

Current motors of cooperation: **Russia**

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The ideological connection

- Putin as a supporter of **traditional values**, coupled with references to national integrity; against globalization; West is depicted as decadent and Euro-Atlantic community is source of all these troubles
- Most far right leaders share the same opinion and Russia is the only power struggling to reverse this moral decadence
- Putin is praised by the leader of National Rally, Marine Le Pen, as a true patriot and defender of European values and the „Christian heritage of the European civilisation“

- Gábor Vona (former leader of Jobbik): *Europe is sinking ship that had lost its values and that Europeans should get back to their roots and rearrange their relationship with other traditional cultures that only exist now in East*
- Vona at Moscow Lomonosov Uni (May 2013): *the US as the deformed offspring of Europe and the EU as the traitor of the European continent; Russia represents Europe much better than either the US or the EU*
- Lega Nord MEP Lorenzo Fontana: *Russia as an example as far as the protection of national identity and family values is concerned*
- New Force leader Roberto Fiore: *Russia is a model civilisation which defends Christian Europe against the threat from international bankers and migrants*

- For far right parties (ATAKA, Golden Dawn) originating from **Orthodox** countries (Bulgaria, Greece) **religion** plays even more important role in their views on Russia
- Golden Dawn have repeatedly referred to the religious bonds that unite the Greeks and the Russians and make Russia a natural ally

- European far right likes **Putin`s conservatism**
- His homophobic campaigns have great impact on European far right
- Western liberalism granting equal rights to all irrespective of their sexual, religious or other preferences leads to degeneration (social and national threat)

- Like Putin, European far right **opposes globalism** as a force undermining nation-states, negative towards everything what might represent a threat to national/traditional culture (another symptom of degeneration)
- Putin`s **economic policy** is also praised (strategy of state control of the strategic sectors of the Russian economy)
- Putin as **strong leader** ruling his country with iron hand **using autocratic methods** (repression of political opponents, freedom of speech is not guaranteed, control of the media)
- Imprisonment of members Pussy Riot - very welcomed among European far right

- Putin as **patriotic leader** – his constant effort to rebuild Russian national pride, his effort to protect Russian national interests beyond its borders (even by using power) – invasion in Georgia, support of pro-Russian movements in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, annexation of Crimea
- As for Crimea, Marine Le Pen said that „*Putin is doing what is good for Russia and the Russians*“

→ **European far right attracted by Putin's ultra-conservative and semi-authoritarian form of governance**

Russia as a geopolitical alternative

- Many European far-right politicians see in Russia an example of how a country can be truly sovereign and independent, ignoring Western liberalism and confronting the West.
- Most of them are also against European integration and anti-American → relationship with Russia as a necessary foothold on the path to achieving the gradual disassociation of their countries from Euro-Atlantic institutions.
- **Russia as counterbalance to US influence over Europe**
- Gábor Vona: accused the EU of threatening the freedom of Hungary and colonising the Hungarian nation; *„Being principled, conservative and radically patriotic basically means saying a definite “no” to the modern world that surrounds us in the Euro-Atlantic region today“; „Euro-Atlanticism must be replaced by Eurasianism“*

- Le Pen advocates the creation of a **strategic alliance with Russia** based on a comprehensive military and energy partnership. A first step: the establishment of a trilateral alliance between Paris, Berlin and Moscow. Eventually, the scheme would result in the formation of a pan-European union including Russia, thus forcing the EU and NATO aside.
- the National Rally's representative, Aymeric Chauprade, refers to Putin's Russia as '*the hope of the world against new totalitarianism,*' meaning 'the American and European financial oligarchy'
- BNP: the UK should withdraw from NATO and the EU and should instead 'engage constructively with Russia as a natural ally and trading partner'
- The FPÖ's anti-American and pro-Russian sentiments were officially declared by its former chairman, Heinz-Christian Strache: '*instead of playing the stooge of the US in the encirclement of Russia, Brussels must finally be able to build positive relations with Moscow and show understanding of Russian interests.*'

Close contacts

- It is not only about statements but also about establishment of close contacts
- **Jobbik** is very significant example
- Regular journeys to Russia, Russian embassy always represented at Jobbik`s yearly conferences
- In 2014 Béla Kovács, a Jobbik MEP was accused of being a Russian spy and channelling Russian funds to support Jobbik

- **ATAKA** - also very close relation to embassy in Sofia
- Rumours about secret funding from Russia
- Leader Siderov chose to launch his party campaign for the 2014 EP elections in Moscow

- **National Rally (former National Front)**
- Marine Le Pen visiting State Duma and she met with Deputy Minister of Russia Dimitry Rogozin
- Before 2014 EP elections – she made public statements saying that EU policy towards Russia in view of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict was not in line either with traditionally friendly Franco-Russian relations or with the economic interests of France or any other EU country
- The FN obtained a loan of 9 mil. Euros from the Russian bank

- **FPO** – also rumour about financing from Russia
- Frequent visits in Russia and from Russia
- Russian oligarch, Konstantin Malofeev, was organizing in Vienna meetings with delegates from European far right
- cooperation agreements with United Russia (signed in December 2016, Italian The League in March 2017)

- **BNP**
- In 2011 the BNP's Nick Griffin went to Moscow to observe Russia's Duma election.

- **Russia provides the ground for interaction between members of far right parties from EU countries**
- Conferences on ideological and political issues
- November 2013: BNP, New Force, Golden Dawn in Moscow
- August 2014: Yalta, conference „Russia, Ukraine, New Russia: Global Problems and Challenges“ – BNP, Jobbik, VB
- September 2014: international forum on „The Multi-Child Family and the Future of Humanity“ at Kremlin – FPO, FN as speakers
- March 2015: European far right met in St Petersburg (e.g. BNP, NPD, Golden Dawn)
- July 2019: “International Congress of Peace-Loving Forces” in the State Duma

World National-Conservative Movement

- Russian political party Motherland (Rodina) is standing behind it
- Members e.g. Golden Dawn, Falanga, NPD, Jobbik, American Freedom Party (cca 50 parties)

- **Russia also uses European far right to legitimize elections and referendas in the region**
- Ataka, the FPO, the Front National, Jobbik, and Latvijas Krievu savieniba also sent observers to separatist “referendums” and “elections” in March and November 2014 in Ukraine’s Russia-occupied Crimea and Donetsk regions. They were joined by members from the Italian and Belgian rightist parties Forza Italia, Lega Nord, and Vlaams Belang.