



## Populist Parties in Contemporary Europe

Michal Kubát, Martin Mejstřík, Nicolas Hubé, Martin Baloge, Giuliano Bobba, Daniel Castellero, Cristina Cremonesi, Gábor Dobos, Jaume Magrán, Hendrik Hüning, et al.

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Democratic Efficacy and the Varieties of Populism in Europe

**WORKING PAPER**

## **Populist Parties in Contemporary Europe**

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### **Author(s)**

Editors: Michal Kubát and Martin Mejstřík (Charles University)

Contributors: Martin Baloge (University of Lorraine, UL), Giuliano Bobba, Daniel Castellero, Cristina Cremonesi (University of Turin, UNITO), Gábor Dobos (Centre for Social Sciences, CSS), Jaume Magrán Ferran (University of Barcelona, UB), Nicolas Hubé (UL), Hendrik Hüning (University of Hamburg), Bogdan Ianosev (Glasgow Caledonian University, GCU), Sune Klinge (University of Copenhagen, UCPH), Umut Korkut (GCU), Helle Krunke (UCPH), Oliver Lembcke (CSS), Artur Lipinski (Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan, AMU), Moreno Mancosu (UNITO), Dejan Matic (University for Business Engineering and Management, PEM), Lluís Medir (UB), Vaidas Morkevičius (Kaunas University of Technology, KTU), Esther Pano (UB), Franca Roncarolo (UNITO), Osman Sahin (GCU), Antonella Seddone (UNITO), Andrej Školkay (School of Communication and Media, SKAMBA), Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos, Emmanouil Tsatsanis (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, ELIAMEP), David M. Wineroither (CSS), Viera Žúborová, Giedrius Žvaliauskas (KTU)

### **Contact Information**

[contact@demos.tk.mta.hu](mailto:contact@demos.tk.mta.hu)



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## Abstract

Populism is the “40 is the new 30” of political research, buzzing for the last two decades with what seems as an unfading energy. A lot of attention has been paid to defining the phenomena and outlining its general features. Significantly less notice has been paid to political parties. Even less work has been done on comparative party populism in contemporary Europe, one that would take into consideration social, political and historical aspects. This paper fills this void. Examining sixteen European populist parties and movements across the continent, we argue that while all adhere to the standard populist framework, there is not one but four populisms in contemporary Europe. We demonstrate our argument by positioning the case selection against the following dichotomies: exclusionary v. inclusionary populism, authoritarian v. non-authoritarian populism, strong nativist v. weak nativist populism, and radical democratic v. conspiratorial populism. Based on these variables, we introduce four types of party populism: (1) radical right-wing populist parties, which are exclusionary, authoritarian with a strong nativist appeal and which use conspiratory explanations of liberal democracy; (2) radical left-wing populists, which are inclusionary, non-authoritarian with a weak nativist appeal and use a radical democratic approach; (3) illiberal (post-communist) populist parties, which are exclusionary with strong a nativist appeal and use conspiratory explanations of liberal democracy; (4) anti-establishment populists and political entrepreneurs, which are non-authoritarian with a weak nativist appeal and tend to have radical democratic appeal (exclusionary variable is rather inconclusive due to their lack of ideology).

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## 1. Introduction

The DEMOS analysis of populism focuses on several dimensions of populism, including party politics. In line with that, the herein presented analysis contains a selection of texts that reflect all the significant aspects of party populism in contemporary Europe.

Our analysis begins with a conceptualisation of populism and suggestions for the DEMOS researchers how to proceed in the research of European populist parties. In short, it starts with an introduction to varieties of populism as a concept. This theoretical introduction to the analysis reflects many different conceptual approaches and dimensions of populism. The most useful DEMOS approach can be expressed by the four basic dichotomies of populism described in the Deliverable 2.1. The first dichotomy is inclusionary vs exclusionary populism, initially distinguishing between the right-wing populism that has become prevalent in Europe from the left-wing populism that is more common in Latin America.

The second dichotomy is authoritarian vs non-authoritarian populism; in other words, how populism relates to the democratic institutions. The first type includes mostly right-wing parties but depending on the circumstances it can include left-wing parties too. The non-authoritarian populism contains the rest of populist parties which do not want to restrict democracy in the ways authoritarian populists do.

The third dichotomy is strong nativist or nationalist vs weak nativist or nationalist populism, which considers populism as an ideology and examines its relation to other ideologies, primarily to nativism and nationalism. In our understanding, nativism promotes the interests of native citizens against aliens (migrants, ethnic or linguistic minorities). It is often connected to racist and xenophobic narratives (Liang 2007). This dichotomy is based on the cleavage conflict between proponents of the nation state-based politics versus the mainstream liberal democracy. We could also add the fourth dichotomy based on radical democratic vs conspiratorial populism, which means how populism sees socio-economic and political context and how populism wants to transform it.

Populism should be considered a political phenomenon, which exists within liberal democracies. Hence, DEMOS research studies should not include instances of populism located outside the democratic setting. This is a rational consideration given the fact that the research theme is populist parties in contemporary European democratic countries, and not in nondemocratic regimes. The DEMOS research focuses on (populist) political parties in the sense of an 'empirical class' and not a party type or a party family. The aim of the DEMOS research is not seeking to develop a new distinct party type or to contribute to the theory of political parties. It is rather empirical research of concrete manifestations of populism in Europe. That is why it was strongly recommended to the individual DEMOS researchers elaborating on particular national cases that they should prefer and chose the concepts of populism which were suitable for the context of the countries they were analysing. However, this should have been done with careful consideration of the generally accepted conceptions of populism presented in the Deliverable 2.1 of the DEMOS project.

The research of European populist political parties was based on qualitative approach and inductive analysis, i.e. the derivation of general principles from specific (comparative) empirical observations. The qualitative comparative research juxtaposed the results of the analysis of national specificities to trace the similarities and differences across case studies of a representative selection of European populist political parties. These findings from empirical cases led to the typology of populist political parties (see below) based on an initial set of criteria, which were derived from the general theory of populism explained in the deliverable D2.1 Varieties of Populism by Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos and his collaborates.

Based on criteria set in WP2.1, we could divide 17 populist parties and movements represented in the 14 national reports analysed here in four different categories according to which type of populism they manifest (in some reports more than one party is analysed). The first group represents six cases of populist radical right which combine populism with nativism: Alternative for Germany; Danish People's Party; United Kingdom Independence Party; The League in Italy; National Front in France; and Spanish Vox. These parties share to a certain extent nativist and xenophobic rhetoric and demonstrate strong opposition to multiculturalism.

