
Populist and Extremist Parties in Europe

University of Greifswald - 2024 - Tu 12-14 - ELP3, Room 1.13

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Office hours: Friday 9-12

1 Abstract

This seminar deals with populist and extremist parties (PEP) in Europe, their behaviour, their voter base, and their strategies. First, we will look at concepts and the theoretical differences between populist, radical, extreme and extremist parties and how to measure them. Then, we will discuss who votes for such parties and why, as well as how the appearance of PEPs might change the party system. The main focus though will be on party behaviour: how do PEPs behave in parliament? What is the reaction of other parties in dealing with PEPs, and is it effective? How do PEPs set the agenda and control which topics other parties talk about? What happens if PEPs are in government? In what way is online communication used, and what media strategies do PEPs have? Another focus will be on analysing the local and European elections in June by reading party manifestos and explaining voting behaviour comparatively. While we will deal with parties all over Europe, one core example will be the AfD in Germany. In the end, students should be able to write a quantitative paper on a research question of their choice.

2 Course Requirements

2.1 Readings

Each week, there will be two short mandatory readings, which are necessary to follow the course.

2.2 Presentation

You will have to give a presentation on PEPs in a specific country. You can include explanations of voting outcomes, history of PEPs, institutional context and PEPs today. You should use at least three scientific sources. The presentation should last roughly **12-15 minutes**. Slides must be sent to me no later than 10am the day of the presentation.

2.3 Proposals for term papers

No matter whether you decide to write your term paper in this seminar or another one, you have the opportunity to present a proposal for your research design in the last two weeks of the semester. We will discuss all proposals in detail and give you feedback.

2.4 Term Paper in *one* CP seminar

In the end, you will have to write a seminar paper answering a research question of your choice in one of the two Comparative Politics seminars. About **20-25 pages** are required. The paper needs to address the research question empirically. Deadline is **31/08/2024**. You are encouraged to come talk to me about your research question or any problems you may encounter.

3 Course Structure

1 Introduction (09th April)

No reading required.

2 Micro-level explanations of voting (16th April)

Arzheimer, Kai (2023): The electoral breakthrough of the AfD and the East-West divide in German politics. in: *Contemporary Germany and the Fourth Wave of Far-Right Politics*. Routledge: 140-158.

Kübler, Daniel, Michael Strebel and Frank Marcinkowski (2024): Populism and the scales of statehood. Localism and populist attitudes in Western Europe. *European Political Science Review*: 1-17.

3 Descriptive explanations of voting - Workshop with R (23rd April)

Arzheimer, Kai (2009): Contextual factors and the extreme right vote in Western Europe, 1980-2002. *American Journal of Political Science* 53(2): 259-275.

4 Behaviour in parliament (30th April)

Valentim, Vicente and Tobias Widmann (2021): Does radical-right success make the political debate more negative? Evidence from emotional rhetoric in German state parliaments. *Political Behavior* 45: 243-264.

Otjes, Simon and Tom Louwse (2021): Do anti-elitist parties use their parliamentary tools differently? *Parliamentary Affairs* 74: 704-721.

5 Behaviour and reaction of non-PEP parties (07th May)

Krause, Werner, Denis Cohen and Tarik Abou-Chadi (2023): Does accommodation work? Mainstream party strategies and the success of radical right parties. *Political Science Research and Methods* 11(1): 172-179.

Merrill, Samuel and Bernard Grofman (2019): What are the effects of entry of new extremist parties on the policy platforms of mainstream parties? *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 31(3): 453-473.

6 Polarisation (14th May)

Bischof, Daniel and Markus Wagner (2019): Do voters polarize when radical parties enter parliament? *American Journal of Political Science* 63(4): 888-904.

Ezrow, Lawrence, Margit Tavits and Jonathan Homola (2014): Voter polarization, strength of partisanship, and support for extremist parties. *Comparative Political Studies* 47(11): 1558-1583.

7 PEP campaigns and strategies (28th May)

Cassell, Kaitlen J (2023): The populist communication strategy in comparative perspective. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 28(4): 725-746.

Weeks, Ana C, Bonnie M Meguid, Miki C Kittilson, Hilde Coffe (2022): When do Männerparteien elect women? Radical right populist parties and strategic descriptive representation. *American Political Science Review* 117(2): 421-438.

8 Electoral programmes for the European election (04th June)

This week you will read one of the manifestos uploaded on Moodle.

9 PEPs in Government (11th June)

Huber, Robert A and Christian H Schimpf (2016): A drunken guest in Europe? The influence of populist radical right parties on democratic quality. *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 2(10): 103-129.

Bichay, Nicolas (2024): Populist radical-right junior coalition partners and liberal democracy in Europe. *Party Politics* 30(2): 236-246.

10 Vollversammlung (18th June)

No session

11 Selected topics I (25th June)

See section 4

12 Selected topic II (02nd July)

See section 4

13 Selected topic III & Presentation of proposals I (9th July)

See section 4

14 Presentation of proposals I & Semester Wrap-Up (16th July)

No reading required.

4 Topics for session 11-13

Fake news and communication

Schiff, Kaylyn, Daniel S Schiff and Natalia S Bueno (2024): The liar's dividend. Can politicians claim misinformation to evade accountability? *American Political Science Review*: 1-20.

Cantarella, Michele, Nicolò Fraccaroli and Roberto Volpe (2023): Does fake news affect voting behaviour? *Research Policy* 52(1).

Text analysis - Workshop with R

No reading, please bring a laptop to class to learn how to find sentiments and party positions from speeches, manifestos or press releases.

Populism without host ideology?

Zulianello, Mattia and Erik G Larsen (2024): Blurred positions. The ideological ambiguity of valence populist parties. *Party Politics* 30(1): 190-199.

Benasaglio Berlucchi, Antonio (2022): Populism without host ideologies. A new home for voters with exclusionary attitudes in Italy's Five Star Movement? *Party Politics* 28(5): 811-825.

Left populism

Wagner, Sarah, Constantin Wurthmann and Jan P Thomeczek (2023): Bridging left and right? How Sahra Wagenknecht could change the German party landscape. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 64(3): 621-636.

Rooduijn, Matthijs and Tjitske Akkerman (2017): Flank attacks. Populism and left-right radicalism in Western Europe. *Party Politics* 23(3): 193-204.

Mainstream right

Koning, Edwards and Kate Puddister (2022): Common sense justice? Comparing populist and mainstream right positions on law and order in 24 countries. *Party Politics* 30(2): 223-235.

Hertner, Isabelle (2022): Germany as a country of intergration? The CDU/CSU's policies and discourses on immigration during Angela Merkel's Chancellorship. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 48(2): 461-481.

Public reaction to undemocratic behaviour

Frederiksen, Kristian VS (2023): Young People punish undemocratic behaviour less than older people. *British Journal of Political Science*: 1-9.

Svolik, Milan (2020): Polarization versus Democracy. *Journal of Democracy* 30(3): 20-32.

Macro-level explanations of voting

Dow, Jay K (2010): Party-system extremism in majoritarian and proportional electoral systems. *British Journal of Political Science* 41: 341-361.

Van Hauwaert, Steven, Christian Schimpf and Regis Dandoy (2019): Populist demand, economic development and regional identity across nine European countries. Exploring regional patterns of variance. *European Societies* 21(2): 303-325.

5 Countries for presentations

- Croatia (election 17th April)
- North Macedonia (election 8th May)
- Belgium (election 9th May)
- Austria
- Czech Republic
- France
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Netherlands
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Sweden
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