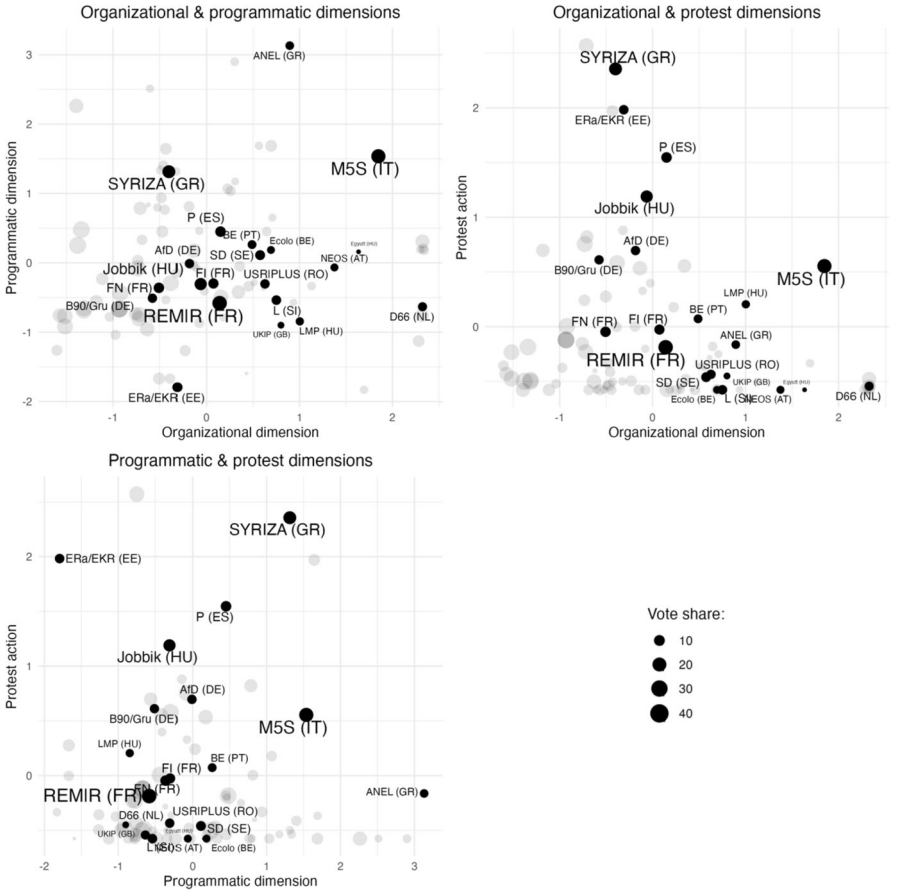

Fig. 1 Movement parties in a three-dimensional structure. Note: the figure shows the examples of movement parties scored in two-dimensional spaces defined by the pairs of the three-dimensional structure. The gray points in the background are parties that have not been identified as movement parties. The size of the dots and party names on the scatter plots is proportional to the vote share of the different parties. The programmatic and organizational dimensions are reversed, high values correspond to low investment

Table 2 Typology of movement parties based on their position in a three-dimensional structure

Typology			Movement parties	Share of movement parties within the resp. type
Org	Prog	Protest		
+	+	+	M5S (IT), BE (PT), P (ES)	75%
+	−	+	FI (FR), LMP (HU)	66.7%
−	−	+	ERa/EKR (EE), FN (FR), B90/Gru (DE), SYRIZA (GR), Jobbik (HU)	33.3%
+	−	−	REM|R (FR), D66 (NL), USR|PLUS (RO), UKIP (GB), NEOS (AT), L (SI)	33.3%
−	+	+	AfD (DE), SYRIZA (GR)	28.6%
+	+	−	ANEL (GR), SD (SE), Ecolo (BE), Együtt (HU)	26.7%
−	+	−		
−	−	−		

Note: the table shows the types of movement parties depending on where they fall in the three-dimensional structure. The mean values on the different dimensions are used as cut-off points. The share of movement parties is calculated from the total number of parties in the respective type in the dataset. The programmatic and organizational dimensions are reversed, high values correspond to low investment

yet been treated as a movement party, is the Austrian Freedom Party. The high share of movement parties within this type (three out of four) points to the alignment of the examples studied in literature with the cases that empirically fulfill Kitschelt's criteria.

