

T03P08 / Populism and policy making

Topic : T03 / POLICY, POLITICS AND POLITICAL REGIME

Chair : Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Second Chair : Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Populism is on the rise and populist leaders and parties have come to power in several countries all around the globe, while studies on their governance and policy making is in short supply. The reason is that populism has been mostly considered and analysed as a phenomenon stemming from politics with little or no relevance for policy making. For instance, Mudde (2004) argues that as a 'thin ideology' populism can be compatible with either left-wing or right-wing ideas thus it does not imply any specific policy content.

Populism may be thin in terms of classical, left or right political ideologies, but it still represents a distinct approach to politics and policy. The substantive emptiness and the chameleonic nature of populism also means an ideational flexibility. In addition, apart from the content of policies, populism may have an effect on the policy process, policy discourses, as well as on actors, venues and institutions of policy making. Constitutive features of populism are anti-elitism, radical majoritarianism, glorification of popular will, anti-pluralism, anti-institutionalism, personalistic and charismatic leadership, direct, unmediated communication with the people, extensive use of crisis frames and adversarial narratives targeting unpopular minorities. These features crystallize a populist policy making ideal type (Bartha et al., 2020) opposed to the ideal type of policy making in liberal democracies that is usually, though often implicitly assumed in policy studies scholarship. From a political regime perspective this has an important implication: while populism is a historically democratic phenomenon, it has an ambiguous relationship with liberal democracies and often leans towards illiberalism.

This complex conceptual relation between populism and policy making opens various research avenues. How compatible are populist policies with liberal democracies? What are procedural and discursive peculiarities of populist policies under left-wing and right-wing political leadership? Are there common policy features of left-wing and right-wing populism? What are the specific policy features of governing populist parties? What is the long-run survival potential of populist policies?

Recent studies have addressed some of the policy aspects of populism, see Rovira Kaltwasser and Taggart (2016), Batory (2016), Peters and Pierre (2019) and Bartha et al. (2020). However, these papers either provide theoretical insights, or use single case studies in their analysis. Accordingly, more research is needed and comparative case studies and quantitative cross-country analyses are particularly missing. Still, as there is no scholarly consensus yet on the basic constitutive features of populist policy making, explorative studies and papers providing theoretical insights are also welcomed in this panel.

References

- Bartha, A., Boda, Zs. & Szikra, D. (2020). When Populist Leaders Govern: Conceptualizing Populism in Policy Making. *Politics and Governance*, 8(3), 71-81.
- Batory, A. (2016). Populists in Government? Hungary's "System of National Cooperation". *Democratization*, 23(2), 283-303.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist, *Government and Opposition*, 39(4), 541-563.
- Peters, B. G. & Pierre, J. (2019). Populism and Public Administration: Confronting the Administrative State. *Administration & Society*, 51(10), 1521-1545.
- Rovira Kaltwasser, C., & Taggart, P. (2016). Dealing with populists in government: a framework for analysis. *Democratization*, 23(2), 201-220.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Populism is on the rise and populist leaders and parties have come to power in several countries all around the globe, while studies on their governance and policy making is in short supply. The reason is that populism has been mostly considered and analysed as a phenomenon stemming from politics with little or

no relevance for policy making. For instance, Mudde (2004) argues that as a 'thin ideology' populism can be compatible with either left-wing or right-wing ideas thus it does not imply any specific policy content.

Populism may be thin in terms of classical, left or right political ideologies, but it still represents a distinct approach to politics and policy. The substantive emptiness and the chameleonic nature of populism also means an ideational flexibility. In addition, apart from the content of policies, populism may have an effect on the policy process, policy discourses, as well as on actors, venues and institutions of policy making. Constitutive features of populism are anti-elitism, radical majoritarianism, glorification of popular will, anti-pluralism, anti-institutionalism, personalistic and charismatic leadership, direct, unmediated communication with the people, extensive use of crisis frames and adversarial narratives targeting unpopular minorities. These features crystallize a populist policy making ideal type (Bartha et al., 2020) opposed to the ideal type of policy making in liberal democracies that is usually, though often implicitly assumed in policy studies scholarship. From a political regime perspective this has an important implication: while populism is a historically democratic phenomenon, it has an ambiguous relationship with liberal democracies and often leans towards illiberalism.

This complex conceptual relation between populism and policy making opens various research avenues. How compatible are populist policies with liberal democracies? What are procedural and discursive peculiarities of populist policies under left-wing and right-wing political leadership? Are there common policy features of left-wing and right-wing populism? What are the specific policy features of governing populist parties? What is the long-run survival potential of populist policies?

