

The Populist Demand: Who Supports a Populist Party?

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- Builds on a **dichotomy between “us” and “them”** (Kazin 1998).
- Populism relies on an **exclusionary definition of “the people”**, a constructed subset of the population.
- This subset is assumed to be **homogeneous** in sharing a common understanding of the common good (Mudde 2004)

Recap of Yesterday - Populism as Anti-Elitist, Anti-Pluralist and as a Thin Ideology

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- Democratic contestation is only to a limited extent necessary. The common good and the “will of the people” is known *a priori*.

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- Democratic contestation is only to a limited extent necessary. The common good and the “will of the people” is known *a priori*.
- Populism is **anti-pluralist** while relying on the democratic (pluralistic) values of representation that characterize democracies

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→ **Let us start with a small experiment**

- How many of the answers can you answer with **YES**?
- Please tell me not which answers you answered with **YES** but only **how many**.
- Please write the number on the back of the sheet you received.

List Experiments to Gain Evidence on Sensitive Topics

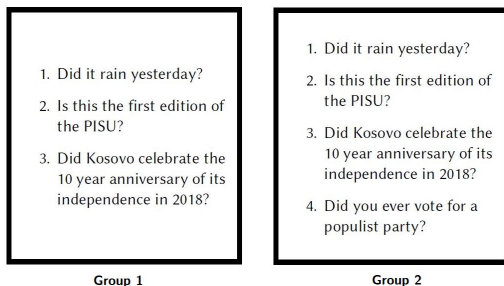


Figure 1: Group 1 and Group 2 in our list experiment

■ Advantages?

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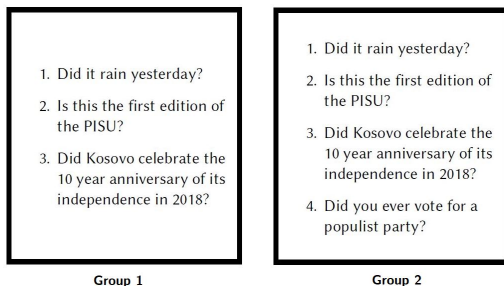


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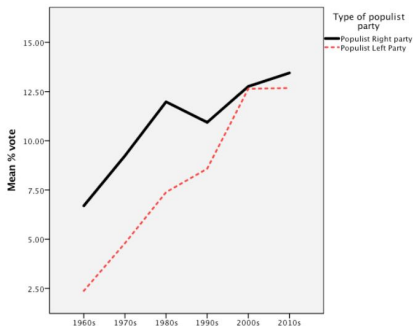
- **Advantages?**
- **Problems?**

Who Votes for Populist Parties?

- **Average share of vote** in national and EP elections **more than doubled** since the 1960s (from around 5.1% to 13.2%), while **share of seats tripled** (from 3.8% to 12.8%), see Inglehart and Norris (2016).

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- Populist parties gain at expense of center parties (Inglehart and Norris 2016)



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- The “left-behinds”:
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 - poorer white populations
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→ **susceptible to anti-establishment, nativist, and xenophobic discourse**

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- Contemporary arguments: "losers of globalization" (Kriesi et. al. 2006, 2012, 2016, 2019), both within the
 - traditional base of center-right parties
 - traditional base of center-left parties

Empirical Support for the Economic Insecurity Hypothesis

Group Exercise: try to find out about studies that empirically support the economic insecurity hypothesis.

- Google scholar
- Literature review in Inglehart and Norris (2016)

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Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism: Economic have-nots and **cultural** backlash

[PDF] uml.edu

[R Inglehart, P Norris - 2016 - papers.ssrn.com](#)

... populist appeals. 8 Sectors once **culturally** predominant in Western Europe may react angrily to the erosion of their privileges and status ... **culture** of advanced industrial societies ... The **cultural counter-reaction** to the **silent revolution** ...

