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## A Fortuynist Foreign Policy

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## A Fortuynist Foreign Policy

Cas Mudde

*Dutchman, European, and world citizen, and in that order!*  
Pim Fortuyn<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

During the time that Western Europe was still supposed to be flooded by the third wave of right-wing extremism, rather than right-wing or national populism. The Netherlands was one of the few countries in the region that seemed safe. Compared with the electoral successes of political parties like the *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium, the *Front National* in France, or the *Legia Nord* in Italy, the roughly 1 per cent of the vote generated by the various parties of the extreme right *Centrumstrooming* (centre stream) was far from threatening.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, while other European parties had skillful and charismatic leaders like Jean-Marie Le Pen and Filip Dewinter, the Dutch extreme Right was lead by Hans Jannat, the personification of the disgruntled *petit bourgeois*.

With the entrance on the Dutch political scene of the flamboyant Pim Fortuyn in 2001, all seemed to change. Inside, but increasingly only outside The Netherlands, academics and journalists considered the former safe haven of liberalism as the next country to fall prey to right-wing extremism and intolerance. The *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (List Pim Fortuyn, LPF) became a common name in the list of successful extreme right parties in Europe, although some authors would at times question its extremity, mainly on the basis of Fortuyn's open homosexuality.

In the following text, I will present short histories of, first, Pim Fortuyn himself, and, second, his party the LPF. Next, I discuss the phenomenon of Fortuynism, arguing that it has both a stylistic and an ideological element. I will then present the foreign policy agenda of the party (and its founder and namesake). In the conclusion, I'll provide a short assessment of the importance of foreign policy to the LPF and of the place of the LPF in regards to Dutch foreign policy.

<sup>1</sup> Fortuyn, W.S.P. (2002). *De puinhopen van acht jaar paars* (Uitboom: Karakter/ Rotterdam: Speakers Academy), p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> See van Holsteyn, J. and Mudde, C. (eds.) (1998). *Extrem-rechts in Nederland* (Den Haag: SDU).

### Pim Fortuyn: the Pink Populist<sup>3</sup>

The LPF was founded on 11 February 2002 by Wilhelmus Simon Petrus Fortuyn. Though Fortuyn's career as a high-profile politician lasted less than a year, his legacy on Dutch politics will long outlive him. In fact, many a commentator has claimed that 'the person Fortuyn marks a watershed in Dutch politics'.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, while the party only made it into parliament (and government) after the death of its founder and leader, the LPF is still first and foremost the party of Pim Fortuyn.

Pim Fortuyn was born into a conservative Catholic family in Velsen on 19 February 1948.<sup>5</sup> After studying sociology at the Free University of Amsterdam, he wrote a dissertation on 'The Socio-economic Policy in The Netherlands, 1945–1949' at the University of Groningen. He then became a lecturer in the Department of Sociology there, which at that time was well-known for its left-wing politics. Fortuyn himself was known as a Marxist, even though he joined the social democratic *Partij van de Arbeid* (Labour Party, PvdA), and not the then locally quite popular *Communistische Partij Nederland* (Communist Party of The Netherlands, CPN).

Although he remained a senior lecturer at the University of Groningen until 1989, from the 1970s onwards he became involved in functions within the university administration and increasingly outside of the university altogether. Particularly in the late 1980s, Fortuyn held various advisory positions in public and semi-public organizations. From 1990 to 1996 he was a 'special professor' in government at the University of Rotterdam; hence he became known as 'Professor Pim'.<sup>6</sup>

In the 1990s, Fortuyn became a well-known publicist and political commentator. From 1992 to 2000 he was a columnist for the conservative weekly *Elsevier*, and his provocative columns led several times to public discussions. The same is true for his many books – in the period 1994–2001 Fortuyn published no less than 10 books, most of which present revisionist views on sensitive topics, such as the European Union (EU) and Islam.<sup>7</sup> More and more Fortuyn became the voice of a right-wing opposition, which was no longer mobilized within the mainstream conservative Liberal Party *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, VVD).