However, as Table 2 and Fig. 1 show, parties that have been considered as movement parties in the existing literature are also found with other combinations of features across the three dimensions. One type of parties combines a limited investment in a formal organizational structure with high protest presence and, less typically for movement parties, a comprehensive issue program. The two movement parties of France Unbowed and Politics Can Be Different in Hungary (2024), together with the non-movement party, Forza Italia—The People of Freedom constitute the three parties in this category. Although protests undoubtedly need organizational resources, these parties are less equipped with a formal organizational infrastructure than their competitors. As Borbáth and Susánszky argue (2024), one of these parties, Politics Can Be Different, uses protest as an alternative to a formal organizational structure at the local level.

In the rest of the constellations, movement parties represent the minority of the cases. In other words, there are four types of movement parties that are more similar to competitors that the literature does not recognize as movement parties. The first type is represented by movement parties that are mainly distinguished by high protest presence. These are parties that otherwise invest in their program and in their formal organizational structure, and accordingly, in those dimensions seem to resemble a 'normal' party more than a Kitscheltian movement party. Movement parties like EKRE in Estonia (Saarts 2024), the National Rally in France, the German Greens, Syriza, and Jobbik (particularly by the 2018 election that is included here; see: Pirro et al. 2021) belong to this category.

The second type is represented by parties that are mainly distinctive in terms of weak organizational investment but otherwise have a comprehensive program and do not demonstrate outstanding levels of protest mobilization. Movement parties such as Renaissance (formerly En Marche!/ La République En Marche!) in France, D66 in the Netherlands, USR in Romania, UKIP in the UK, Neos in Austria and the Left in Slovenia are part of this category. A number of these parties are distinguished by the profile of their supporters (Santos and Mercea 2024) or positionality in the national discursive space vis-a-vis the protest arena (Paxton 2024).

A third type is represented by parties that invest in their organizational structure and presence in protests but not in formulating an encompassing program that covers a multitude of issues. Two ideologically opposed movement parties, Syriza in Greece and the Alternative for Germany, belong in this category. As Weisskircher (2024) shows, the AfD uses protests to further strengthen its organizational structure and attract support from individuals who, if strictly assessed in programmatic terms, would likely vote for left-wing parties.

The last type is represented by parties that invest little in their programmatic profile or organizational structure but are not involved in protests. These are movement parties like Anel in Greece, the Sweden Democrats, Ecolo in Belgium, or Együtt in Hungary. Some of these parties were invested in protest, typically at the time of their emergence, but on average, they now score at a low level on this dimension.

Finally, there are two further types where movement parties do not feature. One type is represented by parties that do not invest in a comprehensive program or in protest but have a strong organizational structure. Well-known examples are parties like Fidesz in Hungary, the Greens in France, or the Left Party in Sweden. There are also parties that score low on all three dimensions, although none of them have been considered movement parties. Examples are mainstream parties like the Austrian People's Party, the National Liberal Party in Romania, or the Conservatives in Great Britain.

The analysis is limited by focusing on cross-sectional differences, although some of these aspects are liable to change over time. Nevertheless, it shows that it is possible to empirically delineate the concept of movement parties in a way that captures similar formations. Next to the clear-cut cases, the findings reveal that there are a number of parties that, while not living up to Kitschelt's definition across all three dimensions, do provide important examples of various subtypes of movement parties. In this way, we point to the importance of distinguishing between movement parties of different types. This point is expanded upon in the rest of the special issue. The contributions will further elaborate on how parties rely on features of the ideal–typical Kitscheltian movement party type in different forms, and occasionally deploy various framing strategies to differentiate themselves from competing formations.