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Figure 2: Google scholar impact of the paper by Inglehart and Norris 2016

The Cultural Backlash Hypothesis

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- Votes for populist parties to be understood as a **reaction against progressive cultural change**:
 - women's and LGBT rights, same-sex marriage, fluid gender identities
 - environmental protection
- Rising **salience of cultural issues**, neutralising effect on social class-based political divisions
 - Political parties take more polarized positions on the GAL-TAN dimension relating to cultural issues and nationalism than on left-right dimension relating to economic redistribution (Polk et. al. 2017)
 - **Hungary**:
 - Vote-weighted standard deviation on GALTAN: 2.6 (average over 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2017).
 - Vote-weighted standard deviation on economic left-right: 1.2
 - **Poland**:
 - Vote-weighted standard deviation on GALTAN: 2.9 (average over 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2017).
 - Vote-weighted standard deviation on economic left-right: 2.1

The Cultural Backlash Hypothesis

- **“Silent revolution”** theory of value change:
 - high levels of existential security experienced by people of developed Western societies (postwar period)
 - → intergenerational shift toward post-materialist values, such as cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism
- **“Culture counter-reaction”** against:
 - growing cultural diversity
 - rising numbers of immigrants and asylum-seekers
 - the erosion of national identities
 - membership in the EU

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in a Favourable Environment for the Populist Right

- Recent terrorist attacks in e.g. France, Belgium, Germany: fuel discourse of populist right about Islam's violent and expansionist tendencies

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- Recent terrorist attacks in e.g. France, Belgium, Germany: fuel discourse of populist right about Islam's violent and expansionist tendencies
- Since (at least) 9/11 and until the current "refugee crisis": Islam key issue for the party family, also in Central and Eastern Europe with few immigrants

Anti-Globalization and Eurosceptic Attitudes

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- Eurosceptics sentiments on the rise
- Anti-immigration and Euroscepticism as “twin issues” → strong correlation.
- Both issues fall on the “new cleavage” (Kriesi): demarcation-integration cleavage or “GAL-TAN” cleavage (Hooghe and Marks)

Two Competing Explanations?

- Analytical distinction drawn between economic inequality and cultural backlash theories may be somewhat artificial?
- What could be alternatives to measure populist attitudes on the individual level?
- Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014): **Measuring populist attitudes**
 1. Populist attitudes
 2. Pluralist attitudes
 3. Elitist attitudes

Measuring Populist Attitudes

Table 1. Items Measuring Populist, Pluralist, and Elitist Attitudes.

POP1	<i>The politicians in the Dutch parliament need to follow the will of the people.</i>
POP2	<i>The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.</i>
POP3	<i>The political differences between the elite and the people are larger than the differences among the people.</i>
POP4	<i>I would rather be represented by a citizen than by a specialized politician.</i>
POP5	<i>Elected officials talk too much and take too little action.</i>
POP6	<i>Politics is ultimately a struggle between good and evil.</i>
POP7	<i>What people call "compromise" in politics is really just selling out on one's principles.</i>
POP8	<i>Interest groups have too much influence over political decisions.</i>
PLU1	<i>In a democracy it is important to make compromises among differing viewpoints.</i>
PLU2	<i>It is important to listen to the opinion of other groups.</i>
PLU3	<i>Diversity limits my freedom.^a</i>
E1	<i>Politicians should lead rather than follow the people.</i>
E2	<i>Our country would be governed better if important decisions were left up to successful business people.</i>
E3	<i>Our country would be governed better if important decisions were left up to independent experts.</i>

Figure 3: Measuring populist, pluralist and elitist attitudes

→ Positive correlation between populist attitudes and the intention to vote for populist political parties, both for populist right PVV and populist left SP

Varieties of Demand for Populism Across the Different European Regions

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- How do the concepts of economic insecurity and a cultural backlash travel to Eastern Europe?
- Low immigrant and asylum application numbers in those countries
- High shares of votes for populist parties rooted in illiberal and authoritarian sentiments among the electorate?

Group Exercise

- Read the following interview and summarize why the author raises doubts about the usefulness of demand-side factors in explaining the surge of populism in Hungary and Poland
- Ben Stanley in the Populism Observer

Populist Demand in Eastern Europe: The Polish Case (Stanley 2018)

- Do populist attitudes correlate with economic and cultural attitudes?

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- **Populist attitudes index**
 - Poland is in need of someone who will be strong enough to change our system of government entirely, and introduce a new, just order
 - In Poland, a few people have taken control of powers which should rightfully be exercised by the people
 - This is the last moment to rescue Poland in the face of a looming crisis
 - Solving the problems our country faces is very easy; it is simply necessary to give power to those who want to do this
 - Everything in politics is either good or evil; the choice is a simple one
 - It isn't the government which rules over us; the people who are really controlling things are unknown to us
 - Those who claim that there are powerful hidden forces conspiring against Poland are in many senses correct

References

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