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Euroscepticism and the diffusion of populist framing in Europe

ABSTRACT

This paper draws on populist political communication in Europe with a view to identifying the convergence of Eurosceptic framing among EU countries. After focusing on the general hosting environment of populism and the dangers that threaten EU member states when populist practice governs, it presents some specific examples of populist rhetoric, in order to resolve the mechanisms of populism when emotional framing leads. The proposed framework projects political communication on specific attitudes/trends in Mass Media, underlining comedic performance and cynicism. The research, which studies the emotional rhetoric of two Danish populist political figures in Social Media, interprets Eurosceptic negativism, fear, aggression and sarcasm as a stereotypic path for gaining popularity. These emotional stereotypes have been cultivated in political satire, tabloid talk shows and news parody programs during the last decades, by transforming politics into a sort of entertaining collective experience. I argue that the study of populism in Social Media together with the analysis of the interaction between Social Media and Mass Media is a way to effectively discuss some of the mechanisms of populism today.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Problem

Eurosceptics may differ in intensity, and in their arguments for opposing the European Union (EU), by focusing their critiques on different political targets and/or aspects of Europeanization. The generic label of Euroscepticism may incorporate sceptical, cynical or oppositional attitudes (Krouwel & Abts 2007). In spite of their diversity, the different forms of Euroscepticism and europhobia converge towards a populist rhetoric. This paper undertakes the potential links between Euroscepticism and populism and later on expounds upon the frames and emotions in the rhetoric of populist political actors.

Media discourse, and in particular programmes such as talk shows, are certainly practices that have extended, enriched, and often taken to the limits, conversation as a speech event. The number of possibilities arising from conversational practice has certainly found a new dimension in the context of the mass media, and on TV in particular (Van de Berg et al. 1991 and 1998).

The paper is structured in three sections. The first section (chapter 2) is reviewing the literature that tries to explain the negative effects of modern populism in Europe. It underlines some of the basic characteristics that constitute the environment in which new European populism is flourishing. The selected material is filtered by the intention to focus only on the analysis that deals with the general hosting environment of populism and later on with the dangers that might occur when populist practice governs EU member states. The second section (chapter 3) discusses in greater depth different forms of populism and looks in more detail at the issue of populist rhetoric through specific examples of framing typology. I outline the links between populist-communication and emotionally loaded frames and I introduce the crucial role of the media in creating a climate in which populist parties prosper. Finally, in chapter 4, I focus on the Danish People's Party, through the analysis of the behaviour of two politicians in Social Media before their success in the last elections. A second case study follows a Danish newspaper during the same period, looking for the correlation between articles and the analysed social media posts.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

In the first section, I try to give a general outline of what might be the actual threat of populism in Europe today, by isolating the negative effects of the populist prevalence from any positive dimension of populist argumentation.

On the last section, the research tracks and evaluates prevailing populist patterns, through the analysis of political tweets and facebook posts.

- By registering the set of frames and the emotional aspects that tend to repeat within Eurosceptic-populist communication, in case study #1, I examine some of the raw material that contribute to the rhetoric of the most popular Danish Populist Party. By examining the characteristics of certain popular patterns, I distinguish populist rhetoric from the ideology attached to the commentator. This allows me to check the types of correlation between popular tweets and posts and examine the comment behaviour of populist actors.

- Finally, in case study #2, I project the findings of case study #1 on the Danish Media, and more specifically on the newspaper Jyllands Posten, in order to estimate and register the correlation between political posts on social media and the news.

1.3 Delimitations

Due to the informal language used in social Media, understanding the opinions of users and performing sentiment analysis is quite difficult. Furthermore, presence of sarcasm makes the task even more challenging: sarcasm is when a person says something different from what he means. Some people are more sarcastic than others, however, in general, sarcasm is very common, though, difficult to recognize. In general, people employ sarcasm in their daily life not only to make jokes and be humorous but also to criticize or make remarks about ideas, persons or events. Therefore, it tends to be widely used in social networks, in particular microblogging websites such as Twitter. That being the case, the state of the art approaches of sentiment analysis and opinion mining tend to have lower performances when analysing data collected from such websites. Maynard and Greenwood show that sentiment analysis performance might be highly enhanced when sarcasm within the sarcastic statements is identified. Empirical research together with manually checked data is the safest way to identify sarcasm.

Chapter 2

Populism in the context of a contemporary democratic Europe

2.1 Introduction

The European Union is one of the favourite targets of populist leaders and movements operating in the national democracies (Hayward, 1996; Mény & Surel, 2000; 2002; Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008; Berezin, 2009; Martinelli, 2012). This situation confirms the thesis according to which populism idealizes the goodness of the people that is considered source of political legitimacy not against a general “other/s” (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014, p. 391), but against the “rulers” (Taggart, 2000, p. 109) or a “corrupted elite” (Mudde, 2004, p. 543). The gap between the EC/EU institutions and the European citizens -descending from the functionalist conception in the 1950s and living through the following political and institutional evolution- is a weakness often denounced even by the actors interested in a democratic and federal development of the integration. (Quirico 2016)

Euro-sceptic radical right parties (RRPs) utilize feelings of national sovereignty and identity to mobilize their electorate against the EU, while Euro-sceptic radical left parties (RLPs) gain support mainly by mobilizing feelings of economic insecurity based on the neoliberal and “imperialist” character of EU integration (De Vries/Edwards, 2009: 18-9; Halikiopoulou et al, 2012: 511-2). Further, fringe parties articulate their EU criticism more strongly than mainstream parties, with only slight differences between RLPs and RRP (Adam et al, 2013: 90).

Populism, which is the flipside and negation of political liberalism, is by far the most menacing challenger. As empirical research shows, it thrives where political institutions - especially the rule of law and safeguards for minority rights- are weak and where polarization and majoritarian tendencies are strong. In such environments, populist parties can be

expected to win power via the ballot box and even to win re-election. Populism is threatening because it has a contagious quality – the appearance and rise of a populist party will predictably push a country’s other parties in a populist direction – and because populism can lead to the decay of liberal institutions and the consolidation of illiberal polities. (Pappas, 2016)

2.2 The Meaning of the Term ‘Euro scepticism’

Euro scepticism should not automatically be classified as a right-wing response. But classically right-wing extremist or novel right-wing populist formations will tend towards Euro scepticism (arguing for ‘preservation of the nation state’), as will many post-Socialist ones (in their slogan, ‘a different, more social Europe’). Euro scepticism is a comprehensive term, comprising a whole spectrum of positions regarding political content. Not surprisingly, its origins lie in traditionally Euro sceptical Great Britain, where it entered into political and journalistic jargon in the middle of the 1980s. The term became widespread with the debates over the Maastricht Treaty, which shifted the ‘permissive consensus’ that had prevailed so far to an open debate about the benefits and costs of further integration. (Hartleb 2012)

The Oxford English Dictionary then defined a ‘Euro sceptic’ as someone not very enthused by the increased power of the European Community or Union. In this early usage period, the term designated an opposition towards both the EC/EU and towards European integration as a whole (Harmsen & Spiering 2004, 15-17). Numerous authors who were dissatisfied with the term ‘Euro scepticism’ proposed alternatives to describe the phenomenon: ‘Euro-indifference’, ‘Europhobia’, ‘Eurorealism’, ‘critical Europeans’ or ‘Euro cynicism’ (Crespy & Verschuere n 2009)

Indeed, the positions towards Europe as a whole and towards the EU in particular are very different, as Chris Flood (2002) distinguishes:

Categories of EU alignments (regarding the EU in general or some specified aspect(s) of it)
Category Position:

<i>Maximalist</i>	Pushing integration as far and as fast as is feasible towards the practical realization of a chosen model
<i>Reformist</i>	Endorsing the advance of integration, subject to remedying deficiencies in what has already been achieved
<i>Gradualist</i>	Accepting some advance of integration, as long as it is slow and piecemeal
<i>Minimalist</i>	Accepting the status quo, but wanting to limit further integration, as far as possible
<i>Revisionist</i>	Wanting to return to an earlier state, usually before a treaty revision
<i>Rejectionist</i>	Outright refusal of integration, coupled with opposition to participation

Table 1.

In 1998, British political scientist Paul Taggart characterized Euro scepticism as a ‘touchstone of dissent’ within Western European political party systems (Taggart, 1998). According to

my own observations I would emphasize the following: in the political debates concerning the future of Europe since then, the distinction between European integration and the European Union has often been blurred, despite the fact that these don't necessarily go hand in hand. European identity is possible even when an EU identity related to the institutions is not. Many politicians mix the terms while pointing out a deeper integration. This might explain the broad acceptance of the phenomenological distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' Euroscepticism made by Paul Taggart and Aleks Szczerbiak regarding the 2004 Eastern European candidates for accession to the EU (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2004; Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008):

1. Hard Euroscepticism is where there is a basic opposition to the EU and European integration and therefore can be seen in parties who think that their countries should withdraw from membership, or whose policies towards the EU are tantamount to being opposed to the whole project of European integration as it is currently conceived.
2. Soft Euroscepticism is where there is not a basic objection to European integration or EU membership but where concerns on one (or a number) of policy areas lead to the expression of qualified opposition to the EU, or where there is a sense that 'national interest' is currently at odds with the EU's trajectory.

The 'soft' version implies the qualified rejection of certain aspects of the integration project or of the EU in its current institutional form. A common argument is that national interests run counter to the supranational agreements. The 'hard' form of Euroscepticism, on the other hand, rejects the 'idea of Europe' fundamentally and therefore also accession to or membership in the EU (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008). From the perspective of democracy theory and integration policy, the hard Eurosceptics are seen as problematic, as they hardly seek or effect any positive development of the integration process. A whole range of parties across Europe can be labelled as 'Eurosceptic'. In 2002 Taggart and Szczerbiak counted 72 parties across the political spectrum in the Member States and 34 in those countries then being considered as candidates for membership. This included all marginal, non-established small parties. Many of these forces still exist, and other new forces such as the True Finns have gained a significant entry into the European party landscape. From a purely quantitative standpoint, the number of Eurosceptical parties would suffice to constitute a party family on its own.

Since the early 1980s, parties of a new type more often than not right-wing populists with an anti-establishment ethos, a protest and taboo-breaking agenda, and a charismatic leader have repeatedly performed well in national elections within some Western European countries (Mudde, 2007). Populism refers specifically to anti-elitism, pragmatism and a politics based on prejudices, but not to an anti-constitutional stance.