The second group comprises of three new anti-austerity radical left-wing populist parties which have, at least initially, based their common rhetoric on Euroscepticism and anti-capitalism: Unbowed France, Spanish Podemos and Greek Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA).

Four cases in the third group have strong illiberal characteristics as a common denominator. Three of them: Hungarian Fidesz; Polish Law and Order; and Bosnian Alliance of Independent Social Democrats could be understood as examples of post-communist populism shaped by constraints of post-communist legacy and nationalism. We added to this group the case of the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP). Turkish AKP has a different background than the ruling populist parties in the post-communist countries. Its predecessors have been repeatedly suppressed under previous political conditions, and the party developed a reliable self-preserving mechanism. On the other hand, populists in post-communist countries capitalised on the setbacks and deficiencies of democratic development after 1989. Another remarkable difference is that AKP shows strong signs of authoritarian populism. That manifests in its refusal of basic principles of parliamentary democracy along the emphasis on the role of a charismatic leader. However, despite the fact that Turkey is not a post-communist country, having experienced repeated periods of authoritarian military rule, Turkish society could be characterised as post-authoritarian, and Turkish politics thus shows many similarities to post-quasi totalitarianism attributable to the former communist countries. This materialises in all of these analysed national reports in the form of both established position of the populist-nationalist or conservative actors and with a strong resentment against liberal democracy (to the extent of declaring the illiberal democracy as an accepted state model by Victor Orbán).

The remaining four populist parties and movements could be characterised most prominently by their strong anti-establishment populist appeal: The Czech Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO 2011) in the Czech Republic; Italian Five Star Movement; We are Family-Boris Kollár

in Slovakia; and Lithuanian Party Order and Justice. Three of these cases could also be included in a particular sub-type of populism: business entrepreneurs acting like politicians. The leader of ANO 2011 is Andrej Babiš; We are Family has been founded by Boris Kollár; the Party Order and Justice has been originally an electoral vehicle for Rolandas Paksas. Only the founder of the Five Star Movement, Beppe Grillo, is not a wealthy businessman; however, he achieved national renown by being a successful comedian.

## **2. The Case Studies of the Populist Parties**

To perform a comparative analysis at which we are aiming, we obtained insights into European populist parties from 15 national case studies written by DEMOS researchers across Europe.

The methodological approach characterising studies reflected in this report is an example of qualitative research based on the traditions of the ‘new’ institutionalism. This broad approach makes institutions (in this case, political parties) a primary subject of research but not in an old ‘static’ view. As Vivien Lowndes (2010, 66) stated, ‘the points of departure represented by the new institutionalism (...) are best represented in terms of movement along six analytical continua: (a) from focus on organizations to focus on rules, (b) from a formal to an informal conception of institutions, (c) from a static to a dynamic conception of institutions, (d) from submerged values to a value-critical distance, (e) from a holistic to a disaggregated conception of institutions, (d) from independence to embeddedness.’ That is precisely what authors of the chapters do. More specially, they adhere to the principles of one subtype of the new institutionalism, which is called ‘empirical institutionalism’ (Lowndes 2010: 67), where they classify different institutional types and analyse their practical impact on politics.

The research provided by the national case studies — i.e., a set of detailed descriptive analysis of the political parties which were chosen as a subject of research — served as the empirical basis for this analytical report and aimed at providing a better understanding or causal explanation of the selected examples. This report considers the overall context of the populist party phenomenon – social, political and historical while offering a unique expert insight into the cases and its further instrumental use for other theoretical and empirical purposes. Those interpretative case studies, owing to a more profound interest in the cases examined, introduce theoretical notions or constructs to the analysis. While referring to existing hypotheses or theories, they can also be regarded as applied science studies, because they are concerned with interpreting or applying a generalisation to a specific case in order to analyse it better (Morlino 2018, 51–52).

Research of European populist parties started in Spring 2019. Overall, 29 scholars from 14 countries participated in the task. Researchers followed the instructions provided to them by the leaders of the team, Michal Kubát and Martin Mejstřík. The authors of the national chapters came from the countries they have examined, which guaranteed advantage of thorough knowledge of the local realia. They were able to work with literature and sources (programs of parties, statements and speeches of the party leaders, statistical data and further on) which were often available in local languages only.

The research went through a few stages. First, Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos and his team developed a basic theoretical framework of populism, which served as an instruction for authors of national chapters on how to select populist parties relevant for the research and how to analyse them.

In the second phase, national teams selected cases and analysed them following the same structure (sometimes with few exceptions where it was necessary or expedient). Authors made a case study selection and explained what makes the party in question populist and why. Next, they expanded on the historical and political context and position of the party in the political and party system of the country. Further, they focused on party (populist) ideology and (voter/people) appeal analysing who are the principal supporters, what is the ideological core characterising the party and what is the position of the leader. Finally, they compared analysed populist parties to other relevant parties within the party systems, which are considered populist by the broader public, if these exist in the respective countries.

During the third and final phase, the editors Michal Kubát and Martin Mejstřík together with Jiří Kocián collected all national chapters, edited them and finally developed a typology of analysed European populist parties based on the findings from empirical cases and on an initial set of criteria, which were derived from the general theory of populism explained in the deliverable D2.1 by Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos and his collaborates.

We depart from the assumption that there is no distinct political party family (e.g. a clearly discernible family of populist parties, in contrast to conservative or socialist parties) as such and that populist parties should be treated as an empirical class spanning across several (ideological) party families. More concretely, it is the specific role which certain parties play in variable national and EU contexts and the underlying populist logic of understanding politics and competing for power which matters most for identifying which parties are populist.

The selected national cases analyse political parties — relevant members of various groups within the empirical class of ‘populist parties.’ By empirical class, we mean a possible whole of parties, which use populism as the part of their appeal to the public while they may differ remarkably in other aspects. This is not to be confused with ‘party family’ of populist parties — which does not exist, as populism itself is incapable of defining a party family as conceptualized by Mair and Mudde (1998).