Recent studies have addressed some of the policy aspects of populism, see Rovira Kaltwasser and Taggart (2016), Batory (2016), Peters and Pierre (2019) and Bartha et al. (2020). However, these papers either provide theoretical insights, or use single case studies in their analysis. Accordingly, more research is needed and comparative case studies and quantitative cross-country analyses are particularly missing. Still, as there is no scholarly consensus yet on the basic constitutive features of populist policy making, explorative studies and papers providing theoretical insights are also welcomed in this panel.

References

- Bartha, A., Boda, Zs. & Szikra, D. (2020). When Populist Leaders Govern: Conceptualizing Populism in Policy Making. *Politics and Governance*, 8(3), 71-81.
- Batory, A. (2016). Populists in Government? Hungary's "System of National Cooperation". *Democratization*, 23(2), 283-303.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist, *Government and Opposition*, 39(4), 541-563.
- Peters, B. G. & Pierre, J. (2019). Populism and Public Administration: Confronting the Administrative State. *Administration & Society*, 51(10), 1521-1545.
- Rovira Kaltwasser, C., & Taggart, P. (2016). Dealing with populists in government: a framework for analysis. *Democratization*, 23(2), 201-220.

T03P08 / Populism and policy making

Chair : Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Second Chair : Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

Session 1

Monday, July 5th 14:00 to 16:00 (004)

Populist Policy Making in Central and Eastern Europe

Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

Egle Butkeviciene (Kaunas University of Technology)

Artur Lipinski (Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan)

Authors: Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest); Zsolt Boda (Centre for Social Sciences - Centre of Excellence of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences); Egle Butkeviciene (Kaunas University of Technology); Artur Lipinski (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan); Andrej Školokay (SKAMBA, School of Communication and Media, Bratislava)

The rise of populist parties and leaders into government position has been a global trend in the last decade and this pattern has been particularly pronounced in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Still, governments in the CEE region vary substantially by the impact of populist political forces. This offers a specific opportunity to study the way in which CEE populist leaders and parties rule in a comparative context. This study first conceptualises populist policy making: we theoretically address the procedural features of policy making under populist governments and the substantive and discursive components of populist policies. As usually applied policy making models assume the context of liberal democracies, we first reconstruct the implicit ideal type of policy making in liberal democracies based on the mainstream governance and policy making scholarship. Then we elaborate the theoretical model of the populist policy making: this ideal type is built upon the recent populism literature along the dimensions of policy content, policy procedures, and policy discourses. The empirical part of the paper is a qualitative comparative study of four CEE country cases, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia, where governments represent different degree of populism. We apply a qualitative congruence analysis to assess the conformity of the cases with the populist policy making ideal type in three policy areas: criminal justice policy, economic policy, and family policy. Although patterns strongly vary by countries and policy areas as well, some specific features of populist policy making are identified. Concerning the policy content, policy heterodoxy, strong willingness to adopt paradigmatic reforms and an excessive responsiveness to majoritarian preferences are distinguishing features of any type of populist policies. Regarding the procedural features our cases demonstrate that populist leaders tend to downplay the role of technocratic expertise, sideline veto-players and implement fast and unpredictable policy changes. Discursively, populist leaders tend to extensively use crisis frames and discursive governance instruments in a Manichean language. These heightened emotional discourses tend to be particularly hostile against unpopular minorities and reinforce polarisation in policy positions. Finally, our findings suggest that in CEE countries populism is more tangible in family policy than in criminal justice policy and economic policy. In family policy, policy making patterns of governments dominated by populist parties and leaders are largely congruent with the ideal type, while in criminal justice policy and economic policy populism is more pronounced in government policy discourses and less in the policy content.

Populist Framing of Policy Debates in the Lithuanian Parliament during the period of 1990-2020: Cases of Macroeconomics, Civil Rights and Law and Crime

Vaidas Morkevičius (Kaunas University of Technology)

Giedrius Žvaliauskas (Kaunas University of Technology)

Monika Briedienė (Vytautas Magnus University)

Vytautas Valentinavicius (Kaunas University of Technology, Lithuania)

Parliaments perform many functions in democratic societies, among which representation, decision making, and legitimization are considered to be the most important ones (Judge, Leston-Bandeira 2021).