The common features of populism are

- an anti-elitist discourse ('us' against the establishment)
- a politics of stereotypes
- not anti-constitutional or anti-democratic
- no nostalgia for fascism or the extremist past in general
- protest topics (negative and cynical formulations; negative campaigning)
- a charismatic leader
- no fixed dogmatic ideology, flexible topics (chameleon-like)

In addition, there are two central aspects for understanding the logic of populism:

- The vertical dimension, as a general characteristic of populism: a separation from established political institutions and traditional parties; an attitude of ‘us’ against ‘those above’.
- The horizontal dimension, as a specific right-wing variant of populism: a separation from immigrants, foreigners and criminals; an attitude of ‘us’ against ‘those from outside’.

As applied to Euroscepticism, the vertical can be expressed as ‘us against the bureaucrats’ (Hartleb 2012)

2.3 European Integration

European integration is a moving target. The relationship between left/right positioning and support for European integration has shifted over time. In 1984, social democrats constituted the largest pool of Euroscepticism, measured according to electoral strength, while in 1999 they were the most pro-European party family (Hooghe/Marks/Wilson, 2002). Hooghe & Marks have argued that European integration has disrupted established patterns of democratic competition in the member states. It has engendered conflict within political parties and it has strengthened identity-driven opponents of European integration, particularly on the populist right. European integration has helped to bring about important changes in the democratic institutions of the member states. It has induced governments to hold referenda, which are a key constitutional innovation in several European countries. More than half of all referenda in the European Union are directly related to questions of European integration. One reason for this is that European integration is rightly perceived as changing the basic constitutional structure of democratic decision-making in its member states. But there is a more partisan-political reason for the flood of referenda in recent decades. Political elites are happy to shift responsibility for an issue that precipitates intense conflict within their political parties. But the unintended consequence of this innovation is to weaken the hold of political parties on the agenda, shift authority beyond the legislature to the people at large, and inject populism into national politics (Hooghe/Marks, 2004). This environment is fruitful for discourses around the question of a common European identity but it also provides clear paths for anti-EU populist argumentation.

In 2010 the European Union President Herman Van Rompuy declared populism “the biggest danger to Europe,” referring to the rise of xenophobic right-wing parties in a number of European Union member states. Another observer (Bartolini, 2005) considers populism as a ‘virus’ that infects party systems across Europe and spreads its ‘epidemic effects’. Common ground for populist parties such as Front National or Vlaams Block is clear antagonism between friends and enemies. On one hand, populist parties usually oppose to immigrants and criminals. For example, Lega Nord takes especially hard-line position towards Muslim foreigners and multiculturalism. On the other hand, populism presents hostility towards intellectual economic and political elites.

Populists reject the symbolic framework in which political stage for a democratic political struggle is defined. This situation creates a permanent situation of conflict, which is not conducive to an accepted democratic outcome. Law notion of individual and civil rights, devotion to conspiracy theories, sharing some inspirational themes with communism and

fascism, and most of all foreign policy based on isolationism can be seen as a dangerous ideas for democracy maintenance (Held, 1996:63-65).

2.4 Populist Politics across Ideological Appeals and the diffusion of left and right populism

Before trying to understand modern European populism, one has to trace its actual connection to people and to understand why it leads to polarization. Populist discourses imply that political decisions should not be too complex and that everyone should be able to understand the reason behind every political action. “Populism is a dimension of political action, susceptible to syncretism with all forms of movements and all types of governments. [. . .] Whether dimension or style rather than ideology or form of mobilization, populism is so elastic and indeterminate as to discourage all attempts at a rigorous definition” (Taguieff, 1995, p. 25).¹

Moreover, recent research suggests that more and more citizens select news and information that is congruent with their existing political preferences. This increase in political selective exposure (PSE) has allegedly led to an increase in polarization (Bos, Kruikemeier, de Vreese 2016). Another element that stimulates polarization is the fact that populism is a monist and moralist ideology, which denies the existence of divisions of interests and opinions within “the people” and rejects the legitimacy of political opponents. As the populists are the *vox populi*, ie the voice of all the people, anyone with a different view speaks for “special interests”, ie the elite. Given that the key distinction is between the pure people and the corrupt elite, any compromise would lead to the corruption of the people and is therefore rejected. This uncompromising stand leads to a polarized political culture, in which non-populists turn into anti-populists. (Mudde 2015)

In subsequent decades, there have developed three broad approaches to the populist phenomenon, each with different normative implications: a social-structuralist, a cultural-ideological and a political-institutional. While trying to explain populism as a threat in Europe today, we will have to use a minimal definition, which is to be found in the political institutional approach. In this path, Taguieff points out that “Populism is a dimension of political action, susceptible to syncretism with all forms of movements and all types of governments. [. . .] Whether dimension or style rather than ideology or form of mobilization, populism is so elastic and indeterminate as to discourage all attempts at a rigorous definition” (Taguieff, 1995, p. 25). When the ideology is no longer enough to support the populist practice, the convergence of left and right populism under the Eurosceptic approach comes as a natural consequence. Taking Kazin’s analysis¹ step further, the two ideological poles of populism today are not so much to be found in the left and right but rather in the actual liberal or illiberal practices.

Even though individual case studies often focus on particular ideological manifestations of populism (typically on the political right in Europe and the political left in Latin America), when read in the aggregate, these studies demonstrate that populism is not intrinsically tied to either left- or right-wing political ideology. In fact, the ideological content can vary both across countries and within the same polity over time. For more than a century, democratic contestation in Western Europe has been structured by a left/right dimension that encapsulates equality vs. economic freedom and government control vs. market society. To what extent does this dimension encompass conflict on European integration? We can begin

by saying that there is no linear relationship between the level of support for European integration and positioning on the conventional left/right divide. (Hooghe, Marks, Wilson 2002).

In order to understand Populism in Europe today, we need to define it as a strategy of rebalancing the distribution of political power among established and emerging social groups. Urbinati (1998) suggests that the tension between liberal democracy and populism stems from the ways in which these ideologies perceive the relations between representative institutions and the “will of the people.” She contends that for populists, the primary task of political institutions is not to serve as systems of checks and balances or as protectors of civil rights, but rather as instrumental tools for translating the majority will into political decisions. Canovan (2002) also focuses on the tensions inherent in the institutional design of democracy: democracy is an ideology and practice of popular participation, but at the same time it requires a complex system of decision-making that is often opaque, leading populist actors to experience deep dissatisfaction with representative institutions. Consequently, populist ideology seeks to redeem this state of affairs with “a claim to legitimacy that rests on the democratic ideology of popular sovereignty and majority rule”- that is a return to a “true” democracy led by “the people” and not by professional political elites (Canovan 2002, 25)

2.5 Euroscepticism and the Institutional Elite

Public opinion about European integration is a field of strategic interaction among party elites in their competition for political power (Hooghe and Marks, 2007). Emergence of populist parties depends on social factors. Population is forced to adapt to a drastically new situation, where unemployment, vulnerability, precariousness are everyday reality, and where identity crisis and social exclusion are spreading (Adolfo, 2005). Feelings of uncertainty, fear and despair among Europeans compose an era exploited by populism parties, which assure popular longings for security and predictability.

In Poland, one of the first official acts of the new right-wing government was to remove the EU flag from public buildings. Marine Le Pen’s Front National, which demands France’s withdrawal from the euro, has seen the rising arc of support. Hungary would appear to be lost already, and even socialist-inspired populists the likes of Robert Fico in Slovakia and the Czech President Milos Zeman are politicking against Europe. With his pandering to the national-populist zeitgeist, David Cameron risked first weakening the Europe project and then plunging his country into a Brexit.

Eurosceptical parties have been the third-biggest power in the European Parliament ever since the 2014 European elections. 156 of the 751 delegates want to reduce the rights of the parliament that they have got themselves elected into, or at best eliminate it altogether. The term Euroscepticism emerged in the 1980s and since then, opposition to the European Union has become increasingly embedded both at national and European level (Usherwood/Startin, 2013). This increased politicisation of the debate about Euroscepticism has caused some to claim that the permissive consensus has come under severe strain by the increasingly hostile public opinion on the EU (Brack/Startin, 2015). Others claim that the majority of citizens favours the status quo and neither support closer integration nor disintegration (Rose/Borz, 2016: 381).

While Europe is confronted with a numerous crises, Islamophobia, Euroscepticism, and anti-Americanism become the means through which people regain political consciousness and

populist politics seem to have an increasing success. The (new) social European reality is giving fresh food to the nationalist and populist discourses. The general scene suggests a transnational corporate and political elite that is being shaped and reformed through a complex international economic system, which sets a new demand for populist persuasion; that is the adjustment of populism to the complexity within the liberal dominant scene and the production of effective analysis and argumentation that could explain the new dangers that might threaten the society. The problem with populism today is, that this exact complexity is oppositional to the simplistic nature of populist argumentation. Kazin argues that populism is “a language whose speakers conceive of ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bounded narrowly by class, view their elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic, and seek to mobilize the former against the latter” (Kazin, 1995).

The different means of communication in the recent European political scene seem to converge in a new populist core expressed through a Eurosceptic approach, which argues that the institutions threaten the nations; hence people are represented by nations and the institutions are the new elite. The strongest argument in populist discourses today is opposed to the mechanisms of European Commission, often raising the ultimate question of the exit from the EU. The pro-exit approaches suggest that the nation is the only valid representative for people. In this sense, ideology is the ‘nation’, nourishing broad and often vague concepts that involve nationalistic patterns.