The authors of the national studies were tasked to maintain a specific structure providing a broader research framework. First, they explained why and how a selected party is populist and did the literature review concerning the selected parties. Second, they focused on the historical and political context and on the position of the party in the political and party system of the particular country. Third, they concentrated on party (populist) ideology and (voter/people) appeal analysing who are the principal supporters, what is the ideological core of the party and what is the position of the leader. Fourth, they compared analysed populist parties to other relevant parties within the party systems, which are considered populist by the broader public. All case studies generally followed this structure, sometimes with few exceptions where it was necessary or expedient. As a time framework for the national studies we chose the period from



the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008 to the European Parliament elections in 2019. That allowed the authors to focus on the recent development of populist parties and movement in selected countries and their reactions to the economic and migrant crises.

Regarding the case selection, we set-up four main criteria identifying which party could be counted as populist. It has to be: 1) a well-established party which exists for at least 2 years (thus excluding newly-born parties such as Czech Tricolour); 2) not a fringe party with low electoral support (irrelevant parties such as Danish New Right or Greek Popular Unity); 3) not a classical mainstream party which just sometimes uses populist rhetoric (which all political parties do, especially in the time of an electoral campaign); 4) not an extreme party which seeks to replace the democratic regime (far-right or far-left parties such as Greek Golden Dawn or Slovak Kotleba — People's Party — Our Slovakia).

The first chapter by Oliver Lembecke and Hendrik Hüning deals with 'Alternative für Deutschland' (AfD). It is a new phenomenon of German party politics because AfD was founded just a few years ago (2013). AfD evidently combines populism with nativism, but it was not always so. As shown in the relevant chapter, AfD developed over time. It did not have a nativist appeal in the past, but quickly absorbed supporters with nativist attitudes. In the beginning it was a single-issue party (AfD's Euroscepticism focused on anti-Euro and anti-Eurozone appeal). After the start of the migration crisis, this party emphasised an anti-immigrant position, and it became increasingly national-conservative with a strong anti-establishment appeal. Today, the AfD is a well-established party with quite strong electoral support, but — as the authors say — it is not a mainstream party in Germany.

The next chapter written by Helle Krunke and Sune Klinge focuses on the Danish People's Party (DF), which is the oldest among the populist parties surveyed in this Deliverable (founded in 1995) and the most established Danish populist party. In the beginning, it was a nationalist party characterised by ethno-nationalist and ethno-pluralist xenophobia. The DF party focused on migration and European integration. DF later added other issues to its program, such as socioeconomic policies and stricter punishment for crimes. In this field the party even moved to the centre/centre-left. Nevertheless, its main issues continue to be the fight for a non-immigrant country and a non-multiethnic society. DF's populism is linked to nativism, and from this point of view it is a typical populist far-right party. However, DF operates in the specific environment of the Danish welfare state and generally in a country with a high quality of life (that is why DF cannot use some 'traditional' populist issues such as corruption, for example). Also because of this reason, DF highlights the danger of immigration which, according to the party's view, can destroy the Danish welfare state. This 'economic' threat of immigration is seen as a threat to broader Nordic values including democracy, liberty, gender equality, a safe society, security and Christianity. It is a model that the authors call 'Nordic populism' (related not only to Denmark but to other Scandinavian countries as well). From their point of view, DF is a representative case of Nordic populism.

The chapter by Bogdan Ianoşev and Umut Korkut deals with a particular case, which is the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). It was founded in 1993 as an anti-modern, anti-establishment party that has guaranteed a relationship with its voters through rallies, media and

its charismatic leader Nigel Farage. UKIP was hostile to the political establishment (mainstream parties) in the spirit of the slogan ‘we vs. they.’ Besides the mainstream political parties, over time the category of ‘they’ ended up also encompassing the European Union. UKIP sees the EU as a political project designed by the elites and operated by ‘unelected bureaucrats’ in Brussels. UKIP considers the European Union to practice a form of colonialism and in this respect, the UK as just another province within the EU. In this context, UKIP and its leader Farage underwent an interesting development. Let us quote the authors: ‘By 2010 the party became to a much larger extent a vote-seeking party. UKIP brought “Europe” as an issue into the limelight of British politics (it was not important issue before). Farage managed to link UKIP’s low salience single-issue with rising concerns over uncontrolled immigration from EU countries, affording UKIP the privileged position as the single political party perceived as being able to deal with immigration by implementing its long-standing project of leaving the EU. UKIP managed to pressure the Conservative Party into committing to a referendum on UK’s EU membership[!]’ From this point of view, it was a significant success for UKIP because the party managed to push its agenda through at the highest level of British politics. However, on the downside, the party failed on the national level in terms of its electoral results. Since the outcome of the Brexit referendum, Nigel Farage has officially resigned, and support for UKIP has practically collapsed.

The following chapter, written by Giuliano Bobba, Cristina Cremonesi, Moreno Mancosu, Franca Roncarolo and Antonella Seddone, is also devoted to more than one party. It deals with the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S) and the Northern League (LN). Both parties are the main populist forces in contemporary Italy, being the first and the third political force in the general elections in 2018. In the proportional part, the M5S obtained 32.7 per cent and the League got 17.4 per cent of the votes. They cooperated and governed together in a coalition from June 2018 to September 2019. However, this does not mean that they could be considered exactly similar. The authors strongly emphasise the fact that they are profoundly different according to various aspects — their origin, development, position, and the type of populism they project.

LN is an older party, which was founded already in 1991. It is a classic example of a radical right populist party combining populism with nativism. LN primarily criticises national (“Rome”) and supranational (“EU”) elites. When Matteo Salvini became the leader of LN, it moved towards more far-right positions with an emphasis on immigration. M5S is a newer entity, that was founded in 2009 as an anti-establishment party, and it is foremostly characterised by strong anti-elitism. Another very typical feature of this party is its blurred ideology. In the beginning, M5S was a vaguely leftist entity, but after 2018, when the party allied itself with LN, it drifted towards the right only leaned back towards the left in 2019. Among its typically leftist programme themes (not necessarily populist) are the following: sustainable development, publicly owned water supply, environmental protection, eco-friendly transport, right to internet access and other themes.

The chapter by Martin Baloge and Nicolas Hubé is devoted to France and to more than one party: Front National/Rassemblement National (FN/RN) and Unbowed France (La France insoumise, LFI). The situation here is rather complicated. The authors draw attention to a

different analytical context of French populism, which they call ‘peculiar.’ Populism in France is traditionally connected with right-wing parties (called ‘extreme right-wing’ or ‘new right-wing’ and other terms). From this point of view, FN/RN represents populism corresponding to three criteria: reference and appeal to the people, anti-elitism, exclusion of groups. It is the ‘prototypical populist’ and the oldest extreme-right party in Europe. On the other side LFI, as the ‘new momentum to left-wing populism,’ should be associated with the euro-crisis.