Representative function is mostly associated with interest articulation and mobilization of the electorate on the part of parliamentarians. This function is performed in various venues, such as traditional media, social networks media or parliamentary floor debates, where politicians express competing interests and ideas about their realization. The ability to express various ideas in different venues also performs a legitimizing function of democratic regimes. Therefore, debates about public policy, where opposing political actors express their differing positions, constitute an important ingredient of well-functioning democracy.

However, scholarly research in recent years revealed that political debates have become plagued with various forms of deficiencies, among which appeals to populism, intentional polarization of political positions and rising expressions of “post-truth” (poorly substantiated claims) are most frequently debated (see, for example, Rooduijn 2014; Suiter 2016; McCoy, Rahman, Somer 2018). In this paper we concentrate on the populist discourse in political debates of the Lithuanian Parliament (the Seimas). Recently, discursive approach has become increasingly popular with empirical studies of populism (Jagers, Walrave 2007; Rooduijn 2014; Aslanidis 2016). Although populism is considered to be a contested concept in scholarly literature, most commonly it is associated with ideas of people-centrism, anti-elitism and popular sovereignty (Mudde 2004). Therefore, we study how these frames of populism are used in Lithuanian parliamentary debates and focus our attention on debates regarding “Macro-economics”, “Civil Rights” and “Law and Crime” (as defined by the Comparative Agendas Project, see www.comparativeagendas.net/pages/master-codebook). Importantly, we select debates from the whole period after the restoration of Lithuanian independence (1990-2020) and trace how populist frames were used in historical perspective. Also, we compare how populist appeals are used in debating policy by representatives from the governing and opposition parties.

References:

- Aslanidis, P. (2016). Is Populism an Ideology? A Refutation and a New Perspective. *Political Studies*, 64(1_suppl): 88-104.
- Jagers, J., & Walrave, S. (2007). Populism as Political Communication Style: An Empirical Study of Political Parties' Discourse in Belgium. *European Journal of Political Research*, 46: 319-345.
- Judge, D., & Leston-Bandeira, C. (2021). Why it Matters to Keep Asking why Legislatures Matter. *Journal of Legislative Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13572334.2020.1866836>.
- McCoy, J., Rahman, T., & Somer, M. (2018). Polarization and the Global Crisis of Democracy: Common Patterns, Dynamics, and Pernicious Consequences for Democratic Polities. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62: 16-42.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition*, 39(4): 542-63.
- Rooduijn, M. (2014). The Mesmerising Message: The Diffusion of Populism in Public Debates in Western European Media. *Political Studies*, 62(4): 726-744.
- Suiter, J. (2016). Post-Truth Politics. *Political Insight*, 7(3): 25-27.

Left-wing populism in power: a policy appraisal from Southern Europe

Beatrice Carella (Scuola Normale Superiore)

In the aftermath of the financial and sovereign debt crises, Southern European party systems were shaken by the striking electoral success of challenger parties which combined left-leaning or utterly leftist ideological traits with marked populist elements. Even though the emergence of left-wing variants of populism has characterized several European countries throughout the continent, it is only in the Mediterranean region that they were able to acquire influential policy positions both in parliaments and in the executive. Syriza was main coalition partner in the Greek government from 2015 to 2019. In Spain, Podemos entered office as junior coalition member in January 2020 after having granted parliamentary support to a centre-left

minority government for a year and a half. The Five Star Movement has been main coalition partner in Italy for two consecutive governments, albeit with different allies, since May 2018. Despite differences in the electoral trajectories and in their ideological-organizational features, all three parties present a clear populist rhetoric whereby the 'people' and its antagonistic fight against the 'other', i.e. the 'elites', are articulated in socioeconomic terms (rather than sociocultural or identitarian ones), and they arguably owe much of their electoral success to their anti-neoliberal, anti-austerity platforms. Taking stock of the relevant policy-making positions they acquired, the present paper aims at providing a first comparative analysis of the policies promoted and adopted by the three parties once in power, with a focus on the socioeconomic realm (mainly the areas of welfare, work, fiscal policy). I develop a comparative case study research to identify the main elements that characterize the policy content of the reforms pursued by left-leaning populist parties in the policy domains where they had been more vocal, by investigating in particular which policy areas they specifically addressed, what was their relative salience and how the policy issues were framed, i.e. which values, ideas and principles underlay their policy proposals. To answer these questions I conduct a qualitative analysis of electoral manifestos, leaders' speeches and policy documents from the outbreak of the financial crisis (in the case of Syriza) or the year of their creation (as for Podemos and the Five Star Movement) until their most recent governmental experience, to unveil how the policy principles and objectives vary over time and across cases. So devised, the paper would contribute to the panel by providing new empirical evidence on the policies promoted by some of the most successful European populist parties in recent years, as well as furthering our theoretical understanding of the nature and characterizing elements of the *left* populist phenomenon from a *policy* perspective, which are both two relatively under-researched dimensions in the broad realm of populist studies.

