

Why voters are Supporting Geert Wilders, the Dutch Donald Trump



Geert Wilders in Hague District Court, December 2016

Read this Nic Robertson CNN International set of interviews with three Dutch citizens, [Geert Wilders: Why voters are flocking to the Dutch Trump](#). You will see why he resonates with them. This despite his conviction on the single charge of incitement to hate, without any penalty, in a political trial brought by the Hague Public prosecutors for his 2014 local campaign rally about “fewer Moroccans’ and “we’ll do something about that”. His comments were far tamer than the scathing remarks by three Members of the Labor Party about Dutch Moroccans in the tweeder kamer, the Hague parliament who were not charged. Wilders remarks were cast in reference to the over representation of Dutch Muslim Moroccans in crimes of violence and the country’s prison population.

Just think of the murder and near slaughter of Dutch Filmmaker Theo Van Gogh on the streets of Amsterdam by Dutch Moroccan, Mohammed Bouyeri in November 2004. Van Gogh's assailant was outraged by a film, "Submission" about the denial of women's rights under Islam based on a script written by ex-Pat Dutch Somali politician, the renowned author and activist Hirsi Ali.

At their core these interviews reflect some of those concerns, but also that Wilders represents their outrage at the Dutch political elite for not dealing with Muslim mass immigration, social welfare burden encroaching the Dutch safety net, as well as, the intrusion of EU bureaucrats on Dutch sovereignty supporting Wilders proposal for NExit.

That is reflected in Dutch political polls showing him as the favored candidate in the March 2017 general elections. Perhaps if they turn out and place him first past the post in those elections, there is the possibility that he might become the next Dutch Prime Minister if he is called by King Willem Alexander to form a ruling coalition government.

Note these excerpts from the CNN international article with comments from the three Dutch citizens -a pastor and political science writer, a woman finance administrator and comedy writer:



Dutch pastor Henk-Jan Prosman

Source: *CNN International*

Minister Hank-Jan Prosman's Church in the village of Nieuwkoop sits on a tiny spit of land surrounded by water. Its tiled roof rises above the surrounding flat, canal-riven fields.

There has been a church here for close to 500 years. For the last five years, it's been Prosman's home.

On an average Sunday, he says, about a third of the 800 villagers will come to attend his service.

He has got to know many of them well over the past few years and in that time has witnessed the growing popularity of Holland's Donald Trump: the peroxide-blonde populist Geert Wilders.

[...]

They are worried about the economy, he says, about the welfare system and about healthcare, but most of all about rising crime – something many of them blame on Muslim immigrants.

[...]

In Holland today, Prosman explains, the major political parties are hemorrhaging followers.

There is a crisis of confidence in the European Union's old elites. The integration and open borders that they sold supporters are past their expiry date.

"I think people get it. And they don't want it," Prosman says of the EU.

[...]



Dutch Finance Administrator Cindy van Kruistum

Source: *CNN International*

One of Wilders' hot button issues is Muslim immigration: even in tiny rural Nieuwkoop, Prosman says it resonates. He claims that public housing is being given to immigrants and that it is "very hard for young [Dutch] people to find

a house.”

Not far from Nieuwkoop, Financial Administrator Cindy van Kruistum is a fervent supporter of Wilders.

We meet in her smart, middle-class house, where her daughter’s running watch is charging on a white table in her pristine kitchen.

If she wasn’t meeting with me, she says she’d be out playing tennis.

The occasional car passes by on the quiet tree-lined road outside her large living room window; more frequently, her neighbors cycle past on the broad bike path.

It seems like the Dutch idyll so many of us imagine.

Yet Cindy tells me that on a street close by, her friend’s son was mugged by a Muslim migrant.

It’s not an isolated case, she warns. She follows a TV program that documents many such attacks. Wilders has the only answer, she says.

[...]

“I support him because he dares to talk about the problems we have with Islamization ... if they don’t want to integrate, they should leave”, she says, quoting Wilders’ campaign rhetoric.

I ask if she is racist.

Quite definitely not, she replies: “My youngest daughter has a friend from Morocco ... and he fits in very well.”

Wilders, she says, is the only politician who is in touch with the people. He understands what’s happening.

She says: “The government, the establishment, they don’t listen to the people. They don’t go on the streets. Geert Wilders, he is near the people on the streets.”

[...]

“The values we have in our country and the traditions we have in our country, they don’t give a damn about it,” she says, in reference to Muslim immigrants.

“The next thing you know they’ll want to ban gays walking hand in hand in the street – and that sort of freedom is important to us.”



Dutch Comedy writer Haye van Heyden

Source: CNN International

Comedy writer Haye van Heyden told me the same thing.

His reasons for supporting Wilders are different from Cindy’s, although like her he is frustrated with mainstream politicians.

He tells me he was ostracized by friends and lost work after he wrote an article explaining his support for Wilders.

“It’s undemocratic”, he says.

Indeed, punishing those who express their views is part of

what angers him about Holland's traditional politicians. He says they refuse to deal with Wilders, instead accusing him of being racist.

I ask him if supporting Wilders makes him a racist. Like Cindy, he says absolutely not.

"I'm not a racist. I am very sure of it but I feel I have to protect the people who have their doubts about Islam." He tells me he doesn't like everything Wilders says, but that he wants to stand up for the rights of all those who do believe him. "I'm voting for Mr Wilders. It's a protest vote because of the exclusion of him and his followers."

Minister Prosman echoes van Hays's sentiment: not everyone following Wilders is a nationalist, but they have given up on mainstream politics.

"It's a wake up call for politicians," he explains. "No one votes for Wilders out of principle, but they want to make sure they are heard."

It is perhaps no surprise that Prosman has become a natural confidant of his congregation.

His church is an epicenter of calm continuity amidst a world of change outside.

Mainstream politicians might do well to stop by once in a while.