2.6 European Neopopulism

By the early 1990s, Latin American scholars were surprised to find out that a new breed of politicians in the region were able to implement neoliberal policies while also enjoying remarkably high levels of popular support - a phenomenon for which they coined the term Neopopulism: “The rise of personalist leaders with broad-based support, who follow neoliberal prescriptions for economic austerity and market-oriented structural adjustments” (Roberts, 1995, p. 82).² It would be interesting at this point, to make an attempt to look for similar patterns between Neopopulism of Latin America and the new populism in Europe. Today, together with the far right populism of Haider, Le Pen and Farage, we have a new left populism that is challenging not just the parties of the right but also the social-democratic parties and the traditional parties on the left. While the victory of Syriza has turned everybody’s attention to Greece these days, the new radical populist left is on the rise elsewhere as well.³ Even beyond the radical left, social-democrats have started to be more outspoken against European austerity and neoliberal policies. It seems that the policies they had supported so far have brought them at odds with their own people and this realization starts slowly to sink in (Prentoulis, Thomassen 2015). Eventually, we are witnessing the birth of a new populist era in Europe, which is directly targeting the EU in its neoliberal dimension. While choosing to be illiberal, a government can still enjoy the liberal advantages of the EU. Taking a giant leap, one can think of the *liberal autocracies* that have existed in the past. Until recently, a small but powerful example flourished off the Asian mainland: Hong Kong. For 156 years, until July 1, 1997, Hong Kong was ruled by the British Crown through an appointed governor general. Until 1991 it had never held a meaningful election, but its government epitomized constitutional liberalism, protecting its citizens' basic rights and administering a fair court system and bureaucracy. A September 8, 1997, editorial on the islands future in The Washington Post was titled ominously, "Undoing Hong Kong's Democracy." Actually, Hong Kong has precious little democracy to undo; what it has is a framework of rights and laws (Zakaria, 1997). What we see in some EU member states today

is the European constitution as the general framework of rights and laws, combined with illiberal policies within the countries.

2.7 Democratic Illiberalism

The term Democratic Illiberalism has been used in the past to describe analytically distinct empirical phenomena and, therefore, with different meanings. Most possibly, the earliest use of the term was made by Fareed Zakaria with reference to democratically elected governments that are, however, soft on the protection of the their citizens' civil liberties—a phenomenon he identifies with the politics of several nations around the world ranging “from modest offenders like Argentina to near tyrannies like Kazakhstan and Belarus, with countries like Romania and Bangladesh in between” (Zakaria, 1997, p. 23). This author's illiberal democracy, therefore, presents just as another “diminished subtype” of democracy (Collier & Levitsky, 1997), which, besides its loose empirical application, is of questionable analytical value. Another author who has used the term in a more suggestive, yet conceptually unspecified, way is Ivan Krastev, a specialist on Central and Eastern European politics, who has proposed “democratic illiberalism” as a “major [and quite dangerous] trend of the modern political world” that gives priority to “building capitalism over building democracy” (Krastev, 2007, p. 62). Still, although for Krastev democratic illiberalism is distinct from populism, they may work in tandem to produce their catastrophic results: “The liberal era that began in Central Europe in 1989 has come to an end. Populism and illiberalism are tearing the region apart” (Krastev, 2007, p. 56).

Furthermore, Krastev argues that what we are witnessing in the new populism is a structural conflict between elites that are becoming increasingly suspicious of democracy and angry publics that are becoming increasingly illiberal. “The major protagonists of European politics are elites who dream of a politically-correct form of limited suffrage, while the people are convinced that they already live under a regime of limited suffrage.” Unlike the extremist parties of the 1930s, argues Krastev, the new populist movements worldwide do not aim to abolish democracy. What they do oppose, however, is the representative nature of modern democracies, the protection of the rights of minorities, and the constraints to the sovereignty of the people: all requirements of EU alignment.

Hungary's populist Prime Minister Victor Orbán when, in a speech in July 2014, he described his views about the future of his country as a purely illiberal state. Here are his exact words: “And so in this sense the new state that we are constructing in Hungary is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not reject the fundamental principles of liberalism such as freedom, and I could list a few more, but it does not make this ideology the central element of state organization, but instead includes a different, special, national approach” (Orbán, 2014).

Takis Pappas, in a re-conceptualizing effort that takes the analysis on populism a step further, eventually achieves a minimal definition that understands contemporary populism simply as democratic illiberalism. Within his analysis he highlights “[...] our new minimal definition of modern populism points directly to its two negative poles, that is, political liberalism (as has been analyzed by several authors, most notably Rawls, 2005) and autarchy (or nondemocratic illiberalism). [...] Populism, in short, may be democratic but never liberal. Such a conception points to two clear cleavage lines that may open up in modern politics and which are essential for further understanding the populist phenomenon: one cleavage dividing democratic from

nondemocratic forces (which effectively pits liberals and populists jointly against autocratic nondemocrats) and another dividing liberal from broadly illiberal forces -which pits liberals against populists and non democrats jointly (Pappas 2016).

The current situation in Hungary and Venezuela shows us what populism can do when it takes full control of a country. Supported by impressive popular majorities in elections, populist leaders like Viktor Orbán and Hugo Chávez have introduced new constitutions that significantly undermine the checks and balances of liberal democracy. In addition, loyalists have been put at the head of non-majoritarian institutions, such as the courts and other oversight committees, often for periods that extend well beyond the legislative term. Any opposition is frustrated by a combination of legal and extra-legal pressures, from raids by tax agencies to the rejection of renewals of media licences. In short, populism is an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism. (Mudde 2015)

2.7.1 Populism as a threat for the EU: The rise of "democratic illiberalism"

As Ralf Dahrendorf argues, today, even the accusation of populism can be populist. "The border between democracy and populism, election campaigning and demagoguery, discussion and seduction, is not always easy to draw." For Dahrendorf, the root cause for the rise of populism is the diffusion of power – governance replaces government. A gap has opened up between citizens and power, information gaps that invite conspiracy theories and patent recipes. The parliamentary process is empirically the best antidote to populism. But what happens when within democracy, illiberal and liberal policies have to come to terms with each other? Perhaps this is the exact challenge in Europe today: to maintain a European liberal structure together with member states that practice illiberal democracy.

But since contemporary European democracy involves illiberal practices, the dichotomy between illiberalism, democracy and liberalism becomes almost invisible. At the same time, populism cannot clearly define the 'era of people', but instead a communicative path in which different ideologies wrestle for prevalence. Nearly two decades ago, the political commentator Fareed Zakaria wrote an article called "The Rise of the Illiberal Democracy," in which he worried about the rise of popular autocrats with little regard for the rule of law and civil liberties. Governments may be elected in free and fair elections, he wrote, and yet routinely violate their citizens' basic rights. (Rodrik & Mukand 2015)

In its most extreme interpretation, populism rejects all limitations on the expression of popular will, such as protection of minorities' rights and independence of key institutions (Mudde, 2004). In this perception populism appears as a serious threat to democratic system. It seems even more dangerous when we look on how democracy in populism's view should look like. Based on Schmitt's vision of democracy, populists build their own ideal political system. One cannot say that it is clearly a reflection of Schmitt's theory, but some common ground can be found. Populism democracy is "in the firm grip of the people, nourished by elections and referendums, adulterated by the machinations, pedantry, corruption, clientelism and pluralism typical of official politics" (Pasquino in: Albertazzi, McDonnell, 2008:35). One can assume that the real threat for liberal democracy nowadays is a rise of illiberal democracy and consequences of this emergence. An example is Syriza in Greece. Even if Tsipras never admitted the illiberal line his government follows like the Orbán did, he is in fact backing up his populist identity within the illiberal democratic practice in the name of European democracy.

2.7.2 Democracy as a host for liberal and illiberal practices

The American diplomat Richard Holbrooke pondered a problem on the eve of the September 1996 elections in Bosnia, which were meant to restore civic life to that ravaged country. "Suppose the election was declared free and fair," he said, and those elected are "racists, fascists, separatists, who are publicly opposed to [peace and reintegration]. That is the dilemma." Indeed it is, not just in the former Yugoslavia, but increasingly around the world. Democratically elected regimes, often ones that have been re-elected or reaffirmed through referenda, are routinely ignoring constitutional limits on their power and depriving their citizens of basic rights and freedoms. From Peru to the Palestinian Authority, from Sierra Leone to Slovakia, from Pakistan to the Philippines, we see the rise of a disturbing phenomenon in international life: illiberal democracy. It has been difficult to recognize this problem because for almost a century in the West, democracy has meant liberal democracy - a political system marked not only by free and fair elections, but also by the rule of law, a separation of powers, and the protection of basic liberties of speech, assembly, religion, and property. In fact, this latter bundle of freedoms, what might be termed constitutional liberalism, is theoretically different and historically distinct from democracy. As the political scientist Philippe Schmitter has pointed out, "Liberalism, either as a conception of political liberty, or as a doctrine about economic policy, may have coincided with the rise of democracy. But it has never been immutably or unambiguously linked to its practice." Today the two strands of liberal democracy, interwoven in the Western political fabric, are coming apart in the rest of the world. (Zakaria 1997)

The major question underlying any assessment of the quality of democracy is how to discriminate between better and worse democratic units. The number of normative criteria that could be used to evaluate democracies is, however, virtually unlimited. Levitsky and Way studied the quality of democracy in Latin America. They made a distinction among polyarchies: even though all of them allow universal participation and legal opposition to the ruling party, effective participation and competition vary from country to country. This suggests that countries with similar levels of democratization might take advantage of their democratic institutions to different degrees. Following this observation, three dimensions of the quality of democracy are explored: civil rights, participation and effective competition. Following Hill, these three dimensions are conceived as the extension of Robert Dahl's concept of polyarchy (Levitsky & Way 2002). Perhaps the same analysis-approach could help scholars explain the different populist means in the EU member states and define the actual threats and errors that might occur from populism.

What we seem to be witnessing is a wholesale reaction against liberalism and an indifference to democracy. Part of this looks comprehensible to respectable centre-left or centre-right thinkers. For since the 1970s an ever-freer market system has increased inequalities everywhere; the belief that a bigger pie, however divided, would ultimately result in increased standards of living for all has proved delusory. And here one has to say that the *vox populi* may intuitively grasp the obvious, even though it has mostly eluded the educated. And this is that the conflict now between an economically liberal right and a culturally liberal left is in many ways a sham. For it is not an accident that the right have been winning the economic war and the left the cultural one. In deep reality it is *liberalism* - the cult of the unrelated, freely-choosing individual - that has been winning both wars in a cunning two-pronged assault of conscious enemies who are secret allies. This triumph involves above all the notion that that there is no common shared sense of the human good; the good is just

whatever we happen diversely to prefer. But now the massed expression of a common view about, at least, a local good life is interrupting all this.