FN/RN and LFI have very distinct ideologies. FN started as a typical and ‘classical’ extreme-right party (with topics such as anti-Semitism, anti-communism, xenophobia, fascist traditions). Later, the long process of ‘de-demonisation,’ ‘normalisation’ and ‘respectability’ started, and it culminated in 2018 when the party changed its name to RN. FN/RN is indeed an extreme right-wing party with following attitudes: defence of the nation, criticism of the EU, strong stance against ‘massive immigration,’ Islamophobia, linking unemployment and insecurity with immigration, anti-globalism and restoration of popular sovereignty. The most significant trait of this party is definitely xenophobia (FN/RN ‘is less “populist” than xenophobic’).

Unbowed France is an ultimately different case. The leader of the LFI Jean-Luc Mélenchon started as a left-wing politician within the French Socialist Party (PS). In 2012 he left the PS and adopted a more radical ideology inspired by Podemos, Syriza and Bernie Sanders. LFI is a ‘typical populist’ party in the sense of having ‘a sacrificial leader chosen among the people [, who] opposes corrupt elites.’ This core attitude can be clearly expressed by the slogan: ‘To clear out politicians.’ Its programme is otherwise a collection of various leftist issues. Generally, LFI can be considered much more as an ideational populist party than FN/RN, with a coherent discourse on the true ‘people’ against the elite (the oligarchy).

A national report written by Jaume Magre Ferran, deals with the Spanish populism parties Podemos and Vox. The author presents Podemos as a typical left-wing populist subject built on the Indignados movement in 2014. The party reacted to the financial crisis and dissatisfaction with traditional mechanism of political representation. The leftist element has gone further since 2016 when Podemos made a permanent coalition with the United Left. In the recent elections, however, voters’ support for Podemos declined and the author argues this is due to tensions between the party hierarchy and the grassroots organisation, due to its complex territorial structure in multilevel Spain, and due to the ambiguity between a ‘working-class’ ideological dimension and transversal attempts to go beyond its ideological core. On the other hand, Vox is considered as a radical right-wing populist formation which has been created as a result of a split in the People's Party (PP). Vox has a strong nativist component and uses a xenophobic discourse (with existence of victimised people, presence of corrupt elite, and danger from ‘the others’ who are opposed to the interest of the ordinary Spanish people).

The following chapter by Emmanouil Tsatsanis and Dimitri A. Sotiropoulos describes the story of the most successful left-wing populist party in Europe, the Greek Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA). It is a relatively new party, which was formed in 2004 as a leftist coalition of numerous smaller political subjects and was later transformed into a unified party (in 2012). Remarkably, SYRIZA was leading a government in coalition with a right-wing populist party Independent Greeks (ANEL) from 2015 until 2019. Initially, it was formed as an answer to ‘the

old establishment of PASOK' to stand up against 'the banks,' 'economic cartels,' 'big corporate capital' and others. The critical turning point for its success became the financial crisis in 2008 and the imposition of austerity policies in 2010. That led not only to political mobilisation and social protests of Greek citizens, who felt disadvantaged by the situation but also to populist radicalisation of SYRIZA. The party defined its primary goal as a fight against domestic and especially foreign establishment (EU, Germany), capitalism and neoliberal globalisation, all of that in the name of the ordinary people. What is an interesting and predominantly 'leftist' populist trait, is that the party never defined the people in nationalist discourse terms. Another pivotal moment for SYRIZA came in 2015 when its electoral success led to the increase of personalised character of the party and strengthened the position of its leader Alexis Tsipras. Generally, the authors believe that SYRIZA is the most paradigmatic case of left-wing populism in Europe.

The chapter written by Gábor Dobos and David M. Wineroither turns its attention to a completely different case — to Fidesz — Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz). Founded in 1988 as a liberal party, it was transformed into a conservative one after 1994 (and after Viktor Orbán was elected its chairman in 1993). The openly populist era of Fidesz started in 2002 when this party lost the national elections and began to organise a social movement among its supporters. It added leftist values to its ideological profile and the position of the leader became unquestionable. The authors claim that the party organisation and operation overall are characterised by ideological populism. In short, the populism of Fidesz is not just a political strategy, but an ideology. This ideology has some of the most essential and typical characteristics. A first characteristic is a flexible anti-elitism. What does it mean? It is not a dichotomy of the Hungarian people against Hungarian elites, but the Hungarian community against an always-changing group of elites. In the 1990s, the traditional enemy of Fidesz used to be the communist elite. In the 2000s it became the post-communist elite. From 2006 onwards the targeted elites were the new 'aristocrats' and opulent millionaires. Nowadays, it is an international economic and cultural establishment (EU, NGOs, George Soros).

The second important characteristic of Fidesz is its populist conservatism. This is represented by the party's point of view in which the moral practices of society are actively subverted by liberal elites and the 'natural order' of things needs to be defended from alien (liberal) influences. From here, it is just a step to illiberalism and anti-liberalism. The third major characteristic is nationalism and mobilising conservatism: a combination of a rightist cultural position (the protection of Hungarian interests and the 'natural order' that is based on national identity) and leftist socio-economic orientation (social programmes). National populism is hence connected with social populism in this case. Finally, Fidesz's populist identity is based on the crucial role of its leader. The party is under the full control of its president, Viktor Orbán. Needless to say, Fidesz could be considered a hugely successful case of populism — the party has continuously been in power since 2010.

The next chapter by Artur Lipiński is about Poland and deals with two parties, Law and Justice (PiS) and Kukiz '15, but concentrates to a greater extent on the PiS party. This latter party was founded in 2001 and its populism appeared or strengthened in 2005, when it articulated the

following points: references to the homogenising of the cultural narrative and exclusivist sense of national heartland, constructing the national identity in strong interrelation with the religious themes, and strong anti-elite discourse, extremely critical towards political and business elites of the post-communist era of the 1990s. PiS became more and more populist, and this development culminated in 2015 with an electoral campaign using such words and slogans as ‘ordinary people,’ ‘national identity,’ ‘conservative values,’ ‘anti-establishment,’ ‘exclusionary anti-refugee,’ ‘anti-corruption,’ and others. The populism of PiS is similar to that of the Hungarian Fidesz in the sense that it is not just a strategy or style, but a true ideology which combines anti-elitism, nationalism (connected with Catholicism), political and cultural conservatism and social solidarity. A specific part of its ideology is represented by politics of memory and the ‘good name of the country.’ The source of its ideology is rather simple: national pride based on (great) national history. PiS is similar to the Hungarian Fidesz: a party ruling the country in the long-term (in 2005–2007 and from 2015 on).