In August 2001, Fortuyn received attention in the national media by announcing his interest in the leadership of *Leeftbaar Nederland* (Liveable Netherlands, LN), a

new national political party based on the success of various local *Leeftbaar* parties.<sup>8</sup> The LN was the product of local politicians who generally used to be active or close to the social-democratic PvdA, but the party itself had an amorphous ideological profile. Its most distinct feature was its populism, combining strong anti-political-elite rhetoric with various policy proposals for the introduction of more instruments of direct democracy.

On 25 November 2001, Fortuyn was indeed elected party leader, despite some questions about his alleged xenophobic ideas. Almost immediately, the LN jumped in the opinion polls, from a mere 2 per cent without Fortuyn as leader, to some 17 per cent with him. However, there were problems with some of his statements on immigration, and on 9 February 2002 he was ousted as leader, after he called Islam 'a backward religion' in an interview with the Dutch daily *de Volkskrant* (9 February 2002).

Two days after his ouster, Fortuyn founded a new party, the LPF, and became its political leader. While most local branches of the LN remained loyal to The National Party, most supporters followed Fortuyn. In no time the LN was back to a mere 2 per cent in the polls, while the LPF soared to some 17 per cent. In the local elections of 6 March 2002, *Leeftbaar Rotterdam* (LR), one of the few local *Leeftbaar* parties that stayed loyal to Fortuyn, had great success. With Pim Fortuyn at the head of the list, the newly found LR gained no less than 34.7 per cent of the votes in The Netherlands' biggest city.

As a direct consequence, the stigma of 'extreme right' around Fortuyn was broken for good. In a television debate on the night of the elections, a raving Fortuyn was ignored by the national leaders of the 'purple parties' (these being the 'blue' VVD and the 'red' PvdA), offering a perfect visualization of the clash between the energetic new politics and the stagnant old politics. After a relatively quick round of negotiations, the LR formed a coalition with the *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal, CDA) and the VVD in the local government of Rotterdam, thereby for the first time since the end of the Second World War ousting from power Fortuyn's arch enemy, the PvdA. While staying outside of the local government himself, Pim Fortuyn did represent the LN in the negotiations and was the faction leader in the local council.

On 6 May 2002, nine days before the parliamentary elections, Fortuyn was shot dead by environmental activist Volkert van der Graaf. His funeral, four days later, is broadcast live on Dutch television and leads to scenes of mass hysteria not seen since the Dutch national football team won the European Championship in 1988.

### The List Pim Fortuyn: An Ill-Behaved Orphan

Founded on 11 February 2002, the List Pim Fortuyn was led by its founder and namesake for less than three months. This notwithstanding, on 15 May 2002, nine days after the murder of its leader, the LPF gained 17 per cent of the votes and 26

<sup>3</sup> See also, Maude, C. (2002), 'The Pink Populist: Pim Fortuyn for Beginners', e-Extreme 3(2), <[http://www.bath.ac.uk/esnl/esp/newsletter/News3\\_2.htm](http://www.bath.ac.uk/esnl/esp/newsletter/News3_2.htm)>

<sup>4</sup> Bennis, M. and Renout, F. (2002), '6 mei 2002. De Nederlandse geschiedenis maakt een sprongje', in *Fortuyn, de opkomst, de moord, de nasleep* (Rotterdam: Het Spectrum), p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> The information on Pim Fortuyn has been taken from two biographies on different websites: <<http://www.ljstipimfortuyn.nl/article.php?id=295>>, and <<http://www.parlement.com/9291000/bio/02312?layou=print>>

<sup>6</sup> Even after 1996, Fortuyn had continued to use his professor title, despite the fact that he no longer had a right to do so.

<sup>7</sup> Including books with titles like 'Against the Islamization of Our Culture' (1997), 'The Orphaned Society' (1995) and 'Business Cabinet Fortuyn' (1994).

