

## **Populism and Perceived Inequality**

The research question of our project is whether perceived inequality affects support for populist parties. Raising inequalities all over the globe have been described as a fertile ground for the rise of populist parties. Existing research, for example, reports that raising inequality can (under certain conditions) play a central role in understanding the support for radical-right and populist parties [Coffé et al., 2007, Jesuit et al., 2009, Han, 2016, Engler and Weisstanner, 2020,]. However, existing evidence focuses solely on the influence of objective income inequality levels in a country and arrives at mixed findings. In this project, we shift the focus from macro-level income inequalities to perceived inequalities by individual voters. Citizen perceptions of inequality and actual inequality do not necessarily coincide and perceptions are potentially more relevant to explain behaviour [Engelhardt and Wagener, 2014]. In addition, a focus on perception can also encompass other inequalities next to income, like inequality in wealth or inequality in opportunities.