Kukiz ’15 is a different case. It is a much newer party than PiS (founded in 2015), and contrary to PiS, the Kukiz ’15 is not in Poland’s political mainstream. Kukiz ’15 has an exclusionary, populist radical, anti-elitist and right-wing character. The critical point for its success became the refugee crisis which began in 2015 and has denominated in the party discourse as a ‘war’ and ‘invasion of hordes.’ All immigrants are considered Islamists and an omnipresent threat to Polish freedom, Catholic identity and culture. This dominant characteristic of Kukiz’15 is complemented by an anti-EU agenda, precisely because of the party’s rejection of the quota system designed to distribute immigrants among the EU member states.

The next national report by Dejan Matic analyses the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This party with a ‘non-populist name’ was founded in 1998, originally as a moderate force. However, since getting back into power in 2006 (nowadays still in power in the Republika Srpska and central institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels), it gradually evolved into a strongly nationalist and populist political party. Its populism is focused on nativist ethnic identity rather than economic issues (its socio-economic program is slightly leftist). Nationalism and nativism play a vital role in the party identity, which is naturally taking into account the region where it operates.

The Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) — analysed in the following chapter by Osman Sahin — represents an entirely different case. AKP is the longest-ruling populist party in Europe (in power for 17 years). Its origin is derived from a long tradition of political Islam in the country. Although AKP was moderate on this issue at the beginning of its existence, it later became more and more religious and authoritarian. Authors list the main populist characteristics of AKP as follows: anti-institutionalism, anti-establishment discourse, antagonisation of the society (“we vs. they”) and demonisation of the opposition, strong emphasis on a national will supporting the leader, mobilisation of the masses for political goals (and against enemies), personal charisma of the leader and leadership (condition of success). What is important in this context, is the ideological flexibility of AKP. The party has no rigid ideological boundaries. From this point of view, its cross-class and cross-ethnic appeal corresponds to the classical anti-establishment trait.

The chapter written by Michal Kubát deals with the Czech Republic. The Czech Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO) movement, founded in 2012 made a spectacular career becoming the mainstream and ruling Czech party within just a few years. What is interesting, this party became a mainstream political force without weakening its populist foundations. ANO's populism is specific. It is based on technocratic and expert efficiency and effectiveness, which according to the party's rhetoric should be the solution to the problem of 'corrupted' and 'incompetent' former mainstream political elites. ANO's populism is less ideological; it is instead a political strategy and style. Another typical attribute of ANO's populism is its extreme personalisation. The party is de facto owned by its founder and leader (and donator), the Czech businessman and billionaire Andrej Babiš, and that is why it is considered to be a typical business-firm party.

The chapter written by Andrej Školkay and Viera Žúborová deals with the Slovak party called We Are the Family – Boris Kollár (SR-BK). This young party (founded in 2015) represents a typical case of a business-firm party, founded, donated and 'owned' by its entrepreneur leader Boris Kollár (characteristically, the name of the leader is a part of the name of party). The authors claim that SR-BK represents all key criteria of populism, including anti-establishment appeal, call for the restoration of the sovereignty of people and pretending to represent true interests of the people.

The final chapter written by Vaidas Morkevičius and Giedrius Žvaliauskas analyses the Lithuanian Party Order and Justice (TT). The authors explain that there are two types of populism in Lithuania. The first is a centrist one — dismissing all ideologies and 'political battles' as well as appealing to moderate, rational and effective governance and the fight against corruption (with strong anti-establishment ideas). The second is a nationalist one — aggrandising Lithuanian nation, its cultural traditions, the need for spiritual revival and a return to the appropriate place among other countries (however, it is not directed against traditional national minorities). The analysed TT party (founded under its current name in 2006) is quite a typical 'centrist' populist party with some features of illiberal appeal. It represents eclectic anti-establishment centrism: liberalism towards business, social policy based on labour, the order in the state, and more.

### **3. One Populism or More Populisms in Europe?**

The analysis of European populist parties shows some similarities and differences among them. These can be demonstrated on some selected thematic areas: the first one is a general relation to the standard theoretical framework of populism; the second is the issue of leadership; the third is dichotomy between right-wing and left-wing populist parties; the fourth is the history of populist parties; the fifth is the question of success of populist parties.

The first and the most general level of comparative analysis of European populist parties is related to the question of how much they fit into the basic theoretical framework of populism. The basic definition of populism considers it as a thin ideology (or thin-centred ideology) which places into opposition two contradictory actors – people and elites. The people are always good (virtuous), while elites are always bad ("corrupted" in the broadest sense of this word). People

are naturally and morally sovereign, while elites want to undermine this sovereignty and deprive the people of their political and other rights. In other words, generic populism operates with a dichotomy of “we vs. they”, where “we” and “they” can be defined in various ways. All European populist parties fit into this very basic scheme. Everywhere we can see this kind of thinking or this kind of political strategy or style. In some cases, ‘we,’ as a concept, is defined ethnically (the most common example), but sometimes it is not (e.g. Czech ANO, French PgD/LFI, Italian M5S, Greek SYRIZA). What is symptomatic is that ‘they’ as a concept, is defined much more concretely than ‘we.’ Often ‘they’ are ‘foreign,’ such as the European Union or immigrants (e.g. British UKIP, Danish DF, German AfD), but sometimes ‘they’ are domestic actors, such as local ‘corrupted politicians’ (e.g. Czech ANO, Slovak SR-BK, French LFI). We can also notice a combination of those two variants (e.g. Greek SYRIZA, Hungarian Fidesz, Polish PiS).

Secondly, an essential component of generic populism is the leader. Populism is anti-institutional, and instead of institutional ties, it favours personal relations, especially ties between people and leaders, in which case a leader personifies the will of the people. If we look at the analysed European populist parties, across the whole spectrum we can observe a vital role their leaders play. In some cases, the leader ‘is’ the party, and the party is the leader: e.g. Nigel Farage, Viktor Orbán, Jarosław Kaczyński, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Alexis Tsipras, Matteo Salvini and Andrej Babiš. In the case of Polish Kukiz ’15 the name of the party is the same as the name of its leader (Paweł Kukiz) as well as in the case of Slovak We Are the Family — Boris Kollár. (Kollár’s party and also Babiš’ party being simultaneously quite typical examples of business-firm parties).

