

Populism in the Twenty-First Century

Cologne Center for Comparative Politics

Winter Term 2021/22

Online Seminar (14335.0107)*

Instructor: E. Ece Özbey

E-Mail: ee@mpifg.de

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3 pm – 5 pm, CEST/CET (Online, by appointment)

Modules: SM Repräsentation und Wahlen (PO 2021, ECTS Points: 6)

Schwerpunktmodul Seminar Politikwissenschaft I (PO 2015, ECTS Points: 9)

Course Time: Wednesday, 4 pm – 5:30 pm, CEST/CET.

Please see the "Course Structure" section below!

First and Last Sessions: October 13, 2021 – January 12, 2022

Course Overview

Populism has gained a successful foothold and generated new challenges in numerous long-established democracies across the globe over the past few decades. It has become a widely debated and well-researched theme in light of the global resurgence of populist leaders, parties and movements, as well as events like the Brexit referendum and the Trump presidency. Nevertheless, some misconceptions and inaccurate interpretations surrounding the concept have abided to this day.

Even though the most recent elections have not necessarily brought about populist victories, they have made it clear that populists have gone beyond being a noisy opposition. Holding executive offices, forming governments and being at the heart of inter-/supranational institutions, populists now have gained the capacity to redefine the political narrative, pose challenges to their mainstream competitors spanning the ideological spectrum and —directly or indirectly— change institutional and organizational structures, legislation and regulations, and relational dynamics in the political, social, and economic spheres.

* This syllabus is preliminary and subject to minor changes. Version 1.0: 15.08.2021.

Against such background, the main objective of this course is to provide students with the conceptual, theoretical and empirical foundations to understand the phenomenon of contemporary populism. Looking into the various definitions, varieties, measurements, as well as causes and consequences of populism, the course explores (i) what populism stands for in today's political context, (ii) how it differs from its earlier manifestations, (iii) how it relates to democracy and affects the political structure, and (iii) which strategic responses are available to mitigate its impacts.

Course Structure

Although initially designed for in-person instruction, this course has been adapted for online teaching in view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Following the original seminar format, weekly synchronous sessions will be held online via Zoom on Wednesdays from 4 pm to 5:30 pm (CEST/CET). The invitation links for the online sessions will be provided later.

Short video lectures (adding up to 20-30 minutes) on the topic of the respective week will be made available via ILIAS on Mondays prior to the synchronous sessions.

All readings will be provided electronically on ILIAS.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the students will be able to:

- ✚ Define the concept of populism and outline its core constitutive features.
- ✚ Distinguish between the different conceptual approaches to populism.
- ✚ Describe the ways of measuring populism at the public and elite levels.
- ✚ Identify the differences and similarities that exist among populist cases.
- ✚ Explain the demand-side and supply-side factors for the rise and continued success of populism.
- ✚ Elucidate the ambiguous relationship between populism and democracy.
- ✚ Critically evaluate the competing strategies developed as a response to the alleged populist surge.

Prerequisites

This is an undergraduate seminar designed for both beginners and advanced students. Some general knowledge of political science concepts, theories and basic quantitative and qualitative methods is sufficient to partake in the seminar.

While perfection is neither expected nor required, students should be able to understand and articulate themselves in English, as this will be the general classroom language.

Assessment

This course follows a seminar format, the hallmark of which is the opportunity for students to engage in exploratory discussion and grapple with complex topics jointly in a group setting. Accordingly, the students are expected to have read and reflected upon at least the compulsory readings and watched the video lectures before the relevant online meeting. They are also encouraged to actively participate in the discussions, share their comments, raise questions, and challenge each other critically in a positive, constructive and respectful manner.

The final grades for this course will be based on the following:

✚ **Three-Minute Papers (15%)** — While participation in online synchronous sessions is not mandatory (with the exception of presentation sessions), students will be asked every week to reflect on that week's discussions in a concise text (maximum 200-250 words). They will be given a different question that can be answered in a few minutes (although they will have time until the next week's session) for 10 weeks and expected to share their own views without carrying out any extensive research or following a specific format.

