

A Populist Crisis? Understanding Contemporary Populism in Europe and Beyond

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Welcome to the Course

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2. Do you live in a country that has (at least) one populist party?
3. Did you ever vote for a populist party?

A Populist Crisis?

Who is a populist or who are populist parties?

1. Is there a populist party in your country?
2. Why do you think this party is populist or why do you think there is no populist party in your country?

A Populist Crisis?

- What's behind the global rise of Populism?

Group Exercise

- Which characteristics of populism are mentioned in the short video?

A Populist Zeitgeist?

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- **Do we actually know what we are talking about when we talk about populism?**

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■ Academic definitions

- Workhorse definition by Mudde (2004) :
I define populism as an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people

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- **Thin-centred ideology**: addresses only part of political agenda.
- **Moralistic** rather than programmatic

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 - Political parties undermine the homogeneity within the people
- Is it enough to be anti-establishment to be a populist?

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- The populist representative claim can not be disproved

Three Dead-Ends to Arriving at a Concept of Populism

- **Group Exercise 2:** Müller (2017) defines three dead ends to arriving at a definition of populism.
 - Social-psychological perspective (voters' feelings)
 - Sociological analysis (certain classes in society)
 - Quality of policy proposals by populist actors

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- → ‘Danger from within’

Empirical research on populism

- We will cover most recent **empirical** findings on populism and discuss methods and techniques to arrive at those empirical findings
- We will briefly cover democratic theory and normative implications at the end of the course

What to expect over the next two weeks?

- **Course Requirements:**
- Write one 500-word response paper to the readings for a given session **or** create and submit a reproducible RMarkdown document that analyses and discusses some features of populist demand that we have discussed in the course for a country of your choice using the ESS8 data.
- Participate actively in class
- Engage with the two core readings before each session
- Think critically!

References

- Mudde, Cas. 2004. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39 (4). Cambridge University Press: 541–63.
- Müller, Jan-Werner. 2017. *What is Populism?* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.