The third aspect is a dichotomy between right-wing and left-wing populist parties. Right-wing populist parties dominate. Only a few cases represent evident left-wing populism (Greek SYRIZA, French PgD/LFI, partly Italian M5S). Some parties try to locate themselves in the centre (e.g. Lithuanian PTT, Slovak SR-BK), or decline any left-right scale positioning (e.g. Czech ANO).

The fourth relevant thematic area is the history of populist parties. As we can see, the vast majority of the analysed European populist parties have existed for a short time so far. With two exceptions (French FN founded in 1971 and Hungarian Fidesz founded in 1988), the few older parties were established only in the 1990s (French FN/RN, British UKIP, Danish DFF, SNSD of Bosnia and Herzegovina). The rest of the analysed parties came into existence in the twenty-first century, and some of them were founded just a few years ago (e.g. Czech ANO, German AfD, Slovak SR-BK, French LFI). In several cases, the parties started as non-populist and later became more radical right-wing (Hungarian Fidesz, SNSD of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Rather than that, what is quite often the case, the tendency of radicalisation (the process of adopting more extreme political ideas and rejecting the status quo) meant that these parties became gradually more and more populist. The sole exception was the French FN/RN which in the past used to be a fascist party and was later transformed into an ‘ordinary’ far-right populist party.

Finally, the fifth aspect is the success of these European populist parties. Are they successful or not? Many of them are. In some countries, the populist parties became mainstream ruling parties, such as in the Czech Republic (ANO), Hungary (Fidesz), Poland (PiS), Greece (SYRIZA), Bosnia and Herzegovina (SNSD) and Turkey (AKP). In other cases, the populist parties did not turn into the political mainstream, but they still formed a government or entered governmental coalitions (e.g. Italian LN and M5S, Lithuanian TT). We can also observe populist parties that did not take a role in governments, but attained massive electoral support and supported governments (e.g. Danish DF). What is interesting, populist parties became political mainstream in east-central and south-east Europe, i.e. in countries without long and uninterrupted tradition of democracy.

Looking back at the analysed European populist parties we can summarise that there is not one European populism. Instead, we see the emergence of various populisms. Individual populist parties are different — and according to many aspects. This statement applies not only to Europe. Hence it is no wonder that the conceptualisation of populism, shown in the first chapter of this deliverable and all theoretical literature on populism as well, is so diverse. The only widely accepted concept of populism is its generic framework.

National reports represented by selected populist political parties and movements have referred to the conceptualisation presented in the WP 2.1 of the project and provided an empirical basis for the analysis of the four variables in a form of dichotomies described in the introduction to this deliverable. Owing to that, it is possible to generate a review of populist phenomena by putting together a comparative overview using data and information gathered in the individual national reports for all of the four aforementioned groups – populist radical right (Alternative for Germany; Danish People's Party; National Front; The League; United Kingdom Independence Party), radical left-wing (Unbowed France and SYRIZA), post-communist populism (FIDESZ; Law and Order; Alliance of Independent Social Democrats; AKP) and anti-establishment populism (ANO 2011; Five Star Movement; We are Family-Boris Kollár; Party Order and Justice).

First, the dichotomy between exclusionary and inclusionary populism has to be dealt with. All analysed populist radical right-wing parties project strong exclusionary features defending the people against the corrupted elites and mainly against the threat from 'the others' (migrants, minorities, etc.): the National Front in France is talking about restoring 'the Spirit of France' (Mayer 2012), warning against the 'massive immigration' and Islam, and promising to 'give power back to the people' (Krause et al. 2018). Alternative for Germany also promotes the protection of the people ('Das Volk') against migrants and foreign cultural elements, the same applies to the League of Matteo Salvini. Vox presents itself as representants of the 'Living Spain' and defends the 'silent majority' betrayed by the political elite. The Danish People's Party is exclusionary in its strong defence of people and strict anti-migrant positions (Bergmann 2017), however, it does not feature the same extreme-right wing features as the AfD or FN.

All three analysed radical left-wing populist parties, on the other hand, show clear characteristics of inclusionary populism. They also defend the people against the elite but include migrants, minorities and other underprivileged classes in that notion. The analysed



illiberal parties group projects exclusionary features based on their antagonism to the liberal progressive agenda. FIDESZ, PiS, and AKP have a very similar understanding of the people and its protection against ‘the others,’ similarly as radical-right wing populists have. All three of these parties are currently in power, so they similarly tend to mobilise the existing divisions within their societies and demonise the opposition.

Among the anti-establishment populists, the dichotomy between inclusionary and exclusionary populism is not so clear. We are Family-Boris Kollár and ANO are business-firm ‘technocratic’ parties and thus capitalise on a staunch anti-establishment appeal. On the other hand, they lack the appeal against ‘the others’ and a strong and coherent exclusionary ideology. For example, Kollár’s party does not consider migration as an important topic (CSES/ISSP 2016). On the other hand, both parties adjusted their rhetoric according to public opinion in the Czech Republic and Slovakia which manifests strong resentment of migrants; thus we characterise them as exclusionary. Five Star Movement is another borderline case. Its ideology is going beyond the left and right classification (Tarchi 2015) and we could find both inclusionary and exclusionary tendencies within the movement. However, in 2019 M5S started to shift towards the left on the ideological spectrum, adopting positions closer to centre-left mainstream parties (Landini and Paparo 2019). Currently, we could say that the inclusionary wing of the party is prevailing.