T03P08 / Populism and policy making

Chair : Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Second Chair : Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

Session 2

Tuesday, July 6th 10:00 to 12:00 (004)

(Virtual) Restraining populism in power through policy conditionality: Evidence from Greece

Dimitris Katsikas (Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP))

Emmanouil Tsatsanis (ELIAMEP)

The economic crisis, which started in Greece in 2010, had multiple negative economic and social effects and provoked a transformation of the party system and in the patterns of policy making. The conditionalities imposed on Greece included austerity and reforms in many policy sectors, including fiscal management, pensions, incomes, labour relations, market competition, and public administration (Katsikas et al. 2018). In these and other sectors, formulation and decision-making was to a large extent taken away from the hands of elected governments and the parliament and passed on to the 'Troika', which represented the country's creditors. The downloading of policy making from supra-national actors combined with an abrupt and long dip in economic growth, which led to high unemployment and impoverishment, fueled a surge in populism (Tsatsanis et al. 2018).

The formerly marginal radical left party 'Syriza' took a populist turn and in the parliamentary elections of 2012, rose to major opposition status. Meanwhile, a nationalist/populist party, the 'Independent Greeks' (Anel), was formed by MPs who split off the center-right party of New Democracy (ND). Syriza won the national elections of January 2015 and the snap elections of September 2015. On both occasions, Syriza chose to form a coalition government with the Independent Greeks (Anel) party. Thus, two populist parties, a large one from the left (Syriza, with 35 percent of the vote) and a smaller one from the nationalistic right (Anel, with approximately 5 per cent of the vote), governed jointly throughout 2015-2018. Anel abandoned the government in early January 2019, following Syriza's agreement with the North Macedonian government over the name issue of Macedonia. Syriza lost the national elections to the ND party in July 2019.

Given that the new, populist government signed a new bailout agreement in the summer of 2015, the aim of this article is to examine whether and how it was able to reconcile its populist character with the policy commitments included in the agreement. To do so the authors discuss policy content, the type of policy making, and the policy discourse employed in three major policy areas: economic policy, with an emphasis on macro-economic and fiscal policy; criminal justice policy with an emphasis on amendments on penal law reforms and the fight against corruption; and family policy with an emphasis on family life and child-care. The research is based on work done in the context of the DEMOS (Democratic efficacy and the varieties of populism in Europe) Horizon 2020 project. We compare practices and developments in these three policy sectors in Greece under populist governance and contrast it with both the commitments of the bailout agreement and the populist rhetoric of Syriza and Anel regarding policy in these areas, before they came to power. The analysis offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of external policy conditionality as a tool for restraining populist governance and policy making, an issue that has become particularly salient in the EU in recent years.

(Virtual) Populist policy positions in the European Parliament: The Eurozone crisis

Viktor Szép (Centre for Social Sciences, MTA Centre of Excellence)

As a result of the financial crisis of 2008, the European Union underwent one of the most serious economic disaster of its history. Economic, financial and social implications are undeniably present and many challenges persist; *inter alia*, there is an assumption that the Eurozone crisis facilitated the spread of populism, intensified its presence and importance in Europe. Our report, in line with the objectives of WP2 of the DEMOS project, scrutinizes one aspect of this crisis: we have focused on the European Parliament (EP)

and examined how populist views shaped the voting behaviour of the MEPs and how populist policy positions were articulated in the debates in the field of EU economic governance. Our report is limited to three major reform packages: the 'Six-Pack', the 'Two-Pack' and the Fiscal Compact which were evidently the most important components of the economic governance reform. These three components may or may not resulted in legislative acts but all of them generated plenary debates in the EP which allowed us to compare populist and mainstream policy positions on EU economic governance reforms. Our notion of populism relies on well-established research conducted by political scientists and, more particularly, recent research on populist policy-making in contemporary Europe (Bartha et al. 2020; Kubát et al. 2020). Our analysis covers the 7th term of the EP (2009-2014) given that major EU reforms were introduced during that time period. Part of our conclusion is that MEPs affiliated with populist parties generally advocated populist policy proposals. In some cases, however, populist MEPs did not voice populist ideas while in other cases non-populist MEPs did raise populist policy proposals.