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, van Praag, P. (2003), 'The Winners and Losers in a Turbulent Political Year', *Acta Politica*, 38(1), pp. 5–22.

## A Fortunist Foreign Policy

213

The first Balkenende Government, 1998-2002

That the end is not yet in sight was made clear in the European elections of 10 June 2004. After a non-campaign by all parties, in which the L'PF was seriously hampered by financial problems, the party was able to enlist the support of just 2.6 per cent of the voters. This was not even enough for one seat in the European Parliament. It seemed that another outsider had stolen Fortuyn's thunder – Paul van Buitenen, the Eurocrat whose inside information about corruption was responsible for the fall of the European Commission in 1999, and his new *Transparent Europa* (Transparent Europe) party gained a surprising 7.3 per cent of the votes and 2 (of 27) Dutch seats in the European Parliament.

Since then the L'PF has almost ceased to exist. In opinion polls the party hovers between 1 per cent and 0 per cent, particularly now that its remaining supporters have moved to the new *list Groen Utrecht*.<sup>14</sup> The non-industrial sector, the main support base

not just most of its members, but also its parliamentary faction (which developed in 1992 into the *United Left Party*). The parliamentary party, though numbering only eight, has continued its chaotic infighting to the level that one can hardly speak of an LPP parliamentary party by the end of 2004. The party itself, finally, has lost

independent from the party). Still troubled by chaos and infighting, the

point in the short yet turbulent history of the party was the arrest of chairman Sergei Moleveld, who had sent threatening letters to both the L-PF and himself.

Fortuynism: Style or Ideology?

Various commentators have argued that Fortuyn's many writings have little ideological consistency. While he wrote about virtually all major (contentious) issues in Dutch politics, including multicultural society and European integration, his views were

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Pennings and Keman (2003), 'The Dutch Parliamentary Elections 2002 and 2003: The Rise and Decline of the Fortyn Movement', *Acta Politica* 38(1), pp. 68; van Praag (2003), *op cit*.

<sup>14</sup> minister of the European Parliament Geert Wilders left the VVD parliamentary party after a conflict over the EU membership of Turkey, of which he is a staunch opponent. His Islamophobic and law-and-order positions are close to those of the LPF, which explains his attraction to former LPF voters.

at times contradictory and his solutions often vague and incoherent. In the words of two commentators, Fortuyn was 'sometimes left, sometimes right. But always very outspokenly left or right'.<sup>15</sup>

There are roughly two 'schools' on the content of Fortuynism, which here will be called the emotional and the ideological. The emotional school holds that Fortuynism was first and foremost a political style of protest, directed at the alleged elitism and bureaucratic style of the purple governments. In contrast, the ideological school argues that Fortuynism was in essence a distinct ideology, a vision of society that provided an alternative to the dominant views held by the established parties.

The emotional school does not so much reject the view that Fortuynism included ideological elements. Rather, it argues that the ideology of Fortuyn was secondary to his political style. What exactly this style was, however, is debated. Some argue that 'Fortuynism is... a political style of openness, directness, and clearness'.<sup>16</sup> Others are far less positive, and see Fortuyn's political style mainly as populist or even demagogic. Some, finally, have argued that the whole Fortuyn phenomenon should be seen, first and foremost, through the lens of charismatic leadership.<sup>17</sup>

While the ideological school does not reject the importance of style in the Fortuyn phenomenon, it sees Fortuynism first and foremost as a distinct ideology, an alternative to the world views of the other main parties in The Netherlands.<sup>18</sup> In one of the few serious analyses of Fortuyn's ideology, Paul Lucardie and Gerrit Voerman argue that Fortuyn had not just one ideology, but several: liberalism, populism, and nationalism.<sup>19</sup> I agree largely with their analysis, though would prefer the term 'national preference' over nationalism, as his ideology lacked the coherence and collectivism of nationalism.