Introducing the individual contributions

The eight articles included in the special issue examine movement parties and more generally, parties' involvement in the protest arena, from a variety of different angles. The first three articles study the emergence (Borbáth and Susánszky 2024),

transformation (Saarts 2024), or non-emergence (Zelinska and Revtiuk 2024) of movement parties through case studies from the Eastern European context. The next two articles critically engage with the movement party concept and highlight its role as a framing strategy (Paxton 2024; Kralj and Tranfić 2024). This is followed by two articles that zoom in on how far-right parties rely on protest on issues that are not core to their appeal, such as peace in Ukraine (Weisskircher 2024) or responses to the Covid-19 pandemic (Caiani et al. 2024). The final paper classifies movement parties based on their ideological appeals and examines the extent to which their electorate is differentiated from other party forms (Santos and Mercea 2024).

In their article *Party System Transformation from Below: Protests by Jobbik and LMP*, Borbáth and Susánszky (2024) distinguish three mechanisms driving parties' involvement in protest: strengthening issue ownership, entering new alliances, and establishing a presence at the local level. Using protest event analysis, they trace the three mechanisms in the protest presence of two parties, the radical right Jobbik and the green Politics Can Be Different, between 2002 and 2022. They find that Jobbik uses all three mechanisms to a similar extent, while Politics Can Be Different mainly relies on protest mobilization to associate itself with issues it does not (yet) own and to build alliances with other political parties that also sponsor protest, as opposed to entering alliances with social movements. They embed the analysis of the protest strategy of the two parties in the broader context of party competition in Hungary and argue that it has facilitated a process of party system transformation from below.

In his article *Seeing the radical right movement parties as activist parties. The case of EKRE in Estonia,* Saarts (2024) examines the organizational structure of a prominent far-right movement party in Estonia, EKRE. The paper extends the theoretical framework provided by Peña (2020) regarding the 'activist party' concept, with extra attention paid to party organizational structure. Using qualitative methods of inquiry, including interviews with party activists, the paper details the well-institutionalized and centralized organizational structure of EKRE. Moreover, the paper argues that other prominent parties in Europe demonstrate a similar combination. Despite potential tensions between the notions of a strongly institutionalized 'mass party' and a protest-oriented 'activist party,' Saarts demonstrates how EKRE's institutionalized organizational structures and practices can actually bolster the party's capacity to mobilize its activists for protest activities.

In their article *Why a Euromaidan movement party never emerged: a field theory approach*, Zelinska and Revtiuk (2024) seek to identify what determines the (non-)emergence of a movement party from a protest movement. They focus on the 2013–2014 Ukrainian Euromaidan protests, a large-scale social movement which did not produce a movement party. While previous studies of movement parties have tended to study 'positive cases' of such parties that actually did develop from movements, they therefore focus on a 'negative case' which did not produce a movement party. The article shows how, in the context of Russian military aggression, activists reoriented their toward pursuing goals of 'national consolidation' that were perceived to be more urgent than establishing a movement party. Their analysis demonstrates the advantages of the 'fields' framework when seeking to explain movement party emergence, as it allows one to access how actors operate within a broader context. In particular, it accounts for the interests and "weight" of both incumbents and

challengers who operate according to the shared rules of the field which regulate political representation.

In his article *Right up their street? News media framing of the protest activities of far-right movement parties,* Paxton (2024) focuses on the newspaper coverage of protests involving the British UKIP and the German AfD. Since the critical junctures of the Brexit referendum and the COVID-19 pandemic, both parties have increasingly portrayed themselves as closely connected to social movements and street protests as a novel mobilization strategy. This paper explores how their attempts at constructing a 'movement party' identity are framed by the news media: a crucial interface between institutional politics and public opinion. The analysis reveals the relative salience of protest activities of the two far-right parties, along with the associated social movement actors, issues, and frames used in the reporting. In so doing, it argues that the critical junctures which drove changes in party activities have generated increased media attention to far-right party protest, but also increasing delegitimising frames.