2.8 The retreat to nationalism and the “Uncivil Society”

One might have expected that an eventual reaction against neoliberalism would be a revival of the left, along the lines of something like Corbynism. But that has not on the whole happened. Instead we are witnessing of a new, post-liberal alternative right. This is in part because socialism has gotten too mixed up with metropolitan liberalism in ignorance of its real history, but also for a deeper reason that even secular socialism does not seem able to serve. This is the fact that people really are concerned with inexpressible common identities and shared values and lifestyles that are sometimes hard to put into words. (Milbank 2017)

Chambers and Kopstein argue that the speeches of holocaust deniers, certain radical Islamic clerics, certain animal rights campaigners, neo-Nazi leaders and white supremacists pose pressing questions not only about their freedom of speech but more broadly on the social and political conditions that allow their organizations to flourish. These worries are not just about words. In several European countries attacks by skinheads against migrants are becoming commonplace news. Terms such as populism, xenophobia and racism appear frequently in the press in the context of recurrent attacks against refugees, Roma people and gays in several EU countries, which are spearheaded by a variety of extremist groups. Most frequently, in recent years, alarms have been raised about the extreme right. Right-wing organizations have, in some contexts and for some periods of time, scored notable electoral successes, but their impact on civil society is often perceived to be as threatening as their success in the ballot box. Their influence has also involved supporting and justifying forms of political violence and discriminatory rhetoric.

More organized right-wing groups form networks of like-minded social circles and engage in extremist propaganda, often using new technologies such as internet-based mobilization. Exclusionist right-wing organizations’ staff encourage and support racist social movements. These and similar activities constitute a distinct type of associations, which observers have called “uncivil society”.

The emergence of right-wing uncivil society organizations has often been interpreted as a worrying indicator of more general problems. The differentiating adjective “bad” in “bad civil society” implicitly addresses a debate that has taken place in the social sciences over recent decades on the role of civil society in the promotion of democratic regimes. A “bad civil society” or an uncivil society is a civil society, which unlike other types of civil society, cannot conceivably be said to accept and foster democracy. Putnam (2000) classifies the democratic contribution of civil society organizations in terms of two functions; whether they are simply producing feelings of solidarity among members, or whether they allow a process of reaching out to other individuals, in other words, bonding or bridging. The democratic benefits of associationism would be related to the second function. However, theorists of uncivil society point out that there is something distinctive in the associations of violent, anti-democratic and xenophobic groups, which cannot be classified using these categories (Chambers and Kopstein, 2001).

2.8.1 European uncivil society: the extreme right

Anti-political sentiments have emerged in Europe on the tail of a set of recurrent corruption scandals. They emerge as a consequence of anti-elitism, which is sometimes fuelled by an anti-political popular media. For the extreme right, anti-politics and more specifically anti-party sentiments are useful for several reasons. Firstly, for much of the extremist right, there are historical ideological elements of rejection of the structures and values of liberal democracy, on which all other parties and political systems are based. Secondly, as the extremist right is formed of small parties, often out of office, their anti-politics is an ideological necessity, and their need to rely on civil society organizations to support and publicize their policies is probably stronger than that for other parties. Thirdly, having been generally out of office for most of their recent past, extreme right parties are less likely to be involved in corruption scandals and for them taking an anti-political stance is therefore safer than for other political actors. Fourthly, the small-groups organizational structure of the extreme right and their relatively short lifespan means that they have less stringent obligations of ideological coherence. They can renew their ideological baggage more quickly than any other party families. As anti-politics is currently prominent in European political culture, it is expedient to define themselves in anti-political terms. This, however, means also emphasizing other aspects of their political repertoire -notably their alleged membership of civil society. (Ruzza 2009)

Chapter 3

Deconstructing Populist Rhetoric

3.1 Populist rhetoric

In Political Science research, the prominence and impact of experiments has grown in recent decades (Druckman et al, 2006). However, within the field of research on right-wing populism and/or media populism such a strong causal test has never been conducted. It is clear that right-wing populist leaders adopt a different approach of presenting themselves by using an idiosyncratic style or rhetoric (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007), and it is oftentimes assumed that this populist style and rhetoric is a decisive factor in determining the success, and the perception, of these politicians.

The populist rhetoric consists of an anti-establishment appeal or anti-elitism, and the celebration of the heartland, which is, according to Taggart (2000, p.95), a place ‘in which, in the populist imagination, a virtuous and unified population resides’. Populism ‘considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, “the pure people” versus “the corrupt elite” and that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people’ (Mudde, 2004, p. 543).

Research has shown that these substantive components of populism have to be set aside from populist style elements. Mainstream parties more easily adopt the presentation style of populists than the more substantive elements of their rhetoric. First of all, populists, and their followers, claim to be reluctant politicians, who only engage in politics because of a perceived extreme crisis (Taggart, 2000; Mudde, 2004). This corresponds with what Albertazzi (2007, p.335) calls ‘dramatization’: the ‘need to generate tension in order to build up support for the party by denouncing the tragedies that would befall the community if it were to be deprived of its defences’. Another aspect of the populist style is ‘ordinariness’

(Stewart et al, 2003, p. 228), ‘straightforwardness, simplicity and clarity’, (Taggart, 2000, p. 97), ‘man in the street communication styles’ (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008, p. 2) and ‘friend versus foe’ rhetoric (Weyland, 2001): populists use simple and strong language. A final aspect of the populist style is the emphasis on the strong (charismatic) party leader. Generally, populist movements are organized around a central leader, without whom the party organization would fall apart. Moreover, these leaders often have authoritarian traits: they refer to themselves as the crisis manager and have an ambivalent relation with democratic leadership (Taggart, 2000).

3.2 Populist frames

Populist parties prosper – and in some cases founder in different political contexts. Because of this, populist parties come in different varieties and some are far more radical than others. Distinguishing between populists is therefore vital, even if it is at times confusing, ambiguous and laden with traps. Counterpoint’s⁵(2014) volume on populist rhetoric includes a color-coded chart distinguishing between different populist parties, together with a detailed methodology explaining the reasoning behind the categorization (see supplementary Appendix: Counterpoint’s guide to populism. -a guide to understanding and responding to the rhetoric of populist politicians).

The American cognitive linguist George Lakoff has spearheaded the use of frames in political communications. According to Lakoff, frames are “mental structures” that organize the way we think. In politics, frames typically contain certain “actors”, together with a problem that the frame defines and a solution that it proposes. In this way, a frame can set the terms of the debate by highlighting what is considered important in a particular policy area and sidelining what is considered irrelevant. In addition, frames correspond to certain values. So, for instance, the “Ruled from above” frame contains two sets of actors – the rulers and the ruled. According to this frame, the problem is that the ruled are at the mercy of the all-powerful, unaccountable rulers; the solution is for the ruled to be able to rule themselves. The values evoked include liberty and democracy.

Frames can be activated by certain words and phrases that have special associations. When repeated over and over, these words and phrases help to instil the frame into people’s minds, compelling people to think about a particular subject according to the logic of the frame. For instance, the phrase “political elite” can be used to activate the “Ruled from above” frame. Lakoff argues that it is essential for communicators and politicians to talk about issues using frames that evoke their own values, not their opponent’s. The worst mistake to make is to repeat your opponent’s language, because that only helps to reinforce their values. Research consultancy Counterpoint distinguished five of the most important frames in the rhetoric of some European populist parties (Counterpoint 2014). The following table presents these frames together with applications and examples.

Parties studied: PVV (the Netherlands), Lega Nord (Italy), UKIP (the UK), Front National (France) and FPÖ (Austria).

1.

Frame	Ruled from above
Actors	The ruled and the rulers
Problem	The rulers who represent the elites have gained too much power over those they rule, the hard-working ordinary people. The ruled no longer have control over their own affairs and are at the mercy of the unaccountable rulers.
Solution	The ruled should be able to rule themselves. We must reduce the power and reach of the rulers, either by reducing their influence or by eliminating them altogether.
Activated values:	Liberty, Democracy
How is the frame applied?	Typically populists present themselves as the scourge of the ruling classes and the protectors of the subjugated people. At their most forthright, they characterize contemporary democratic leaders as vicious despots, the EU as a totalitarian regime, and government policies as flagrant violations of the public will. As true representatives of the people, populists argue that they have the power to overturn the anti-democratic consensus. Example: “Today is the start of the liberation of Europe from the monster of Brussels” – Geert Wilders, PVV31 While this frame is drawn upon by a range of different populists, it is also a particular favorite of UKIP. In using it, the party taps into a rich cultural seam of British liberalism. UKIP applies the frame in at least three ways:
Example 1	The EU rules the Member States Here the ruler is the EU and the ruled are the Member States. The EU infringes on the sovereignty of the Member States, making most of their laws and dictating what governments can and cannot do. Example: “All I want is a Europe consisting of individual, sovereign, democratic states” – Nigel Farage MEP, UKIP32
Example 2	The EU rules the people Here the ruler is again the EU, but this time the ruled are individuals themselves. In this application of the frame, individuals have no say over their rulers in Brussels, despite the EU having more and more control over their lives. EU officials, who have no interest in the wellbeing of ordinary Britons, decide who can come to live in Britain. UK citizens have lost control over who can enter the country. Example: “We believe in the right of the people of the UK to govern ourselves, rather than be governed by unelected bureaucrats in Brussels” – UKIP website33
Example 3	UK politicians rule the people In this application, the rulers are Britain’s politicians or “Westminster”, and the ruled are the people of the UK. Politicians in the UK have grown too powerful, the state is too big, and politicians refuse to give the people a say on the issues that they care about. Example: “the EU is only the biggest symptom of the real problem – the theft of our democracy by a powerful, remote political ‘elite’ which has forgotten that it’s here to serve the people.” – UKIP website34

2.