Most of Fortuyn's writing was part of a comprehensive and coherent neo-liberal attack on Dutch society and economy. He despised the Dutch 'polder model', the pride of the purple governments of Wim Kok, which he criticized for their bureaucratic, uninspired and static character. Fortuyn saw The Netherlands as an overregulated country in which the market was stifled by both bureaucratic and moral limitations. The solution to most problems was, in his opinion, more market and less state. If citizens and entrepreneurs were no longer held back by bureaucratic overregulation and state manipulations, including 'enslaving' social benefits, the logic of the market would prevail in most sectors of life, and both the economy and society would function far better.

<sup>15</sup> Benais and Renout (2002), *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>17</sup> See Ellemers, J.E. (2002), 'Het fenomeen Fortuyn. De revolutie verklaard', in DNNP, *Jaarboek DNNP 2002* (Groningen: DNNP), pp. 252-66; and Ellemers, J.E. (2002), 'Pim Fortuyn: een zuiver geval van charismatisch gezag', *Facta 10*(7), pp. 2-5.

<sup>18</sup> According to Paul Cliteur, a law professor and well-known Dutch conservative intellectual, Fortuyn was (together with former VVD leader Frits Bolkestein) one of the few Dutch politicians with an ideology. See his 'Bolkestein, Fortuyn en Renan over de Islam', lezing bij de opening van het Wetenschappelijk Bureau Lijst Pim Fortuyn, The Hague, 21 February 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Lucardie, P. and Voerman, G. (2002), 'Het gedachtegoed van Fortuyn. Liberaal patriot of nationaal populisme?', *Samenvatting en Politiek* 9(6), pp. 53-62.

But Fortuyn was not just a (neo-)liberal in economic terms, he also generally expressed very liberal views on cultural issues. He held the right of self-determination in both an immaterial and a material sense as one of the most important fruits of the Enlightenment, was a staunch defender of the separation of church and state, and preferred the individual over the collective. As he was openly homosexual, he was a fierce defender of the rights of gays, and detested the conservative and repressive 'culture of sprouts' of the 1950s. And despite making many sexist remarks in his publications and interviews, he also defended the equality of men and women. Most of these liberal values Fortuyn believed to be under growing threat from the Muslim immigrants and their alleged left-wing defenders in politics.

A second key feature of Fortuyn's ideology is populism, the view that society is a struggle between 'the pure people' against 'the corrupt elite' and politics should be an expression of 'common sense'.<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, his view of the people was probably closer to that of the left-wing populists of the 1970s and 1980s than to that of the national and right-wing populists of the 1990s and later: free, emancipated, reasoning citizens.<sup>21</sup>

The key target of Fortuyn's anti-establishment critique was the PvdA, the party that he had left in 1989 after 15 years of membership. Fortuyn saw the PvdA as the leaders of what he referred to as 'the left Church', the politically correct establishment that allegedly ruled The Netherlands. It was the PvdA with its 'perverted Mandarins' culture that exemplified for Fortuyn the Dutch culture of elitism, to which he referred to as the rule by 'Our Kind of People' (*Ons Soort Mensen*, OSM), non-political politics, and the stifling of open debate (by accusations of racism or 'populism').<sup>22</sup>

In conclusion, situating Pim Fortuyn and the LPF in a national and international comparative context might make this phenomenon a bit better understandable. In a Dutch comparative context, Pim Fortuyn was more like a Bolkestein-plus than a Janmaat-light. Similarly, the LPF is rather a radical and populist version of the conservative liberal VVD than a moderate version of the national populist *Centrumdemocraten* (Centre Democrats, CD). In a European comparative context, Pim Fortuyn was more like the Italian entrepreneur-politician Silvio Berlusconi than the French fighter-politician Jean-Marie Le Pen, and the LPF is more like the right-wing populist *Forza Italia* than the national populist *Front National*.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> See Mudde, C. (2004), 'The Populist Zeigzeist', *Government & Opposition* 39.3, 541-63.