In their paper *Movement Party as a Framing Strategy: Comparing Left-Wing and Right-Wing Actors in Serbia,* Kralj and Tranfić (2024) examine the framing strategy of two parties in the current competitive authoritarian regime of Serbia: the far-right Dveri and the Do Not Let Belgrade D(r)own (NDB), a green-left municipalist movement party. Following an actor-centered strategy, the paper examines how the two parties rely on the movement party frame based on media discourses and interviews with activists. Despite strong differences in the ideology of the two parties, they both emphasize their movement origins and the importance of revitalizing political participation by combining movement and party strategies. However, the analysis also highlights the difference in the consistency of the framing deployed by the two organizations, with the far-right envisioning an elitist and corporatist solution to the crisis of democracy.

In his article *A new far-right 'peace movement'? Germany's far-right movement-party strategies during Russia's war against Ukraine*, Weisskircher (2024) zooms in on the peace protests organized by the far-right Alternative for Germany in the context of the ongoing war in Ukraine. The paper identifies two strategic considerations that have motivated the AfD to mobilize in protest for peace. On the one hand, the party mobilizes for peace in the protest arena as a form of long-term investment in its organizational structure. On the other hand, mobilizing on this issue allows the AfD to reach otherwise programmatically opposed supporters and form a 'Querfront.' The paper also shows the limits of this strategy through the words of existing far-right activists, who feel ambivalent about its success.

In their article *Radical Right and Anti-Vax Protests: Between Movements and Parties*, Caiani et al (2024) examine the responses of radical right actors to the policy responses formulated in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Empirically, the paper relies on the mixed-methods analysis of protest events and interviews conducted with far-right and anti-vax activists in Italy and Hungary, the two European countries with the most favorable opportunities for far-right actors. The paper shows that in Italy there was a strict division of labor between radical right movements mobilizing on the streets and political parties mobilizing in parliament. In contrast, in Hungary, mobilization in the two arenas developed in a closer reinforcing

dynamic which resulted in the parliamentary breakthrough of the far-right Our Homeland movement party during the 2022 Hungarian parliamentary elections.

In their article *Young democrats, critical citizens and protest voters: studying the profiles of movement party supporters,* Santos and Mercea (2024) shed light on the determinants of voting for movement parties in Europe. The authors distinguish four categories of movement parties—green/left-libertarian, far-right, eclectic, and centrist. Using nationally representative survey data from six European countries, they examine the distinct profiles of supporters for each type. The findings underscore the significance of varied motivations influencing support for movement parties, particularly concerning their ideological orientations. Despite a common belief in the efficacy of protests, supporters of different movement parties exhibit considerable diversity in the factors influencing their allegiance. This divergence encompasses elements of non-electoral participation, political attitudes, media consumption, and demographic characteristics. This study, therefore, reveals a landscape marked by pronounced differences between the electorates of various movement parties.

Acknowledgments The authors would like to thank all participants at the 2022 ECPR Joint Sessions in the workshop on the "Movement Parties: their rise, variety, and consequences". Endre Borbáth would like to acknowledge funding from the Volkswagen Foundation. Fred Paxton would like to acknowledge funding from the Volkswagen Foundation and the Leverhulme Trust. Open Access funding was provided by the WZB through the DEAL-Consortium.

Funding Open Access funding enabled and organized by Projekt DEAL.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The author declare no conflict of interest.

References

Anria, Santiago. 2013. Social movements, party organization, and populism: insights from the Bolivian MAS. *Latin American Politics and Society* 55 (3): 19–46.

Anria, Santiago. 2018. *When movements become parties: the Bolivian MAS in comparative perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Art, David. 2018. *Party organization and the radical right*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barthold, Charles, and Martin Fougère. 2021. 'A Machiavellian prince at the Elysée: virtù leadership and contingency in the populist moment', *Ephemera: theory & politics in organizations*, Early Access.