Frame	The bearers of truth
Actors	The naive cowards in power, the fantasists who have put their head in the sand; vs the “truth-tellers”, the realists who have the nerve to tell it as it is.
Problem	The naive cowards in power have not listened to the truth-tellers. As a result, a great disaster looms.
Solution	The naive cowards listen to the truth-tellers and disaster is averted.
Activated values:	Integrity, Foresight, Courage
How is the frame applied?	For populists, mainstream politicians are the “naive cowards” and they and their supporters are the “truth-tellers”. Populists do their best to warn the liberal pro-EU mainstream of its mistakes and of the terrible consequences of ignoring the growing fury of the European populace. But the political elite refuse to listen. Politicians from the PVV – especially its leader Geert Wilders – have used this frame since the party’s inception. For Wilders, it takes courage to flout political correctness and speak honestly about the real problems facing Dutch society – from the dangers posed by Islam to the monstrous despotism of the EU.
Example 1	“We must speak frankly to those people, too, who come over as guests of other states. We must tell them to respect the citizens of their host states and not enter their homes illegally and perform acts unbecoming of a guest. They must be respected and they must be protected – in the words of those who speak of high principles – but we must also consider the victims of their crimes: the other honest citizens of the European Union who, perhaps with good reason, do not always enjoy having the Roma as their neighbours. These are the uncomfortable facts that the majority of citizens and people think and that certain do-gooders do not have the courage to admit, because, the truth is, sometimes you also have to have the political courage to say ...” – Mario Borghezio, MEP, Lega Nord
Example 2	“Mr President, on the eve of World War I, the British Minister, Sir Edward Grey, spoke these words: ‘The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time’. We have before us the Polledo report on the political priorities of the European Parliament for the post-2013 period. This concerns both the legislation and the budget. This is therefore the vision of the EU on the future of European citizens... Let me make it clear: a right-thinking Member State such as the Netherlands will never be able to agree with this report. MEPs with a fresh, freedom-loving vision should throw this report straight in the bin. Why? Because, otherwise, the lamps will go out in Europe and we will be paving the way for a dark future for our children. My group want the lamps to stay on in Europe and, therefore, we will vote wholeheartedly against the report.” – Lucas Hartong MEP, PVV

3.

Frame	Paradise Lost
Actors	The representatives of tradition – who long for something lost in the past –

	and the representatives of modernity – who have forgotten or even betrayed the ideal “Paradise Lost”.
Problem	The representatives of tradition want to bring back the Paradise Lost, while the representatives of modernity are engulfed in what is depicted as a meaningless rush towards a soulless future.
Solution	Bring back the Paradise Lost
Activated values:	The frame activates the following values: Respect for Tradition, Sense of Belonging
How is the frame applied?	Populists tend to visualise the Paradise Lost as a stable and confident nation that has been broken down and reimagined by a series of out-of-touch policy-makers. They apply the frame to a number of different social challenges: whether it is down to rising crime, anti-social behaviour, immigration, EU directives or human rights legislation, modern society has trampled over the glories of past decades. The solution is to apply the same policies that worked then and that have since been disregarded by self-important, short-sighted politicians. UKIP in particular is a regular user of this frame. For UKIP, the Paradise Lost is an independent, more homogenous Britain – the UK’s membership of the EU, the acceleration of immigration to Britain, and the liberal, modernising politics introduced by New Labour and the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition have transformed the country. Modern politicians have forgotten the Paradise Lost – some are too young to have seen it – but UKIP wants to bring it back: leave the EU, reduce immigration, stop multiculturalism, and turf out career politicians.
Example 1	“In scores of our cities and market towns, this country in a short space of time has frankly become unrecognisable ... Whether it is the impact on local schools and hospitals, whether it is the fact in many parts of England you don’t hear English spoken any more. This is not the kind of community we want to leave to our children and grandchildren” – Nigel Farage MEP, UKIP
Example 2	“In our glorious history, millions have died to ensure that our country remains free. Today, we are simply allowing our right to self-determination to be stolen from us.” – Marine Le Pen MEP, Front National

4.

Frame	Reinstating Common Sense
Actors	The bookish, disconnected professional politicians vs the down-to-earth, practical real representatives of the people.
Problem	The professional politicians are in charge. Their ideas border on the absurd but are nevertheless being implemented to disastrous effect. They have subverted the natural order of things, because they have no appreciation of nature, “real life” or the heartland.
Solution	We need to listen to the non-professional politicians who have other forms of experience – they are in touch with reality and can find the way out of the mess the politicians have gotten us into.
Activated values:	Natural Order, Competency
How is the frame	Populists apply this frame with a range of different political actors in mind. A common target is the EU. For populists, EU politicians in the Commission

applied?	<p>and the Parliament are the exemplar of the disconnected professionals, surrounded by uncaring bureaucracy and unaware of the outside world. Many populists believe it is their job to stir up the Parliament and inject some common sense into MEPs.</p> <p>While many populists use “Reinstating common sense”, the frame is not limited to parties that have remained outside of government. Both the Lega Nord and the FPÖ have been part of coalition governments but employ the frame regularly. As with other populists, the Lega Nord has drawn an opposition between right-thinking, humble Northern Italians and the corrupt, technocratic political class in both Rome and Brussels.</p> <p>Similarly, the FPÖ uses this frame on issues ranging from the EU to immigration, contrasting political elites with the ordinary people whom they claim to represent. Particularly fertile ground here is the subject of immigration. According to the FPÖ, elite-driven policy-making on immigration is becoming more and more absurd, far removed from the immediate concerns of “ordinary people”. Only the FPÖ can restore common sense to Austria’s immigration policy.</p>
Example 1	<p>“We’re talking about the year 2006. All politicians have resigned themselves to the dominant government... All politicians? No, there’s one from a non-compliant party, the FPÖ, who keeps on resisting. I’m HC, a representative of the people...” – Austria First (HC Rap), Heinz-Christian Strache, FPÖ</p>
Example 2	<p>“[Europe may have] taken away the people’s identity, currency, and sovereignty, but not their common sense” – Roberto Calderoli, senator, Lega Nord</p>

5.

Frame	Order versus chaos
Actors	The people who long for order and stability and the bringers of chaos and uncertainty.
Problem	The bringers of chaos have undermined order, destroyed the social fabric, and wreaked havoc on people’s lives.
Solution	Return to a state of order.
Activated values:	Control, Order, Solidarity
How is the frame applied?	<p>Populists tend to portray the policies of mainstream actors as encouraging chaos. They accuse the mainstream of neglecting a set of grievances – particularly with respect to immigration, crime and Islam – that have fundamentally disrupted the social order. Since the onset of the Eurozone crisis, populists have attempted to depict themselves as the bringers of certainty and solidity in an age of perilous economic and political transition.</p> <p>The “Order versus chaos” frame is often used by the Front National. Their prime application is immigration: a prior age of order, simplicity and homogeneity has become fundamentally disrupted by agents of chaos. These actors, including national and EU politicians and big business, have undermined the social order. Working people, who desire order and fear “insecurity”, face on-going social fragmentation and instability, including the weakening of the welfare state and of French identity. To reverse this disaster, immigration needs to be reduced and priority needs to be given to French nationals. Tied in with this frame is the metaphor of the nation as a</p>

	<p>family. As cognitive linguist George Lakoff explores in his book <i>The Political Mind</i>, the family is a recurring source of metaphors in US politics for both the left and the right. As Lakoff argues, both conservatives and liberals project their own versions of the ideal family (the “strict father” model for conservatives and the “nurturant parent” model for liberals) onto the country’s different governing institutions. For the FN in France, the family represents security, stability, and strong social ties. The metaphor of the nation as a family consequently evokes feelings of order and solidity; immigration threatens to disrupt these familial bonds. The first of the following examples illustrates Le Pen’s use of the family and the “order versus chaos” frame.</p>
Example 1	<p>“Putting a stop to immigration is of urgent social need. Solidarity does not just happen. Solidarity is a sentiment that can only exist as long as there is a community of values, a common cultural base, within which everyone recognizes him or herself. And ever since our societies have been organized as nations, the nation is the natural framework for the exercise of solidarity. Social security, our whole system of social protection, our consent to pay taxes rest on this principle. The only reason we are willing to pay for each other, to insure each other against the risks of life, to protect each other is that we recognize that we are of the same family. And this family is France (...). [M]ass immigration carries with it the seeds of the destruction of our national solidarity.”</p> <p>– Marine Le Pen, Front National</p>
Example 2	<p>“Mr President, we need to recognise that the removal of border controls has not just brought us advantages, such as convenient travel. These open borders have also naturally resulted in illegal immigration, while also making it child’s play for international criminal organisations to operate throughout Europe. You will all be aware of the undesirable side-effects: homes have been burgled, houses stripped bare, cars stolen, people trafficked, while we in this House seem almost oblivious.”</p> <p>– Franz Obermayr MEP, FPÖ</p>

Table 2.

3.3 Cynicism and alienation

Attitudes of scepticism and distrust denote active civicness⁶, including an (relative) observant, reflexive and open-minded stance towards politics. Both attitudes express the idea of contingent or qualified opposition towards the European regime. Their criticism towards the practice of European integration does not mean that they perceive the idea of European integration in itself as a bad thing. Sceptic and distrustful citizens may well contest some elements of European integration while accepting other aspects. Rather than viewing Eurosceptic or Euro-distrustful attitudes incompatible with or in opposition to pro-European positions, they should be considered as reconcilable with positive evaluations of the larger European project. Cynicism and alienation, on the other hand, are in strict opposition to the EU and incompatible with the idea of European integration. Generally, cynic and alienated citizens disengage from politics, they adopt a low degree of observation and they have an outlook of pre-reflexive dissent. Cynics oppose the EU as an adjunct of their general opposition to contemporary political systems. Based on ideological opposition, alienated citizens take an anti-integration position and they outright reject EU membership as well as the very idea of European integration. (Krouwel & Abts 2007).

3.4 Hate Speech

There are copious examples of research on frames in communication using approaches similar to those outlined above, including analyses of affirmative action (e.g., Gamson & Modigliani 1987), support for war (e.g., Dimitrova et al. 2005), opinions about stem cell research (Nisbet et al. 2003, p. 48), cynicism toward government (Brewer & Sigelman 2002), and attributions of responsibility for the obesity epidemic (Lawrence 2004). These analyses provide insight into cultural shifts, media biases, public understanding and opinion formation. They also demonstrate that framing is best conceptualized as a process that evolves over time. The dimension of time allows us to separate new issues from previously debated issues that are familiar to those who pay attention to politics. Although new issues are often variants of other issues that have been in the news, they are distinguished by the absence of general agreement about how to construe them, whereas older issues have a defined structure and elicit more routine considerations.