✚ **Presentation (25%)** — In the second half of the course, each student will give a 10-minute oral presentation on their choice's populist case (party, leader, movement and the like), which can be either historical or contemporary and from any region of the world. Cases and presentation dates will be determined in the first weeks of the course in consultation with the instructor. In their brief introduction to the case, students will be asked to look for answers to questions, by referring to the themes covered in the course, such as: Should this case be considered populist and why? What kind of populists are they? What structural or institutional factors might have led to their success (or, a lack thereof)? What consequences did they have in the political setting within which they exist?

✚ **Final (Take-Home) Examination (60%)** — At the end of the semester, students will be given a take-home essay examination that tests their understanding of different debates and theories on populism. They will be asked to choose from multiple questions (which will be provided at the last synchronized meeting on January 12) and submit their completed academic essays in English (around 3000-3500 words for PO 2021 and 4000-4500 words for PO 2015) by a specified deadline. The take-home exam will necessitate students to be familiar with all topics and materials covered during the course, critically analyse them, articulate their point of view and present thoughtful arguments in a coherent body of text (with proper introduction, body, conclusion and bibliography sections). Since students will have access to all readings, lecture videos and their own subject notes, greater expectations about their synthesis of material and coherence of argument than will be expected in a typical written

exam. The details will be communicated during the semester, and, if alternative arrangements become necessary, students will be notified in advance.

Essays submitted after the published deadline without notice or good reason will be penalized by the deduction of 10% of the total mark awarded for each working day after the submission date.

+ In-Class Debate (Bonus, 10%) — Students will have the opportunity to earn 10% bonus points through participating in the topical in-class debates in the last synchronous session of the semester. Students will be divided into small groups (based on the number of participants) and assigned to different debate topics and propositions at the beginning of the semester. They will thus have sufficient time to research the topic, prepare logical arguments, gather supporting evidence and examples for the position taken, and prepare counter-arguments and rebuttals. Each debate will take around 15-20 minutes, and the details on the format and assessment will be made available for students on ILIAS. The bonus points of the students who fulfil this voluntary task will be added to their final grade.

Grading

At the end of the semester, points will be converted to final grades as follows:

Points	Grade
96 – 100	1,0
91 – 95	1,3
86 – 90	1,7
81 – 85	2,0
76 – 80	2,3
71– 75	2,7
66 – 70	3,0
61 – 65	3,3
56 – 60	3,7
51– 55	4,0
0 – 50	5,0

Registration

Students have to register for the course and the exam separately via KLIPS. Deadline for the exam registration will be announced later.

Course Schedule

Week	Subject
Week 1 October 13	Introduction & Populism: Then and Now
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Rovira Kaltwasser, C., Taggart, P., Ochoa Espejo, P., & Ostiguy, P. (2017). Populism: An Overview of the Concept and the State of the Art. In C. Rovira Kaltwasser, P. A. Taggart, P. Ochoa Espejo & P. Ostiguy (Eds.) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Populism</i> , Oxford University Press, 1-24.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Mudde, C. (2016). Europe's Populist Surge: Long Time in the Making. <i>Foreign Affairs</i> , 95(6), 25-30.	
Week 2 October 20	Conceptual Approaches
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Gidron, N., & Bonikowski, B. (2013). Varieties of Populism: Literature Review and Research Agenda, Weatherhead Working Paper Series, No. 13-0004.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Hawkins, K. A., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2018). Introduction: the Ideational Approach. In K. A. Hawkins, R. E. Carlin, L. Littvay, C. Rovira Kaltwasser (Eds.) <i>The Ideational Approach to Populism: Concept, Theory, and Analysis</i> , Routledge, 1-24.	
Mouffe, C. (2018). <i>For a Left Populism</i> . Verso Books, Chapter 1.	
Week 3 October 27	Populism around the World
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Mudde, C., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2013). Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America. <i>Government and Opposition</i> , 48(2), 147-174.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Mudde, C., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2017). <i>Populism: A Very Short Introduction</i> . Oxford University Press, Chapter 2.	