Borbáth, Endre, and Swen Hutter. 2020. Protesting parties in Europe: a comparative analysis. *Party Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068820908023.

Borbáth, Endre, and Pál Susánszky. 2024. Party system transformation from below: protests by Jobbik and LMP. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00342-w.

Caiani, Manuela, and Ondřej Císař. 2019. *Radical right movement parties in Europe*. NY: Routledge.
Caiani, Manuela, Pál Susánszky, and Nikos Saridakis. 2024. Radical right and anti-vax protests between movements and parties: a comparative study. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00339-5.
Cervera-Marzal, Manuel. 2024. "This is not a party": elements for a sociology of movementism based on the case of La France Insoumise. *French Politics*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41253-023-00233-0.
Dalton, Russell J. 2008. Citizenship norms and the expansion of political participation. *Political Studies* 56 (1): 76–98.
Della Porta, Donatella, Joseba Fernández, Hara Kouki, and Lorenzo Mosca. 2017. *Movement parties against austerity*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.
Fielitz, Maik. 2019. From indignation to power: the genesis of the independent Greeks. In *Radical right movement parties in Europe routledge studies in extremism and democracy*, ed. Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař. NY: Routledge/Taylor Francis Group.
Frigoli, Gilles, and Gilles Ivaldi. 2019. Still a radical right movement party? Political opportunities, party strategy and the cultural context of the front national in France. In *Radical right movement parties in Europe, routledge studies in extremism and democracy*, ed. Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař. NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
Giugni, Marco, and Maria T. Grasso. 2019. *Street citizens: protest politics and social movement activism in the age of globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Greene, Zachary. 2016. Competing on the issues: how experience in government and economic conditions influence the scope of parties' policy messages. *Party Politics* 22 (6): 809–822.
Gunther, Richard, and Larry Diamond. 2003. Species of political parties: a new typology. *Party Politics* 9 (2): 167–199.
Hanna, Jeanne, and Joel Busher. 2019. UKIP and the UK's radical right: a tale of movement party success? In *Radical right movement parties in Europe*, ed. Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař. NY: Routledge.
Heinisch, Reinhard, and Oscar Mazzoleni. 2016. *Understanding populist party organisation: the radical right in Western Europe*. Cham: Springer.
Heinze, Anna-Sophie., and Manès Weisskircher. 2021. No strong leaders needed? AfD party organisation between collective leadership, internal democracy, and "movement-party" strategy. *Politics and Governance* 9 (4): 263–274.
Junius, Nino, Didier Caluwaerts, Joke Matthieu, and Silvia Erzeel. 2021. 'Hacking the representative system through deliberation? the organization of the agora party in Brussels. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-021-00226-3.
Kajta, Justyna, Janina Myrczik, and Mateusz Karolak. 2023. 'In the Name of "endangered nations" and "unsovereign states"? Official discourses of radical right movement parties and social movement organizations in Poland and Germany.' *Nationalities Papers* 52: 619.
Kim, Seongcheol. 2023. Movement parties of the left, right, and center: a discursive-organizational approach. *Constellations*. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.12705.
Kitschelt, Herbert. 2006. Movement parties. In *Handbook of party politics*, 278–290. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd.
Kralj, Karlo, and Ivan Tranfić. 2024. Movement party as a framing strategy: comparing left-wing and right-wing actors in Serbia. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00348-4.
Kriesi, Hanspeter et al. 2020. 'PolDem-Protest dataset 30 European countries', *Version 1*
Lehmann, Pola et al. 2023. 'The Manifesto data collection. Manifesto project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2023a', https://doi.org/10.25522/manifesto.mpds.2023a.
Lindberg, Staffan I. et al. 2022. 'Varieties of party identity and organization (V-Party) Dataset V2', *Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project*,.
Lisi, Marco. 2019. Party innovation, hybridization and the crisis: the case of Podemos. *Italian Political Science Review/Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica* 49 (3): 245–262.
Lorenzini, Jasmine, Hanspeter Kriesi, Peter Makarov, and Bruno Wüest. 2022. Protest event analysis: developing a semiautomated NLP approach. *American Behavioral Scientist* 66 (5): 555–577.
Mair, Peter. 2013. *Ruling the void: The hollowing of western democracy*. Brooklyn: Verso Books.
McAdam, Doug, and Sidney Tarrow. 2010. Ballots and barricades: on the reciprocal relationship between elections and social movements. *Perspectives on Politics* 8 (2): 529–542.
Mosca, Lorenzo, and Mario Quaranta. 2017. Voting for movement parties in Southern Europe: the role of protest and digital information. *South European Society and Politics* 22 (4): 427–446.