“Traditional” issues can therefore potentially be transformed into “new” issues by reframing. In the 1980s and 1990s, for example, proponents of hate speech regulations on college campuses made considerable headway by drawing a parallel between racial harassment in the university and sexual harassment in the workplace (Chong 2006). They argued that without speech code regulations, universities could become hostile educational environments in which some students were deprived of an equal opportunity to thrive (Delgado 1982, 1991; Matsuda 1989; MacKinnon 1993). Thus, by arguing that hate speech was not a traditional First Amendment issue, they shifted the value dimension corresponding to the issue and reframed the debate in terms of whether hate speech violated the civil rights of women and racial and ethnic minorities. (Chong & Druckman 2007)

In *Hate Speech and Political Tolerance Norms Among Youth* Allison Harrell argues that the current measurement of political tolerance is limited to the two extreme cases of absolute tolerance and absolute intolerance and offers a third type called ‘multicultural political tolerance’ (p.112). As found in both samples, people who are of this latter type are able to distinguish between hate speech by skinheads and racists and other types of objectionable speech from groups like gay rights activists or Flemish/Quebec separatists. However, this type’s profile is not ‘in the middle’ between absolute tolerance and intolerance regarding its socio-economic and democratic background. For instance they share the democratic qualities of absolute tolerators, while their social background is closer to that of the intolerants. (Anikó Félix 2014)

3.5 Humour and cynicism in political communication: A horse that pulls the populist carriage?

This paper intends to underline one interesting facet of modern populist rhetoric: humour, often expressed as cynicism and joshing. It is a communicative path that has well contributed to the popularity of many political figures. Whether we take the example of Silvio Berlusconi, Beppe Grillo, Boris Johnson, Nigel Paul Farage or Donald Trump we are faced with the extreme politically incorrect argumentation accompanied by the lightness of comedic performance.

As Leggitt and Gibbs (2000) point out, the function of sarcasm is not easy to pinpoint and can range from “being humorous, acting aggressively, achieving emotional control, elevating one’s social status, expressing attitudes, provoking reactions, mocking others [to] meeting the force of one’s meaning” (p.2). Hence, speaker intent and attitudes behind sarcasm can vary from negative to positive as Kim, J. (2014) explains: “Negative emotions such as contempt, anger, dislike and frustration may lead a speaker to use harsh and bitter sarcasm, whereas positive emotions can trigger a speaker to yield light-hearted sarcasm in a friendly way.” (Glaser, K. 2014)

In the book ‘Laughter and Ridicule: Towards a Social Critique of Humour’ (2005) Michael Billig studied the links between humour and social order. Billig’s own theoretical interventions begin with a critical reading of the oldest, and presently neglected, thought on humour – known collectively as the superiority theorists – ‘or the so-called haters of laughter’. He has made a distinction between humour’s rebellious and disciplinary functions, pointing out the controversy that relies on the fact that one person’s harmless bit of teasing will be another’s cruelty. *Laughter and Ridicule* shifts a gear in chapters six and seven, on Henri Bergson’s *Laughter* (1911) and Sigmund Freud’s *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905) respectively. In extracting the essential points from each, Billig argues that ‘Bergson has illustrated, but not explained, something about the cruelty of laughter’ and that ‘Freud’s distinction between the joke-work and the tendentious purpose of a joke provides the basis for a critical approach to humour’. While these are the two most original humour theories they also, significantly, shy away from their own implications for a theory of laughter as ridicule. Billig makes reference to humour as a form of rhetoric, and states that ‘humour, just as much as any other rhetorical device, does not belong to one party. It can be recruited in the service of conservatism as well as radicalism’. He also contributes to this collection with a chapter outlining the connection between extreme forms of comic racism and violence, a form of humour often overlooked by scholars of ethnic joking. ‘If meaning has to be socially policed, then mockery and laughter are the friendly neighbourhood officers, who cheerily maintain order. And sometimes they wield their truncheons with punishing effect’.

Humorous approach, no matter what the subject or the target audience is, sets its own stage of communication where ignorance and communicational gaps melt into a sort of pleasant collective experience. The profound popularity of populist humour relies on the fact that it provides a safe environment where the “bad elite” can even be entertaining. Extreme positions accompanied by comedic attitude appear to be less extreme and easier to adopt, since the literal message remains encrypted in the prevailing intention of cheeriness. Social media has played a significant role in the success of this type of communication. There is a high probability for shares and likes when a comment intends to generate a smile.

Social analysts have long recognized the importance of embarrassment for maintaining social order. Most notably, Goffman (1967) in his classic essay ‘Embarrassment and Social Order’ suggested that the social codes, which permit daily interaction, would lose their force without the possibility or threat of embarrassment. It will be suggested that analysts such as Goffman, who have argued for the social importance of embarrassment, have tended to overlook the extent to which humour, especially ridicule, is a necessary component of embarrassment. Even humour researchers have tended to ignore this vital social role of humour, seeing humour as a useful, but essentially surplus, element of social life. They tend to treat humour as a ‘safety-valve’ that siphons off unwanted tensions, or as a bonding mechanism that enables groups to withstand social difficulties. In such accounts, humour is seen to come to

the rescue of social bonds, rather than being integral to social order. By contrast, it can be argued that humour is not a surplus topic. If it is essential for embarrassment and if embarrassment is essential for social order, then so must humour be vital for social life. (Billig 2001)

3.6 Packaging politics as entertainment: The Italian example of Silvio Berlusconi and Beppe Grillo

Oppositions and contradictions play a central role in humour, both for theorists (Bakhtin 1984; Douglas 1968; Freud 1990) and within an Italian tradition (Di Martino 2011; Pirandello 1974). On comedic performance, Gilles Deleuze has observed, “By scrupulously applying the law we are able to demonstrate its absurdity” (1971:77). It follows, then, that political humour overdoes it: Exaggerating political forms reveals the logics that undergird them (Boyer and Yurchak 2010). But humour is also about mockery and derision and, at times, embarrassing and ridiculing its targets. Embarrassing faux pas, Michael Billig (2001) suggests, do not necessarily produce empathy in onlookers, as humour theorists had initially conjectured. Rather, he argues, the enjoyment of such moments derives from their social mismatches, disruptions, or ambiguity (Billig 2001:29). In turn, this pleasure is “disciplinary” and reinforces the social order by rendering those who laugh both happily transgressive and compliant (Billig 2005:176). For example, the kind of humour disseminated by Berlusconi, relies on a cynical national audience: It stems from a distrustful citizenry that finds amorality in politics to be dismally normal. The cynicism is reciprocal, as Berlusconi’s own humour and political manoeuvres exhibit contempt for traditional moral standards. Žizek (2012), for instance, has referred to “[Berlusconi’s] rule through cynical demoralization.” Catherine Fieschi and Paul Heywood have also suggested that cynicism -“a willingness to engage, but with lower expectations” -sustains Berlusconi’s “entrepreneurial populism” (2004:293). They define this form of populism as a media-heavy right-wing politics with business-based leaders and a less “xenophobic tenor” than “traditional populism,” which is animated not by cynicism but “lack of trust” (Fieschi and Heywood 2004:292). On the contrary, cynical citizens expect all politicians and leaders to be corrupt, conniving, and amoral, so, therefore, they come to value leaders’ street smarts (*furbizia*) or cleverness and capacity to “play the game” (Fieschi and Heywood 2004:303). In other words, Italians do have the ability to discern a political ruse, yet this backhandedness may be both widely expected and perceived as funny.

Concurring with Žizek’s (1989) earlier take on cynicism as a form of political ideology, Lisa Wedeen has examined satire and cynicism in Syria, calling it “the habituation to obedience-the combination of cynical lack of belief and compliant behaviour” (1999:154), which, she adds, may be found in both authoritarian regimes and Western liberal democracies. Berlusconi’s own attempts at humour and his clownish behaviour seem to be recognized in Italy as absurd, even funny, yet somehow inevitable. Take, for instance, journalist Francesco Merlo’s (2011) prediction: “From now on [post-Berlusconi], jokes in politics will be remembered like a lifejacket for misfits, the ultimate safe house for the inadequate.” Merlo cynically characterizes Berlusconi as a self-evidently deplorable leader -a misfit-and his humour as survivalist: the “lifejacket,” inflating what would otherwise sink.

It is also worth bearing in mind that the male figure has dominated the genre of Italian humour and comedy for several decades, or for centuries if we consider the tradition of 16th-century improvisational and theatrical comedy (*commedia dell’arte*; Rudlin 1994).

Berlusconi's jokes implicitly reference a much longer legacy of masculinized and highly visible Italian clowns, with whom an Italian audience of onlookers can identify and yet ridicule. In the world of post-war cinema, the Italian style of comedy (*commedia all'italiana*) often centred on ridiculing "the ineptitude of the Italian male" (Bini 2011:111). Many of the celebrated works of comedian Alberto Sordi were satires of the emerging middle class and, in particular, a "childish, conformist, cowardly, irresponsible, and sly" man (Bini 2011:136). While the films' comedic figures represented the flaws of Italian society, they also illustrated the viewer's own collusion in the country's social and political arrangements.

During the 1970s, Italy's "leaden years" (*anni di piombo*), marked by left-wing terrorist violence and widespread corruption, these comedies "relied on the construction of a 'typical' but often grotesque Italian, usually male" who "allow[ed] the viewer no exit from his or her own complicity with the violence (of workplace, home or street)" (O'Leary 2010:247). Still, some film critics have chastised Italian-style comedy for its ability to reduce citizens' desire to oppose or rise against particular political regimes. If we understand contemporary political satire as riding on the coattails of this comedic tradition, it is hardly surprising that it shares the same double bind: the capacity to promote scrutiny of political life yet also dumb down political critique.

Comparatively speaking, American and European news parody programs emerged within a monopolized and highly politicized field of television broadcasting -such conditions bear resemblance to those underlying the emergence of other news parody programs such as *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* (Boyer and Yurchak 2010), other forms of news parody across the globe and new forms of political irony (Haugerud 2012). News parody is one genre within a late 20th-century cultural shift toward greater media saturation and one in which televised media have played a strong role in shaping cultural identities, ways of being in the world, and new forms of desire and affect. *Striscia*⁷, like other parody programs, emerged at a time when voicing political critique was particularly challenging, and its broadcast in 1988 represents an early emergence of televised political satire with respect to other Western democracies. So too Italian politics and politicians were thrust toward theatrical politics -where increasingly outrageous and pre-orchestrated public displays upstaged the content of political discourse- sooner and more dramatically than their counterparts in other Western democracies were (Smith and Voth 2002; Boyer and Yurchak 2010:191).