References

Bartha Attila – Boda Zsolt – Szikra Dorottya (2020) "When Populist Leaders Govern: Conceptualising Populism in Policy Making". *Politics and Governance* 8(3), 71–81.

Michal Kubát, Martin Mejstřík, Nicolas Hubé, Martin Baloge, Giuliano Bobba, et al. (2020): "Populist Parties in Contemporary Europe". Research Report, Centre for social sciences; Hungarian academy of sciences.

(Virtual) Populist policy making in the European Parliament: the case of migration policy

Lena Karamanidou (Glasgow Caledonian University)

Populist parties increased their presence in the European Parliament in the 2014 and 2019 elections. The implications of this development for policy making have been the focus of a growing body of research. Yet, unlike the case of populist parties in national and regional governments, their actual impact on policy making is more difficult to assess because of the complex institutional arrangements policy making processes on the European Parliament. I therefore explore the influence of populist parties classified as illiberal, anti-establishment or inclusive by the DEMOS project on policy making on migration in the 7th legislature (2014-2019), a period that coincided with increased migratory movements constructed as a 'crisis'. Three legislative processes were selected for analysis: Regulation 2016/1624, which established the European Border and Coast Guard; the proposal for a relocation mechanism; and the European Parliament Resolution on The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration.

Following the research approach adopted in the DEMOS project, I explore three dimensions of populist policy making: discursive policy positioning, policy content, and the policy making process (Bartha, Boda and Szikra 2020). Three analytical steps were taken to this end: the analysis of a) contributions of populist MEPs in debates and explanations of voting in order to explore their discursive positioning on key aspects of migration policies b) amendments submitted to proposed legislation and resolution in order to explore their policy content and policy preferences of populist MEPs and parties c) their adoption or not at the committee and plenary stages of the parliamentary legislative process in order to assess the impact of populist parties on the decision making process. Further, I compare the finding of these three aspects of analysis to those of parties not classified as populist.

The findings suggest that the influence of illiberal and anti-establishment populist parties on migration policy making is limited as few of their amendments are adopted at committee stage, let alone by the plenary. However, 'inclusive' populist parties were more successful in this respect. Further, it is difficult to discern specific illiberal populist positions. While the discourse and phrasing of policy proposals of such parties tend to be more extreme, core policy positions such as preserving the powers of member states and strongly supporting border controls are shared among mainstream right-wing and to an extent centrist parties and political groups. Further populist tropes such as invoking the people, condemning elites and constructing the Other as threatening were articulated not only by MEPs of populist parties but also by those representing as extreme right parties such as Jobbik and Golden Dawn. This raises some questions regarding the modalities of classifying parties as populist, as well as for analysing the intersections between populism and migration discourses.

T03P08 / Populism and policy making

Chair : Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Second Chair : Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

Session 3

Wednesday, July 7th 10:00 to 12:00 (004)

(Virtual) Institutional decay and long-term growth prospects: The case of Poland and Hungary

Istvan Benczes (Corvinus University of Budapest)

Joanna Orzechowska-Waclawska (Jagiellonian University Cracow)

Three decades ago, populism was considered as an economic phenomenon. In the context of post-World War II Latin America, Sachs (1989) and Dornbusch and Edwards (1990) famously argued that distorted and lax policies disregarding the intertemporal budget constraint of the state and attacking the highly uneven distribution of income culminated in economic and political chaos. In the most recent wave of populism, however, with a few exceptions, no such tendencies can be identified. In turn, supply-side economic analysis of populism has become rare, and economists have turned their attention to the demand side of the phenomenon.

Yet, supply-side analysis does have its merits, as it points towards the long-term costs and consequences of certain economic and public policies under populist governments (Rovira Kaltwasser 2018). By applying the ideational approach to populism (Mudde 2017), this paper argues that incumbents' attacks on checks and balances can cause serious deterioration in the quality of institutions in the economy, thereby endangering the long-term growth prospects of such countries.

In the paper we have selected Poland and Hungary as two prime examples of populists in power in the EU, because these two countries showed remarkable growth performance without seemingly undermining the sustainability of macrofinances prior to the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, the spectacular growth record was paralleled with substantial decay in their institutional landscape, including the quality of regulation or the security of ownership (e.g., WEF 2019). By concentrating on such changes in these two economies, the paper demonstrates that the positive short-term results in the form of high growth rates do not necessarily translate into long-term benefits, due to the radical reshaping of the incentive structures in the economy. Based on the main findings of the two cases, the paper provides general lessons as well on the supply side of populism.