Paxton, Fred. 2024. Right up their street? News media framing of the protest activities of far-right movement parties. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00334-w.
Peña, Alejandro M. 2020. Activist parties and hybrid party behaviours: a typological reassessment of partisan mobilisation. *Political Studies Review* 19: 637.
Peterson, Abby. 2019. The relationship between a movement party and its radical flank: The Sweden democrats and the militant factions within the Swedish neo-Nazi ultra nationalist movement. In *Radical right movement parties in Europe, Routledge studies in extremism and democracy*, ed. Manuela Caiani and Ondřej Císař. NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
Pirro, Andrea L. P. 2018. The polyvalent populism of the 5 star movement. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 26: 443.
Pirro, Andrea L P. 2019. Ballots and barricades enhanced: far-right "movement parties" and movement-electoral interactions. *Nations and Nationalism* 25: 802.
Pirro, Andrea L. P., and Pietro Castelli Gattinara. 2018. Movement parties of the far right The organization and strategies of nativist collective actors. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 23: 367–383.
Pirro, Andrea, Elena Pavan, Adam Fagan, and David Gazsi. 2021. 'Close ever, distant never? integrating protest event and social network approaches into the transformation of the Hungarian far right.' *Party Politics* 27 (1): 22–34.
Prentoulis, Marina, and Lasse Thomassen. 2019. Movement parties: A new hybrid form of politics? In *Routledge handbook of contemporary european social movements: protest in turbulent times*, ed. Cristina Flesher Fominaya and Ramón A. Feenstra. NY: Routledge.
Rahat, Gideon. 2022. Party types in the age of personalized politics. *Perspectives on Politics* 22: 213.
Saarts, Tõnis. 2024. Seeing the radical right movement parties as activist parties. The case of EKRE in Estonia. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00343-9.
Santos, Felipe G, and Dan Mercea. 2024. Young democrats, critical citizens and protest voters: studying the profiles of movement party supporters. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-023-00321-7.
Schwartz, Mildred A. 2006. *Party movements in the United States and Canada: strategies of persistence*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
Soneryd, Linda, and Åsa. Wettergren. 2017. 'How does climate change transnationalise environmental movement organisations? The case of Denmark.' *Global Society* 31 (1): 23–42.
Tarrow, Sidney. 2021. *Movements and parties: critical connections in american political development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Toplišek, Alen. 2017. The Slovenian United Left: from protest to movement, and from movement to party. *openDemocracy*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2017.1385727.
Biezen, Van, Peter Mair Ingrid, and Thomas Poguntke. 2012. 'Going, going, gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe.' *European Journal of Political Research* 51 (1): 24–56.
Vittori, Davide. 2020. 'Which organization for which party? an organizational analysis of the five-star movement.' *Contemporary Italian Politics* 13: 31.
Vittori, Davide. 2022. Vanguard or business-as-usual? "New" movement parties in comparative perspective. *International Political Science Review*. https://doi.org/10.1177/01925121211026648.
Weisskircher, Manès. 2024. Far-right movement-party activism as strategy: Germany's 'peace movement' during Russia's war against Ukraine. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-024-00378-y
Zelinska, Olga, and Yevhen Revtiuk. 2024. Why a Euromaidan movement party never emerged: a field theory approach. *Acta Politica*. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-023-00317-3.