The second examined dichotomy is the authoritarian against non-authoritarian populism. Resulting values of this variable also generally follow the left-right division but to a much lesser extent than the previous inclusionary/exclusionary dichotomy. Its key feature is the approach of analysed parties towards democracy and its possible restrictions. Against the original expectation, analysed radical-right wing populists are not all authoritarian. National Front, despite the process of ‘dédiabolisation,’ still presents a strong anti-democratic sentiment which has been symptomatic of the original party founded by Jean-Marie Le Pen in the 1970s (Igounet 2014). The League is a clear example of a right-wing populist party which often defines itself against the rules of liberal democracy using ethnically homogeneous people (Bobba and McDonnell 2015). The same questioning of the basic principles of representative democracy is also present in the case of UKIP and Vox. The analysis of the AfD showed a different picture. The Alternative for Germany is a borderline case, because of its internal division between non-authoritarian moderates and authoritarian hardliners. We put the party among authoritarian populists due to the shift of influence towards more extremist agenda in the last two years. The case of the Danish People's party, on the other hand, shows a not so common example of a classic populist right-wing party which lacks the authoritarian elements. Regarding liberal democracy, the DPP could be considered as a centre-right party proposing a particular type of social liberal ‘Nordic populism’ (Rodrik 2018).

Analysis of the left-wing populist parties confirmed the hypothesis that most of the cases of authoritarian populism are to be found on the radical right. Syriza, Podemos, and Unbowed France are critical of the current functioning of liberal democratic institutions but want to return to a direct relationship between the people and power (possibly through some form of direct democracy).

Illiberal populist parties also show mixed results. On one hand, Orbán's and Erdogan's parties have clear characteristics of authoritarianism in their programme and rhetoric. Being anti-Semitic and calling for a 'national order' in the case of Fidesz or proposing political Islam in contrast to the eroding power of the secular elite in the case of AKP document these tendencies. On the other hand, the Polish Law and Justice Party does not want to restrict democracy in an authoritarian way. Its programme is characterised by a strong conservatism and appeal to Christian values, which cannot be considered authoritarian features. Similarly, the Bosnian Alliance of Independent Social Democrats directly calls for a welfare society and social justice through parliamentary democracy and the rule of law.

Analysed anti-establishment populists, together with political entrepreneurs also do not project characteristics of authoritarian populism. For Andrej Babiš, Boris Kollár, Rolandas Paksas and to a certain extent also for Five Star Movement the lack of strong left or right-wing ideology is a typical feature. Their approach to populism could be called 'technocratic' with a very low appeal to changes in a democratic system. Slogans 'running the state as a company' in the case of ANO or 'non-revolutionary' mix of economic neoliberalism and cultural traditionalism in the case of We are a Family document these tendencies.

The third examined dichotomy is the strong nativist against weak nativist populism. The former including ultra-nationalist ideology and the latter including parties and movements with a more moderate position closer to the political centre. Following this dichotomy, analysed radical-right wing populists clearly show strong nativist tendencies. The Danish People's Party with its significant anti-migrant features, which constitute its core appeal, is a typical nativist populist party. The same applies to the League (Albertazzi, Giovannini and Seddone 2018), UKIP (Brown 2017), Vox (Kaltwasser et al. 2017), and National Front (Mondon 2013). The Alternative for Germany did not initially present a strong nativist appeal, being a single-issue anti-Euro party. After 2015 with the migration topic gaining prominence, they, however, adopted a strong nativist approach and made it a key feature of their programme. In contrast, left-wing populist parties, being inclusionary, lack any nativist element at all.

Illiberal populists, on the other hand, use strong nativist rhetoric. That is connected to their post-communist heritage and to the strong ethnic nationalism which became part of the political systems of Central-East European and South-East European states after the fall of communism. For Bosnian SNSD, the nativism is a key feature of its 'populist nationalism.' FIDESZ is becoming more and more radical in promoting its 'paternalist populism' based on clear nativism connected with economic control of the state. Similarly, Law and Justice homogenised the entire Polish cultural narrative and promotes the concept of a national conservative heartland. On the other hand, the AKP, which in other categories shows similar characteristics, especially to FIDESZ, differs in the issue of nativism. The Turkish ruling party does not have a clearly defined ideological core and combines political Islam with ad hoc positions thus lacking the nativist or nationalist appeal (Ozpek and Tanriverdi Yasar 2018).

The group of analysed anti-establishment parties also shows weak nativist appeal. As in the case of authoritarian populism, their lack of clear left or right-wing ideology leads to a technocratic approach towards politics and thus to omitting nativism in their core programme.

They may employ nativist rhetoric in electoral campaigns (for example, in the European Parliament elections in 2019, the ANO movement campaigned with slogan ‘For a Better Czechia’ with a strong nativist message), but for those parties and movements, it represents a mere political marketing (another similar example would be the electoral campaigns of Boris Kollár’s party).

The last dichotomy is based on the contrast between radical democratic and conspiratorial populism. This captures the difference regarding how populists interpret the contemporary socio-economic and political context and how they want to change it. Radical democratic populists do not trust liberal democratic institutions and promote direct democracy as a remedy; on the other hand, conspiratorial populists often find conspiratorial explanations of how liberal democracy works. The group of analysed radical-right wing populist parties is very critical towards the European Union and insists on high-end conspiracies between national and EU elites putting the sovereignty of ‘the people’ in danger. For example, the DPP being afraid of too much control being transferred to bureaucrats in Brussels, National Front accusing German politicians of ruling the whole continent and criticising the power of global elites, Vox warning against a conspiracy to bring thousands of migrants to Europe and the UKIP having a fear of renewable energy and multiculturalism. Similar resentments are present also in the appeal of the AfD and the League.

Analysed left-wing populist parties are a clear example of radical democratic populism. Syriza, Podemos, and Unbowed France gained their support from mass mobilisations during the economic crises and channelled the general societal frustration in an appeal to fix the ‘broken’ system by adopting radical ‘anti-globalisation’ and ‘anti-capitalist’ agendas. However, during its governmental period in 2015-19, Syriza went through significant de-radicalisation and became less critical towards liberal democratic institutions.

For illiberal populists, conspiratorial explanations represent core features of their appeal. Be it the activities of George Soros for FIDESZ, the narrative of the national tragedy at Smolensk for PiS, incited Muslim migration in Bosnia for SNSD, or a conspiracy of secular elites for AKP, those narratives are essential in the mobilisation against liberal democracy and its representatives.

On the other hand, the key feature of anti-establishment parties and movements is precisely their appeal to improve malfunctioning liberal democratic institutions, not fighting against them. They often promote direct (Boris Kollár) or participatory democracy (Five Star Movement, ANO). The only exception is Lithuanian Party Law and Order, which also has a weak ideological background, but its appeal partially contains conspiracies about migrants, attacks on Christian traditions or the influence of ‘gender ideology.’