<sup>21</sup> Lucardie and Voerman (2002), *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>22</sup> Among his many attacks on the PvdA, see Fortuyn (1991), 'Geperreerde manderjencultuur doet PvdA de das Om', *de Volkskrant*, 9 March. On his use of the term OSM, see, for example, Fortuyn, W.S.P. (1992), *Aan het Volk van Nederland* (Amsterdam: Contact).

<sup>23</sup> Fortuyn himself always rejected (angrily) the accusations that he was similar to Janmaat, Haider or Le Pen, while admitting that he felt 'related' to Berlusconi. See, for example, the double interview with Pim Fortuyn and former PvdA leader Ad Melkert in the Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Dagblad*: Dohmen, J. and de Zwart, M. (2002), 'Therapie of nachtmerrie?', in *Fortuyn: de opties, de moord, de nasleep* (Rotterdam: Het Spectrum), pp. 30-35.

## A Fortuynist Foreign Policy

As a post-11 September 2001 party, it is not surprising that the LPF believes that 'the international safety situation [sic] is unstable'.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Pim Fortuyn's worldview was, already before 11 September 2001, dominated by the thesis of the 'clash of civilizations',<sup>25</sup> most notably 'the conflict between Western society and Islamic culture' or the clash between 'the two dominant cultures [in the world]: modernity and Islam'.<sup>26</sup>

At the same time, for the LPF domestic concerns were by far the most important. If one reads the three election programmes of the party, the bulk addresses domestic issues, most notably education, finance, health care, public order and safety. The most elaborate election programme so far, *Politiek is Passie* (Politics is Passion) of 2003, only one section out of 15 deals exclusively with foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> The section title included the three subfields that the party found most important: defence, Europe, and development cooperation.

## Defence policy

Notwithstanding its gloomy worldview, the LPF takes a fairly mainstream position with regard to defence policy. The party supports North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) membership, but wants to slightly decrease Dutch participation.<sup>28</sup> It supports the budget cuts proposed by the Dutch government, but criticizes the lack of vision underlying the plans, and states that further cuts are not possible if The Netherlands wants to remain a full and reliable defence partner in international organizations.

In line with its neo-liberalism, the party wants the military, and most notably the Ministry of Defence, to work more efficiently, which means less bureaucracy and more cooperation between the various branches of the defence forces. In his 2002 book, Fortuyn even argued for the abolition of both the Army and the Air Force as separate units, and to bring all defence forces under the Navy.<sup>29</sup> One of the few fields in which the LPF wanted to increase the role of the defence forces, most notably the Military Police (*Marechussee*), was in the fight against terrorism.

## European policy

Pim Fortuyn was one of the first open Eurosceptics in The Netherlands. Already in 1997 he wrote the book *Zielloos Europa* (Soulless Europe), in which he painted the

24 See LPF (2002), *Businesslike but with a Heart*, election programme for the Dutch Parliamentary Elections, <<http://www.lijsd-pimfortuyn.nl/party.php?goto=english>>, accessed 29 April 2002.

25 Huntington, S. (1993), 'The Clash of Civilizations', *Foreign Affairs* 72(3), pp. 22–50.

26 See LPF (2003), *Politiek is Passie*, election programme for the Dutch Parliamentary Elections.

27 If not explicitly indicated differently, all citations and references are to LPF (2003), *op. cit.*

28 See LPF (2002), *op. cit.*

29 Fortuyn (2002), *op. cit.*, pp. 174–6.

European Union as a heartless, distant, bureaucratic monster that had grown too big and too powerful.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the LPF states in the introduction of its first election programme: 'Europe is a bureaucracy which barely interests its citizens, let alone inspires them.'<sup>31</sup>

The LPF is Eurosceptic rather than Euroreject, as it supports the underlying values of European integration.<sup>32</sup> Fortuyn summarized his European vision clearly and simply: 'I am a loyal supporter of the EU, but while retaining [the Dutch] identity and where possible while retaining sovereignty'.<sup>33</sup> The party's basic pro-European standpoint is amply demonstrated in its programmes. For example, it describes the European Union as a 'phenomenal experiment, which has contributed a great deal to peace in our part of the world'.<sup>34</sup> The party also believes that the EU 'has contributed a great deal to the prosperity of its member states'.<sup>35</sup>

So, rather than wanting to dismantle the EU, the LPF suggests different ways in which the organization can be made more efficient, more democratic, and less threatening to national (that is, Dutch) sovereignty. The ideological bases of the reform of the EU are in line with the party's general ideology: liberalism, national preference, and populism.