Dornbusch, Rudiger and Sebastian Edwards (1990) Macroeconomic populism. *Journal of Development Economics*, 32: 247-277.

Mudde, Cas (2017) Populism: An ideational approach. In: Rovira Kaltwasser, Cristóbal, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo and Pierre Ostiguy (szerk.) *The Oxford handbook of populism*. Oxford University Press, 27- 47.

Rovira Kaltwasser, Cristóbal (2018) Studying the (economic) consequences of populism. *American Economic Review Papers and Proceedings*, 108, 204-207.

Sachs, Jeffrey (1989) Social conflict and populist policies in Latin America. NBER Working Paper Series 2897.

WEF (2019) Global competitiveness report. World Economic Forum, Geneva.

Politicization and competitiveness of CEE business actors. Cases from Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary

István Kollai (Corvinus University of Budapest)

Among the current strands within the research on capitalism, the scrutinization and categorization of

personal relations between state actors business actors occupies a prominent place, however the research of impersonally coordinated bureaucratic state-business relations seems to surmount to it. The present study also attempts to analyze the issue of personal entrepreneur-politician relations, focusing on the following question: how the domestic personal political embeddedness of company leaders – i.e. the depth of their politicization – and the corporate competitiveness interplay with each other.

Different definitions can be attached both to the concept of politicization and competitiveness, depending on the aspect from which we approach their meaning; our approach is now the aspect of embeddedness. From this aspect, competitiveness can be indicated by a company's impersonal (structural) embeddedness in an extra-local relational web with other companies, and politicization can be regarded as the personal political embeddedness of business actors in the decision-making processes between the state and the business sphere. As it can be stated based on the existing literature, our definitions are not far from various academic attempts to describe corporate competitiveness and politicization; but we have note too that embeddedness – originally a Polanyian term with strong cultural implications – has several dimensions apart from structural and political ones. Now, we focus just on domestic political embeddedness and on foreign structural embeddedness. After this conceptual clarification, our research question can be formulated as follows: how personal political embeddedness of business actors on domestic level (i.e. in their home country) can interplay with their companies' impersonal structural embeddedness on foreign markets? This question will be scrutinized on the examples of three CEE countries, namely Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

As far as their measurability is concerned, it is somewhat surprising that despite the key importance of the concept of firm competitiveness, its operationalization has lagged behind national competitiveness: quantified methodologies which are generally accepted to measure competitiveness of national economies are not readily available in case of particular companies.

Existing measurement solutions on firm competitiveness seek to solve above-

mentioned challenges by quantification of soft data about resources, management or outcome, building on partially subjective information like interviews, questionnaires, expert reviews, expert panels. From this aspect, our methodological solution is not distant from existing operationalization attempts: it is content analysis of media reports (news, opinion articles,

analyses) about both political and international embeddedness of firms. The method of content analysis about business operation has its obvious limitation – it lacks multi-dimensionality, giving no special information about management abilities or product quality, innovation capacity – and implies risks of distortion; these methodological challenges will be scrutinized below. Nevertheless, it provides us with a clear, transparent, repeatable method with comparable data.

According to these results, clear patterns of patronage and neo-feudalistic relations are detected in Hungary, patterns of state capture is revealed in Slovakia, and oligarchic capitalism prevails in the Czech Republic.

(Virtual) “When the (Populist) Boys Come in to Town”: Drivers of Political Trust in Central Europe

Sanja Hajdinjak (LMU Munich)

This paper explores how the arrival and strengthening of populists in Central Europe (Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) affects political trust. I test three competing mechanisms – ideological congruence, regime outputs and democraticness – and show that the effect of populist appeal differs when populists are senior or junior government partners and where populists have merely entered the national legislative body. I further show that populist appeal transforms the effect of ideological congruence and regime outputs where populists are in power – it can either add, augment or neutralize the effect of mechanisms of political trust for populist voters. These effects occur only in countries where populists party is the senior government partner. When comparing populist and non-populist voters, we see populists in power deliver additional trust through diffuse regime outputs – satisfaction with political system, but not by returning faith in democracy or by augmenting trust in public administration.

T03P08 / Populism and policy making

Chair : Attila Bartha (Centre for Social Sciences, ELKH and Corvinus University of Budapest)

Second Chair : Zsolt Boda (HUN-REN Centre for Social Sciences)

Session 4

Thursday, July 8th 10:00 to 12:00 (004)

(Virtual) Populist governments and green policy agendas. A comparative analysis of Italy and Spain.