3.6.1 Beppe Grillo and the web

Most recently, new social and political movements from radically different political positions are emerging across Europe using social media, posing a new challenge to existing political parties and structures. The Pirate Party in Germany and the Occupy movement are examples of movements that have employed social media to grow rapidly and create a significant political and social impact. Beppe Grillo, the comedian and blogger, is one of the first political figures to have embraced this change. He has used social media to communicate, recruit and organize, growing the *Moviment 5 Stelle* from practically nothing to a major political force in Italy in the space of three years, with it expected to play a crucial role in the 2013 Italian elections. His anti-establishment message has resonated with many against a backdrop of declining trust in political institutions, falling political party membership and ever-lower voter turnout. The *Five Star Movement* led by the comedian Beppe Grillo lies at the junction between different organizational models and conceptions of democracy: it combines an online and an offline presence; it has 'horizontal' structural elements, but a top-down decision-making process; it is positioned 'beyond' ideologies, while its electorate

comes from various political families. The work considers the history, message, leader, organization and electoral base of the movement, as well as the political opportunity structure that facilitated its growth in 2012 and the challenges it faces in the delicate phase of institutionalization.

As one of Italy's best-known comedians, Beppe Grillo had often exposed political and business scandals as part of his routines, but in 2005 he published his first post on his blog, www.beppegrillo.it, which established him as a public figure focusing primarily on political and societal issues. In the ensuing years, this became the most visited political blog in Italy and was the launching pad for other online and offline initiatives. Through the blog, Grillo encouraged readers to organize offline using meetup.com and discuss the topics he raised in his blog. Beppe Grillo meet-ups were quickly established all over Italy. As of 8 November 2012, there were officially 532 Grillo meet-up groups, containing 87,895 members and spanning 446 cities and 12 countries (although they were mainly based in Italy). In 2007, Grillo organised an event called 'V-Day', which brought the movement to a much wider media and audience. V-day, as Grillo explained in his blog, was short for 'Vaffanculo day' ('Fuck-off day'), a message directed in particular towards Italy's party political class. (Bartlett, Froio, Littler & McDonnell, 2013)

3.7 Entrepreneurial populism

One kind of entrepreneurial populism is that of politicians who have made a mark through their success in spheres outside mainstream politics. A representative example is Silvio Berlusconi (others might include Christoph Blocher, Ross Perot or Arnold Schwarzenegger). Berlusconi has all the hallmarks of the populist leader, but can nevertheless not be classified alongside Jean Marie Le Pen or Jorg Haider. Nor can he appear alongside Jacques Chirac or Tony Blair. While the latter have adopted a populist style in some instances, theirs is precisely that: a populist style, rather than populist politics. Figures such as Berlusconi on the other hand present a very particular type of profile. While striving to be perceived as a non-professional politician (something common to all populist leaders), Berlusconi's credentials as a successful businessman who is seen to have 'done well by the system' and ready to apply his brand of motivation, work and analysis to what is perceived as an inefficient and corrupt political system are key to his success. The reasoning behind a vote for the entrepreneurial populist might work as follows: although the system may be corrupt, the appropriate response is to vote for someone who can play this system to the mutual advantage of voter and candidate. In populist terms, the person for whom the vote is cast needs to present a certain set of characteristics that are in line with populist traits. The person needs to be seen as successful in the 'real world'. In other words, they must appear to be in politics as an outsider and a non-professional who has proven his worth in another 'more real' sphere of life. Here people like Berlusconi or Blocher in Switzerland fit the type as successful businessmen. The argument is consistent with Thompson's emphasis in his 'social theory of scandal' in which scandals are seen as struggles over symbolic power in which reputation and trust are at stake. As Thompson argues, reputation can be character-based (as in the appeal increasingly being made by mainstream politicians) or skills-based (as in the appeal made by entrepreneurial populists). The growing emphasis on personal trustworthiness that we have seen in democratic elections over recent years relies on leaders both distancing themselves from allegedly scandal-prone opponents and presenting themselves as honest and morally upright citizens of good character. However, the reputation claim of entrepreneurial populists follows an entirely different logic: their appeal is on the basis of what they have achieved, not their

personal integrity, and their take on scandals is that they represent the endemic corruption of all mainstream politicians. The paradox in this sort of support for entrepreneurial populism is that the person does not necessarily have to be seen as trustworthy or moral. In fact, in most cases, their moral credentials are somewhat weak. (Fieschi & Heywood 2004)

Chapter 4

Euroscepticism in Danish Social Media

4.1 Tweeted Populism, Representation and mirroring

The arena of social media has a good share in the so-called transformation of democracy. Tweeting undigested opinions has become a commonly accepted act for all politicians. The new interactive experience allows citizens to follow the political brainstorming as a form of 'live streaming', allowing them so to be part of the political discourse and therefore become easier engaged with political issues. Political discourse in social media can be compared with the experience of watching reality TV, where one can easily feel as if sitting in the same living room with the guests of the show.

The politician represents a party or a government and therefore a specific group of people. In social media the politician can skip this heavy representative role and talk as an ordinary citizen. It is very common to see politicians having to withdraw a statement after some hours in order to come to terms with the main views of the party they represent.

Parliamentary discussions maintain the classical form of representation where the citizen is simply a viewer. Before social media, a citizen's interaction with politics would be mostly through elections (private) or by becoming part of a demonstration and protest (public). In social media this interaction can be characterized both as private and public and the experience of representation can work backwards: following a politician and reproducing/commenting on political tweets reveals the citizen that represents a politician instead of the politician that represents a citizen. We are now dealing with the controversy and the paradox where citizens have become more politically engaged and politicians have become depoliticized. In addition, freedom of speech in the form of "tweeted" propaganda, fake news and the stylistic adoption of any extreme expression in a social media's discourse, support an environment where the dangerous effects of populism can flourish democratically.

Pro-Europeanism and Euroscepticism are very often opposed to each other through debates in Danish Media. As a natural outcome Social Media have an additional but very crucial role in this debate. Live streaming news and events in social media give the opportunity to the public not only to follow the news at real time, but also to comment and follow the other real time comments. Often, the streaming comments provide more suspense and entertainment than the actual streaming news or events.

4.2 The case of the Danish People's Party (DPP)

The Danish failure to achieve a yes in the first referendum to ratify Maastricht in 1992 served

as a galvanising event for Eurosceptics across Europe. Around the two referendums we see two new formations whose purpose was to oppose Maastricht: the June Movement and the People's Movement Against EC-Union. The June Movement is seen as the more moderate of the two while the People's Movement Against the EC-Union wants Denmark to leave the EU. The party-based opposition came largely from the Progress Party on the right in combination with the Socialist People's Party (a New Populist and New Politics party respectively). By the time of the second referendum in 1993 the socialist People's Party had switched to a position of support for ratification but as, Thomas Pedersen (1996: 211) notes: 'Given the fact that the present [Socialist People's Party] leadership only accepts the EU in the watered-down Edinburgh version, it is probably correct to categorize the party as EU sceptics'. (Taggart 1997).

In Denmark, only two parties have been against all new EU treaties throughout their existence. Those parties are Danish People's Party and the left-wing Enhedslisten (Red-Green Alliance), although the DPP's predecessor, the Progress Party, was generally supportive of the EU (Meret 2009). Although most mainstream politicians favour a more prominent role for the EU, Danish public opinion is generally sceptical and in favour of the retention of strong national power. Referendums have rejected the Maastricht treaty and entry into the Eurozone. The DPP has managed to take advantage of this Euroscepticism more effectively than the other left-wing parties that have also expressed concerns about the EU. (Southwell & Lindgren 2013). Denmark's immigration rules are among the toughest in Europe - reflecting the power of the Danish People's Party (DPP), which came second in the last general election.

The Danish People's Party was officially founded in 1995, when Pia Kjaersgaard broke off from the previous major right wing populist party, the Danish Progress Party. The DF's success was immediate; in its first election in 1998, it received 7.4% of the vote. It was able to increase its vote share to 12% in the 2001 elections, and since then it has not seen its vote share fall below ten percent. In 2014 the party won the European Parliament election in Denmark by a wide margin, securing 27% of the vote. After the election, it joined the European Conservatives and Reformists group alongside parties such as the United Kingdom's Conservative Party and Poland's Law and Justice. The DPP received 21% of the vote in the 2015 general election, becoming the second largest party in Denmark for the first time amid a plurality for the centre-right parties. The People's Party came second behind outgoing Prime Minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt's Social Democratic Party (SD) (26.3% of the vote) but took first place amongst the right-wing parties in the general election on 18th June. The People's Party led by *Kristian Thulesen Dahl* won 21.1% of the vote and 37 seats in the Folketing, the only chamber of parliament (+15 in comparison with the previous elections on 15th September 2011). The election on 18th June 2015 revealed the populists as Denmark's leading right-wing party.

The stated goal of the Danish People's Party is "to protect our country, its people and the Danish cultural heritage", The DPP platform repeatedly makes reference to the importance of Danish cultural heritage and how it must be preserved and protected. The party quite bluntly states, "Denmark is not an immigrant-country and never has been. Thus we will not accept transformation to a multi-ethnic society". Consistent with its views on having a strong national identity, the Danish People's Party opposes membership to the European Union, as it does "Not allow Denmark to surrender its sovereignty". Despite being classified as right wing party, the Danish People's party firmly believes in protecting the national health system, adequate funding for education, and welfare programs, as long as they go to native

citizens. (Malone 2014)

4.3 Methodology

In case study #1 I chose to study the two most popular DPP politicians on social media before their recent success in the Danish elections.

- Using the keyword “EU”, all the posts of the period 2015-2016 were registered.
- All the posts are manually checked and classified as positive and negative.
- All “EU” posts are manually checked and classified as negative, angry, sarcastic and fearful.

Additionally, I distinguished:
Prevailing frames - metaphors
Prevailing hashtags
Repetitive quotes

Finally I registered the number of posts that were sharing newspaper articles and the posts that referred to newspaper articles.

In case study #2, in order to examine the links between the posts of the two politicians and the Danish news, I chose to study a popular newspaper during the same period (2015-2016)

- I distinguished the Top Occasions & Events at the time the articles appeared, using the same keyword (EU)
- From these articles I registered the number of articles where the two politicians are mentioned by using the keywords “Kristian Thulesen Dahl” and “Søren Espersen”
- I registered the number of articles referring to the EU filtered by the tagged location.

4.4 Case study #1: Kristian Thulesen Dahl and Søren Espersen

Kristian Thulesen Dahl has been leader of the Danish People's Party since 2012, following Pia Kjaersgaard's retirement from the post. He has been a member of the Folketing (Danish parliament) since 1994.