First and foremost, the Eurocracy should be reduced and the EU should provide less subsidies. Seeing the EU largely as an inefficient and corrupt bureaucratic machine, the LPF demands the 'forceful combating of bureaucracy, fraud and favouritism'.<sup>36</sup> The party also wants the incremental abolition of food subsidies and structural funds.

Second, national identity and sovereignty should be guaranteed through the principle of subsidiarity as well as through the introduction of 'a senate composed of delegates from the national parliaments'.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the democratic deficit should be solved at the national level, not at the European level. Consequently, '[t]he List Pim Fortuyn believes that only an expansion of the influence of the national parliaments on European policy making can be truly effective'.<sup>38</sup>

Third, the LPF wants the introduction of a consultative (national) referendum for all major decisions of the EU. According to then party leader Mar Herben, the

30 Fortuyn, W.S.P. (1997), *Zielloos Europa* (Uitloos: Karakter).

31 See LPF (2002), *op. cit.*

32 With the term Eurosceptic, I refer to views that support the underlying ideas of European integration, that is, a European market and pooled sovereignty, but that believe the current EU is developing in the wrong direction. It does not mean a complete rejection of the whole idea of European integration. See Kopecky, P. and Mudde, C. (2002), 'The Two Sides of Euroscepticism: Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe', *European Union Politics* 3(3), pp. 297–326.

33 Fortuyn (2002), *op. cit.*, p. 181.

34 See LPF (2002), *op. cit.*

35 *Ibid.*

36 LPF (2004), *Is U iets gevraagd?*, election programme for the European Parliamentary Elections, <<http://www.lijsdpimfortuyn.nl/article.php?id=367>>, accessed 27 May 2004.

37 See LPF (2002), *op. cit.*

38 LPF (2004), *op. cit.*

EU is ruled by a 'Euro-élite'.<sup>39</sup> Even worse, the LPF accuses Dutch politicians of squandering Dutch interests because they wanted to be 'the best pupil in the class'.<sup>40</sup> Only a referendum can break the power of the Euro-élite, and their Dutch vassals, and give power back to the Dutch people. Consequently, with regard to the expansion of the European Union, the party states:

New member states will only be permitted to join after the Dutch people have been given their say in a politically binding referendum in the matter. This will ensure that politicians are forced to examine carefully the benefits and disadvantages of expansion of the EU.<sup>41</sup>

With regard to expansion, it is very clear where the LPF draws the line: 'The European Union shouldn't cross the Bosphorus and the Ural, Turkey, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia should not be allowed to become members of the EU'.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, after the 2004 expansion, the party wants a 10-year halt to further expansion, to ensure that the effects of this accession can be dealt with.

In the European elections of 2004 the LPF campaigned under the slogan 'Accession of Turkey? Have you been asked anything?' This combined several popular themes of the party: Islamophobia, national preference, and populism. Oddly enough, the election programme for the 2004 European elections devoted little attention to the possible EU accession of Turkey. It does state as one of its 10 summary points the party's opposition to that other contentious issue of European integration: the European Constitution. The programme finishes with a citation from Fortuyn's book *Soulless Europe*:

I love Europe. I love its multitude of peoples, cultures, landscapes, weather conditions, languages and human beings. I sometimes hate the euro-élite [sic] in its arrogant negligence. In short, I want a Europe of the people, of the human scale. A Europe of you and me!<sup>43</sup>

#### Development cooperation

Not surprisingly, the sub-section on development cooperation is fully inspired by the neo-liberal ideology of the party. The solution to underdevelopment is more market and less aid.