Week	Subject
Week 4 November 3	Measuring Populism
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Norris, P. (2020). Measuring populism worldwide, <i>Party Politics</i> , 26(6), 697-717.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Akkerman, A., Mudde, C., & Zaslove, A. (2014). How populist are the people? Measuring populist attitudes in voters. <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> , 47(9), 1324-1353.	
Hawkins, K. A., Aguilar, R., Castanho Silva, B., Jenne, E. K., Kocijan, B., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2019, June 20-22). Measuring Populist Discourse: The Global Populism Database, Paper presented at the 2019 EPSA Annual Conference in Belfast, UK.	
Week 5 November 10	Causes of Populism: Economic Grievances
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschieer, S., & Frey, T. (2006). Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 45(6), 921-956.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Colantone, I., & Stanig, P. (2018). The trade origins of economic nationalism: Import competition and voting behavior in Western Europe. <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> , 62(4), 936-953.	
Week 6 November 17	Causes of Populism: Cultural Backlash
<u>Compulsory Reading</u>	
Inglehart, R. F., & Norris, P. (2016). Trump, Brexit, and the rise of Populism: Economic haves and cultural backlash, HKS Working Paper No. RWP16-026.	
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	
Halikiopoulou, D., Nanou, K., & Vasilopoulou, S. (2012). The paradox of nationalism: The common denominator of radical right and radical left euroscepticism. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 51(4), 504-539.	

Week	Subject
	Rydgren, J. (2008). Immigration sceptics, xenophobes or racists? Radical right-wing voting in six West European countries. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 47(6), 737-765.
Week 7 November 24	Causes of Populism: Electoral System and Party Competition
	<u>Compulsory Reading</u>
	Rooduijn, M., De Lange, S. L., & Van der Brug, W. (2014). A populist Zeitgeist? Programmatic contagion by populist parties in Western Europe. <i>Party Politics</i> , 20(4), 563-575.
	<u>Recommended Reading</u>
	Carter, E. (2004). Does PR promote political extremism? Evidence from the West European parties of the extreme right. <i>Representation</i> , 40(2), 82-100.
	Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. <i>Government and Opposition</i> , 39(4), 541-563.
Week 8 December 1	Populists in Power
	<u>Compulsory Reading</u>
	Taggart, P. & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2016). Dealing with Populists in Government: Some Comparative Conclusions, <i>Democratization</i> , 23(2), 345-365.
	<u>Recommended Reading</u>
	Mudde, C. (2013). Three decades of populist radical right parties in Western Europe: So what?. <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 52(1), 1-19.
Week 9 December 8	Democratic Backsliding & Student Presentations I
	Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). Populism and the Question of How to Respond to It. In C. Rovira Kaltwasser, P. A. Taggart, P. Ochoa Espejo & P. Ostiguy (Eds.) <i>The Oxford Handbook of Populism</i> , Oxford University Press, 1-24.
	<u>Recommended Reading</u>
	Mudde, C. (2021). Populism in Europe: An Illiberal Democratic Response to Undemocratic Liberalism (The Government and Opposition/Leonard Schapiro Lecture 2019). <i>Government and Opposition</i> , 1-21.
Week 10 December 15	Populism and Crises & Student Presentations II

Week**Subject**

Compulsory Reading

Stavrakakis, Y., Katsambekis, G., Kioupiolis, A., Nikisianis, N., & Siomos, T. (2018). Populism, anti-populism and crisis. *Contemporary Political Theory*, 17(1), 4-27.

Recommended Reading

Wondreys, J., & Mudde, C. (2020). Victims of the Pandemic? European Far-Right Parties and COVID-19. *Nationalities Papers*, 1-18. doi:10.1017/nps.2020.93

Week 11 | January 12**In Class Debates and Wrap-Up**

Additional Sources

Below there are some additional sources that students can utilize in their presentations, essays and discussions related to the topics covered in the course.

- ✚ Global Party Survey: <https://www.globalpartysurvey.org>
- ✚ Manifesto Project: <https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu>
- ✚ ParlGov: <http://www.parlgov.org>
- ✚ Party Facts: <http://www.partyfacts.org>
- ✚ Team Populism: <https://populism.byu.edu>
- ✚ The Populism Seminar: <http://populism-seminar.com>
- ✚ The PopuList: <https://popu-list.org>
- ✚ World Values Survey: <https://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/wvs.jsp>