Benedetta Cotta (Università Cà Foscari Venezia)

Ekaterina Domorenok (University of Padua)

In recent years, an increasing number of populist parties have emerged and gained electoral successes. In several European Union (EU) member states they moved “from being outsiders to being insiders” (Taggart and Rovira Kaltwasser 2016:346), thus becoming powerful political actors as partners in governing coalitions or leaders in governments. While academic interest on populism has largely focused on electoral strategies, ideology and discourses of populist parties and their leaders, our knowledge on populist governments’ policy-making activities and styles appears to be limited.

This paper aims to contribute to the relatively new but rapidly growing research agenda on how populism affects public policies by addressing the following two questions:

- 1) How do policy issues move from electoral discourses to policy-making processes?
- 2) In what way do the ideological orientations of populist governments along the left-right axis matter for the content of policy proposals, the selection of policy instruments and policy-making styles?

In order to answer these questions, we focus on the agenda setting and formulation phases, analysing the content of party manifestos as compared to the legislative provisions that develop specific policy issues into policy packages. More specifically, we compare the policy-making activities of the Italian government led by the Five Stars Movement (2018-2020) and the Spanish government led by Unidas Podemos (2019-2020) for the development of the national sustainable development strategies to meet the Paris Agreements commitments and the measures adopted to transpose the recent European renewable energy directive (Directive EU 2018/2001) into national legislation. The selected cases represent promising empirical grounds for unveiling populist governments’ policy-making styles against the evidence provided by some recent studies on populist parties’ scepticism and denial of climate change (Forchtner 2019), as well as on their attempt to scale back climate change policies once in power (Lockwood 2018). Similar positions have characterised populist electoral discourses on sustainable energy transformations and renewable energy generation infrastructures (Fraune and Knodt 2018; Batel and Devine-Wright 2018).

Populism fosters inequality - the case of Romania

Andreea Lucia Oprescu (University of Barcelona)

Abstract— Populist parties have benefited from major electoral support in Europe over the past two decades, becoming important decision makers and re-negotiating the political order in the EU. Currently, more than a third of Europeans’ preferences in the voting booth go to populist parties. The return of populism in the Western political landscape is not due to any merit of the phenomenon itself, but to the failure of liberalism to provide adequate solutions to contemporary crises. Thus, populism in Eastern Europe displays a collection of extremist and ultra-traditional mentalities, promoting a platform that advances anti-immigration, anti-gay, anti-gender equality, pro-patriarchy ideas. Populist movements have appealed to the basic instincts of European voters in their quest to gain international representation, influence and political power. The aim of the paper is to review the way populist parties in Romania and their patriarchal influence public policies and the life of women. The roots of populism in Romania are set in tradition and conservatism, thus presenting to society a certain stability achieved around traditional and religious values - family, religion, nation. The Alliance for the Union of Romanians (AUR), a party seemingly doomed to fail at first, managed to obtain 10% of the parliamentary seats in 2020. AUR entered the Romanian Parliament

with an unexpected score, promoting a nationalist, homophobic, anti-gender equality, pro-Orthodox, anti-Western and sovereigntist discourse. AUR supports the Orthodox Church, displaying a highly patriarchal agenda. The paper analyses AUR's discourse using a generic methodology, qualitative research, speech and document analysis in order to establish its impact on gender equality in Romania. Findings revealed that populist parties promoting patriarchal ideas in the Romanian society foster societal inequality and public policies unfair towards women. With the Alliance for the Union of Romanians in the Parliament, Romania does a pirouette in the past, but at the same time it aligns with some of the European populist tendencies.

Keywords— inequality, gender, patriarchy, populism, religion

(Virtual) A comparative study on how populist governments has been able to squash separatist movements- Evidence from India

Rahul Shukla (University College London)

"By its very nature, a separatist movement is an attack upon the integrity of the state, which the state feels called upon to repress." (Sandwell, 1993)

In the last century alone, the world experienced around 400 separatist movements. Deeper analysis of these movements would promulgate ethnic concentration, state oppression and radicalization as the core tenets[1]. In this context, separatist movements are defined as those where an individual, province, race or ethnic groups identify themselves as separate entities from the union. In short, the entities involved demand for their independence from the union to form their own government (Wood, 1981).