The LPF wants the Dutch government to fight harder for open markets and against barriers to the European market. Concretely, they want to abolish agricultural subsidies, which the party believes will structurally strengthen the ability of

<sup>39</sup> Herben, M. (2004), 'Stemmen voor Europa,' speech at Het Plein, The Hague, 25 May.

<sup>40</sup> LPF (2004), *op. cit.*

<sup>41</sup> See LPF (2002), *op. cit.*

<sup>42</sup> LPF (2004), *op. cit.*

<sup>43</sup> 'Ik houd van Europa, ik houd van zijn veelheid aan volkeren, culturen, landschappen, weersomstandigheden, talen en mensen. Ik haat soms de euro-élite in zijn vervagen achterloosheid. Kortom, ik wil een Europa van de mensen, van de menselijke maat. Een Europa van u en mij.' LPF (2004), *op. cit.*

developing countries to cope independently. They also want the Dutch private sector to play a more important role in development cooperation, while at the same time taking a more critical attitude towards NGOs.

The LPF wants to bring the Dutch contribution to development cooperation back to 0.7 per cent of the GDP, which is the international norm (currently The Netherlands spends 0.8 per cent). At the same time, it wants The Netherlands to pressure other EU countries to keep their promises and also spend 0.7 per cent.

In line with their national preference, the LPF wants Dutch national interests to be safeguarded in development cooperation. They also see a link with immigration policy, a central concern of the party. Through development aid to countries from which many immigrants in The Netherlands come, they hope to also address the 'immigration problem'. For example, they want to promote the return of asylum seekers to reconstruct their own country. Finally, they want 'generous support' for the reception of asylum seekers in the broader region by extra support for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

#### Conclusion: the LPF and Dutch Foreign Policy

As is the case with most if not all populist parties – left, right or centre – foreign policy is at best a secondary issue for the LPF. Consequently, the party has a limited programme on the issue, which is fully consistent with the general basic features of the party ideology: (neo-)liberalism, national preference, and populism. Additionally, foreign policy is of little consequence to the voters of the LPF.<sup>44</sup>

Both in government and in opposition the LPF has focused little on foreign policy issues. The sole exception is the issue of EU membership for Turkey, which the party staunchly opposes. More generally, one could argue that the LPF has had some effect on the discussion in The Netherlands regarding European integration. For example, the national referendum on the European Constitution was fully in line with LPF policies, even though it was decided by the second Balkenende government, and the party itself played little role in the campaign. But rather than the initiator of new foreign policy positions, the LPF has functioned as a catalyst of Euroscepticism within The Netherlands. It has enabled other political actors in the mainstream, most notably Geert Wilders, to challenge widely held 'truths' and depoliticized issues regarding European integration at the elite level. Whether this will lead to any significant future changes in Dutch foreign policy remains to be seen.

#### Acronyms

- CD *Centrumpdemocraten* (Centre Democrats)
- CDA *Christen-Democratisch Appèl* (Christian Democratic Appeal)

<sup>44</sup> The relation between the (skeptical) position on European integration and LPF voting for example, turned out to be non-significant for the 2002 parliamentary election. See van Holsteyn, J. and Irwin, G. (2003), 'Never a Dull Moment: Pim Fortuyn and the Dutch Elector of 2002', *West European Politics* 26(2), pp. 41–66.

- CNP Communistische Partij Nederland (Communist Party of the Netherlands)
- D66 *Democraten 66* (Democrats 66)
- EU European Union
- LN *Leefbaar Nederland* (Liveable Netherlands)
- LPF *Lijst Pim Fortuyn* (List Pim Fortuyn)
- LR *Leefbaar Rotterdam*
- NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
- PvdA *Partij van de Arbeid* (Labour Party)
- VVD *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (People's Party for Freedom and Democracy)

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