The table below shows all the analysed parties in comparative perspective:

	Inclusion ary	Exclusion ary	Author itarian	Non- author.	Strong nativist	Weak nativist	Radic al dem.	Conspi ratorial

AfD		X	X		X			X
DF		X		X	X			X
UKIP		X	X		X			X
FN		X	X		X			X
LN		X	X		X			X
VOX		X	X		X			X
LFI	x			X		X	X	
PODEM OS	x			X		X	X	
SYRIZA	x			X		X	X	
FIDESZ		X	X		X			X
PiS		X		X	X			X
SNSD		X		X	X			X
AKP		X	X			X		X
ANO		X		X		X	X	
SR-BK		X		X		X	X	
TT		X		X		X		X
M5S	x			X		X	X	

Based on these variables applied in selected national studies, we can sketch following general characteristics of the four different types of populism used to categorise all of the respective political parties:

radical right-wing populism parties are exclusionary, authoritarian with strong nativist appeal and use conspiratory explanations of liberal democracy;

radical left-wing populists are inclusionary, non-authoritarian with weak nativist appeal and use radical democratic approach;

illiberal (post-communist) populist parties are exclusionary with strong nativist appeal and use conspiratory explanations of liberal democracy;

anti-establishment populists and political entrepreneurs are non-authoritarian with weak nativist appeal and tend to have radical democratic appeal (exclusionary variable is rather inconclusive due to their lack of ideology)

Putting to use the analytical framework devised in Deliverable 2.1 showed that the populist parties' categorisation adopted by DEMOS presented us with quite coherent results in terms of

individual cases' characteristics. Especially the groups of radical left-wing and radical right-wing populist parties seem to project a high degree of internal similarity in the analysed aspects. This could be, in turn, associated with specific ideological elements that allow us to identify their positioning on the left-right spectrum more easily in comparison especially with anti-establishment populists and political entrepreneurs.

Despite the fact that other characteristics could be put to use in the process of analysing varying nuances of party populism in Europe, these important elements addressed within the frame of our text and the national case studies point to relevant differences present within the existing spectrum. In other words, a better understanding of different types of populism can lead us to a better understanding of what to expect from various types of populist parties and actors. With additional cases potentially introduced into an analysis similar to this one, solid correlations among the parameters of party populism could be further developed in order to capture the often elusive picture of what the populists seek and pursue.

#### **4. Policy Statement**

Populism is generally perceived as a negative political phenomenon. That being said, we need to be careful and distinguish between parties and movements, which are exclusively populist and parties and movements, which are non-exclusively populist (Havlík, Pinková 2012, 25–33). We can define non-exclusive populism as the occasional populist style of parties, which are not fundamentally populist, which represent 'traditional' political ideologies or doctrines. For exclusively populist parties or movements, populism is the essence of their existence and of all their activities. This exclusive populism is illiberal, anti-democratic and, in essence, epitomises the negative political phenomenon. It was these parties that were analysed in national reports within this deliverable. Non-exclusively populism of non-populist parties is not necessarily something we need to worry about. There is also not much to do about it, non-exclusive populism is an ordinary part of politics. As we argue here and throughout the text, focus should be on exclusively populist politicians and their parties and movements.

But what strategy should we choose and use regarding exclusively populist parties? Let us start negatively, i.e. let us say first what we should not do. Populists cannot be defeated by attacking them as dangerous for democracy, not smart enough, generally bad people. Populists cannot be defeated by pushing them to the edge of the political system of the country or by excluding them from the other 'decent' part of the party system, labelling them 'extremists,' 'anti-democrats,' 'fascist' etc. By the same token, supporters and voters of populist parties should not be labelled 'mob,' 'fools,' 'rabble' etc. Populism will not be defeated by merely defending the status quo, ignoring problems, which are real or perceived as real, although without much substance to it. The fact that many issues are captured by populists does not make the public (or popular) fear surrounding these issues less authentic. The migration crisis — in countries not hit by any migration — is one example that underlines our argument here. The fact that there is no increase in the number of asylum-seekers, and certainly none from Muslim countries, does not make people less afraid of migration as such (see Czech and Polish national reports).

Rather, it ‘requires system-wide transformations, alternative paradigms, and new narratives to combat the systemic roots of populism’ (Blanc et al. 2018, 2).

The only effective way to fight populist is positive: offering solutions of real problems and patiently explaining that some things are not based on real facts, that they are artificially used, exaggerated by those who do not have any real answers to any challenges of the 21st century. In short, we need to start a dialog with populist actors and their supporters, a dialogue, which is of course difficult and requires important skills and will be going beyond a simple implementation of policy recommendations and beyond the current status quo in political decision-making. We believe that the response to populism should include two levels — institutional and behavioural, and in what follows we will introduce both.

#### Institutional Level:

**Efficiency of the Democratic Political System.** The political system and decision-making processes need to perform well, its institutions should be strong and operative. Only then will people believe that democracy is able to solve their problems and will they not seek rescue in populism. Politicians should not be afraid to reform the existing political system if necessary (e.g. reform of the electoral system).

**Effectiveness of the Democratic Political System.** The political system should be effective in a socio-economic sense, i.e. it should achieve good economic and social results. Political and other leaders should propose solutions tackling poverty and social inequality.

**The Rule of Law.** The rule of law needs to be strong. The judicial system should be effective and operative. It should concentrate on political and social pathologies such as systemic corruption. People should believe that democratic rule of law can effectively eliminate corruption and other pathologies (including adequate punishment of corrupt politicians and other ‘elites’).

**Independent Media.** Politicians should protect and support independent media, especially public media. Political representatives should not try to dominate, take hold of media as we can see in current central European countries.

#### Behavioural Level:

**Communication.** There should be intensive communication between politicians (‘political elites’) and the public to reduce the gap between them. People should feel that they are integrated into the political system. Politicians should actively work with people who are frustrated and feel excluded from the society and the political system. Those excluded need to feel that are heard and listened to.

**Civic Education.** There needs to be wide civic education in the values of liberal democracy and the rule of law, the relevance of political pluralism etc. Civic education should concentrate on fears: ‘Do not be afraid!’

Explaining the EU. Politicians need to invest more in explaining what the European Union (and European integration) is, what it stands for, and what it can bring to its members. Politicians should explain why the paradigm ‘we vs. they’ (we are we and they are the EU or ‘Brussels’) is false. We (the nation, society, country) are a constituent part of the EU, we create its policies. The EU is not alien, it is also not a foreign body.

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