Different governments have attempted to quieten these movements through dissolving subnational government, forced militarization, and mandatory elections. Such attempts have not resulted in the desired outcomes, favoring the establishment. (Sharma, 2008). In contrast, it was found that the special status granted to a province led to ambivalence in asserting the rights of the State. Most of the time a populist government are the ones who are able to take tough decisions. The special status provision entails the separating entity special rights for residency, employment and powers to operate separately from the union constitution. Such provisions bar people from other provinces or regions to take or obtain residency, employment or in some instances enter that specific territory[2].

In consolidation, the research attempts to explore, the factors behind the sustenance and end of separatist movements. It tries to prove that populist government has been successful in ending the separatist movements. In addition, the design explores whether provinces with special provisions enjoy sustained insurgency versus provinces otherwise? The research therefore shifts the traditional narrative to explore causal pathways between special provisions granted to the provinces and its reasonable impact on the sustenance of the separatist movements. Through its analysis, the research will provide insights on the conditions associated with these sustained separatist movements and the role of different union governments in acceding to the demands of the provinces.

The research will compare evidences arising from two provinces in India, namely Kashmir and Punjab. While Kashmir continues to experience insurgent tendencies with special provisions granted, Punjab's experienced a halt in its insurgent activities albeit not having any special provisions (Sharma, 2008).

An understanding of the terms sustained separatist movement and special provisions calls for greater clarity. The definitional aspects of the same as discussed below.

1. A sustained separatist movement, is one in which the movement spans over and above a period of 10 years, and expands beyond the narrow confines of religion and colonial contexts.
2. Accordingly, special provisions are those which entitle the province with special rights, and the ability to govern in an autonomous manner, except on issues of international importance.

Populist governments are known for taking harsh decisions in the policy making approach. The paper will explain how populist government has been able to solve long running problems due to their harsh decision making approach.

Approaches to understand separatist movements would include accessing the resolution documents promoting separatist ideology, duration of the movement, stakeholder analysis of the interest groups involved. These factors provide specificity and sensitivity to the analysis being pursued. On the other hand, special provisions are mostly associated with legally binding constitutional grants. The contours of the legalities are equally established in the documents published. Articles mentioned under the Indian constitution reflect on the special provisions. The paper will compare two separatist movements of India. Both the movements could have sustained for long if a populist government with the absolute majority wouldn't have been in power in the Parliament houses.

Mapping Patterns of Policies by Populist Parties. A Quantitative Cross-Country Analysis

Oliver Lembcke (Ruhr-Universität Bochum)

The aim of this paper two-fold. It will try to identify populist policy fields' patterns in contrast to non-populist positions; it will measure the impact that populist parties have on other parties' policy positions and the party system. The analysis's critical questions are the following: (1) Do populist parties have a stable core of policy positions? Or does their essential policy direction change over time? On which policy positions do they give up? (2) Is there a distinct cluster of populist policy positions that distinguishes populist parties from their contenders within the party system? (3) What impact do populist parties have on other political parties' policy positions, and (4) the party system's competition modum (centripetal or centrifugal)? These four perspectives may also contribute to the broader discussion if the rise of populist parties reflects the emergence of a new cleavage in Europe.

The research design is based on a quantitative cross-country data analysis with party manifestos as the core unit of analysis (MARPOR data set). Four hypotheses will guide this analysis: The first hypothesis (flexible policy program) refers to the widely acknowledged definition of populism as a 'thin ideology' due to the few core concepts introduced by Mudde (2010). It will test if populism is more flexible in terms of its policy goals and or guiding principles than fully-fledged ideologies like liberalism or socialism. The second hypothesis (representation gap) picks up on the notion of populist policy supply. It takes a closer look if populist parties try to pursue a different kind of policies outside of or in contrast to the mainstream (Franzmann & Lewandowsky 2020). The third hypothesis (contagion effects) points to the relation between the electoral success of populist parties and the policy adaption of other parties, especially among established parties. It will test the impact of the electoral success by populist parties on other political parties, especially parties with a conservative, nationalist, or centrist-right ideology. Finally, the fourth hypothesis (polarization effects) deals with the impact of populist parties on the party system (Wolinetz & Zaslove 2018). It will analyze if populist parties have polarizing effects on the political party system, changing the party competition mode from centripetal to centrifugal.

The sample, extracted from the MARPOR data set, includes manifestos of political parties from twenty different European countries. For a comparative approach between West- and East-European party systems, this analysis restricts itself to the recent 'wave of populism' 1990-2020 (Mudde 2013; Andersen & Bjørklund 1994).