Søren Espersen is a Danish politician, journalist and author who since 8 February 2005 has been a member of the Danish Parliament for the Danish People's Party as well as its foreign affairs spokesperson. Since 2012 he is the Deputy-Chairman of The Danish People's Party.

Kristian Thulesen Dahl and Søren Espersen are the two most popular politicians from the Danish People's Party in social media. Dahl, active on Facebook has 65,701 followers and Espersen, active on Twitter has 7,006 followers (he is the most popular DF politician on Twitter)

Results:

The following research is using 2 data sets:

First Data Set

Facebook
Collecting Facebook posts by <i>Kristian Thulesen Dahl</i>
since: 2015-01-01 until: 2016-12-31

First phase

This set contains 753 posts where we have 102 instances mentioning the EU. The “EU” posts are manually checked and classified as positive and negative. All posts are negative. (figure 1)

Second phase

All “EU” posts are manually checked and classified as negative, angry, sarcastic and fearful. 76 include negativism (74,5%), 10 include anger (9,8%), 15 include sarcasm (14,7%) and 2 fear (1,9%). 19 (18,6%) are sharing Danish Media -newspaper articles and TV news-. (figure 2)

Second Data Set
Twitter
Collecting tweets by <i>Søren Espersen (@espersendf)</i>
since: 2015-01-01 until: 2016-12-31

First phase

This set contains 437 tweets where we have 78 instances mentioning the EU. The “EU” posts are manually checked and classified as positive and negative. All posts are negative. (figure 1)

Second phase

All “EU” tweets are manually checked and classified as negative, angry, sarcastic and fearful. 19 include negativism (24,3%), 9 include anger (11,5%), 42 include sarcasm (54%) and 2 fear (2,5%). 32 (41%) are sharing or referring to British and Danish Media -newspaper articles-. (figure 2)

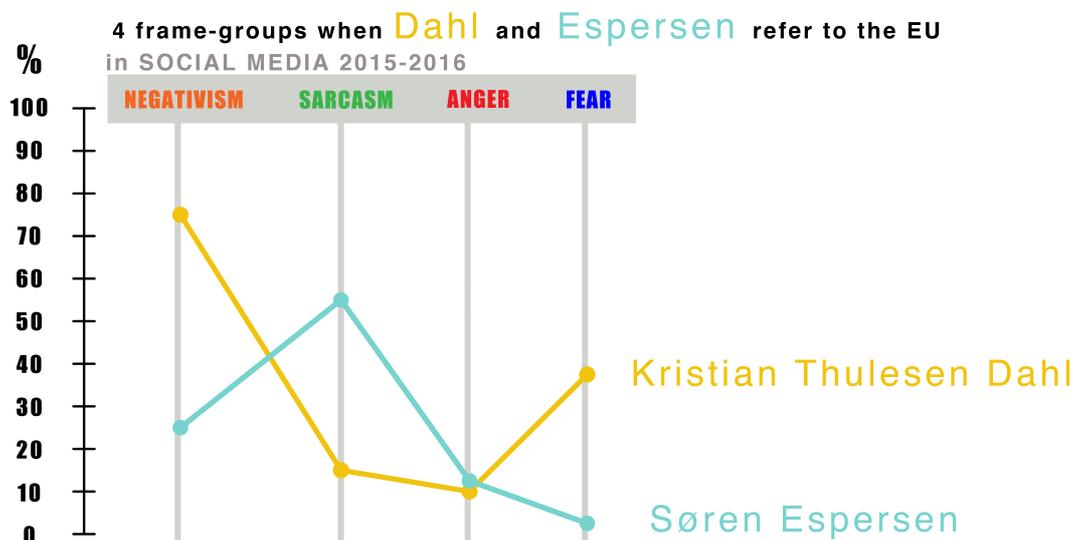
Deconstructing Populist Rhetoric: Danish People's Party DPP / Dansk Folkeparti DF



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Figure 1

Deconstructing Populist Rhetoric: Danish People's Party DPP / Dansk Folkeparti DF



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Figure 2

NEGATIVISM	Referring to the EU using a negative approach, offensive
SARCASM	Referring to the EU using a sarcastic approach
ANGER	Aggressive, attacking
FEAR	Referring to the threats connected to the EU project

Prevailing Frames:

- EU-Court (EU-Domstolen)
- EU elite in Brussels (EU-eliten i Bruxelles)
- "European by heart"
- The Fall of the Roman Empire
- EU's embarrassing impotence (EU's pinlige impotens)
- The EU introduces gun diplomacy (EU indfører pistol-diplomati)

Quote Repetition:

- AGREE? PLEASE SHARE (ENIG? DEL GERNE)
- It is urgent (Det haster)

Prevailing Hashtags

- Vote_no (#stemnej)
- Vote_danish #stemdansk

Prevailing political discourse Hashtags

- #eu
- #dkpol
- #EUpol

Repetitive Quotes:

- "Our Denmark - there is so much we have to take care of." (Vores Danmark - der er så meget, vi skal passe på.)
- "More Denmark - Less EU"(Mere Danmark - Mindre EU)
- "Shall we defend Denmark together?" (Skal vi sammen forsvare Danmark?)

Top Occasions & Events

- Europol
- Common European Asylum System
- Border Control
- BREXIT

4.5 Case study #2: The interaction between Social Media and Mass Media

- **Jyllands Posten:** Danish daily broadsheet newspaper, independent liberal (centre-right) officially supported the Conservative People's Party

Samples

After tracking the stories & articles that mention the EU in the period of two years (2015-2016), we can distinguish 10 events as shown in figure2. #EU (11706 articles)

Results

Within the period 2015-16, Kristian Thulesen Dahl is mentioned in 403 articles, Søren Espersen in 430 articles and the Danish peoples party in 5804 articles.

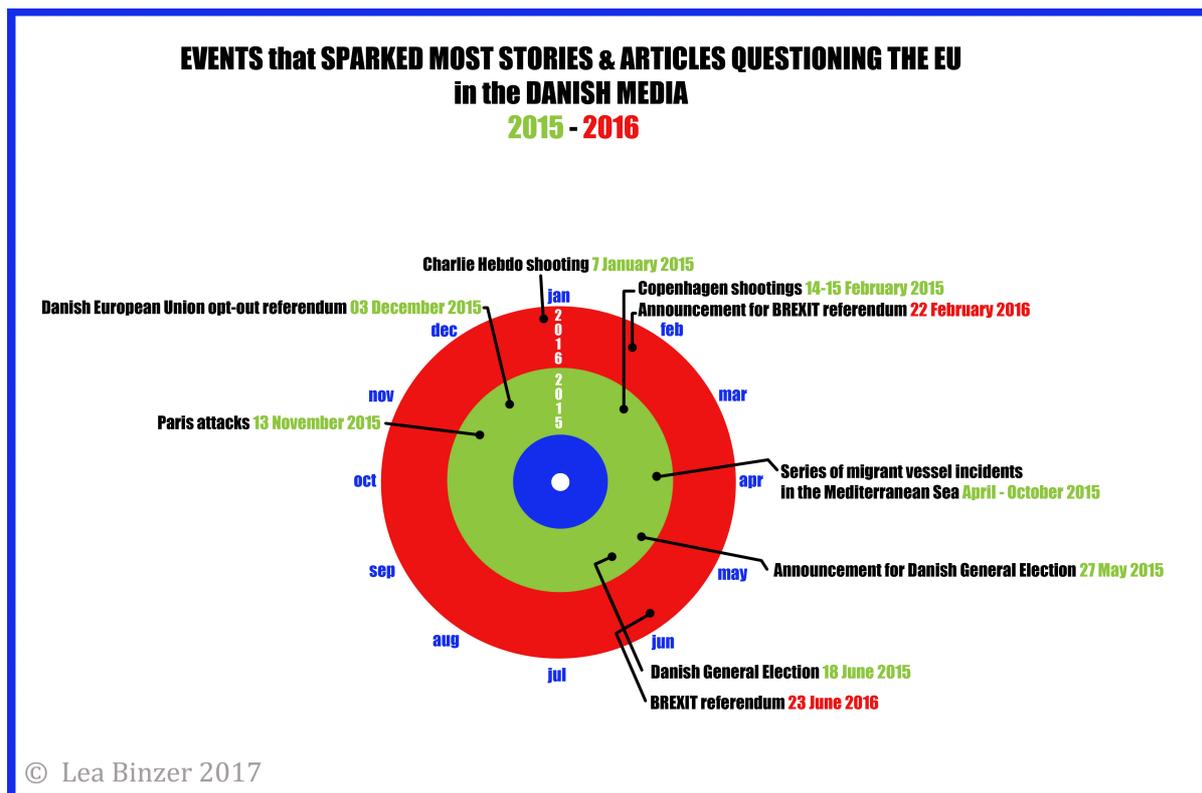


figure 3

Events:

BREXIT

On February 22 2016, Prime Minister David Cameron officially announced to the Houses of Parliament that Britain would vote on the fate of its relationship with the European Union on June 23rd, 2016.

Terror attacks in European capitals:

- Charlie Hebdo shooting 7 January 2015⁹
- Copenhagen shootings 14–15 February 2015⁹
- Paris attacks 13 November 2015¹⁰

Series of migrant vessel incidents in the Mediterranean Sea:

- Five boats carrying almost two thousand migrants to Europe sank in the Mediterranean Sea, with a combined death toll estimated at more than 1,200 people. April 2015
- An image of a drowned toddler washed up on the beach in one of Turkey's prime tourist resorts swept across social media after at least 12 presumed Syrian refugees died trying to reach the Greek island of Kos. September 2015
- Series of migrant vessels captured or capsized between the Turkish coast and the Greek islands. Rescue operations.

General Election 18/06/2015

Danish European Union opt-out referendum 03/12/2015:

A referendum on one of the country's opt outs from the European Union was held in Denmark on 3 December 2015. Specifically, the referendum was on whether to convert Denmark's current full opt-out on home and justice matters into an opt-out with case by case opt-in similar to that currently held by Ireland and the United Kingdom. Approval of the referendum was needed for Denmark to remain in Europol under the new rules. However, it was rejected by 53% of voters.

Number of articles referring to the EU filtered by the tagged location:

EU	1288
Storbritannien (UK)	461
Tyrkiet (Turkey)	375
Grækenland (Greece)	353
Rusland (Rushia)	256
Tyskland (Germany)	211
USA	132

4.6 Conclusions

4.6.1 Online behaviour of the two most popular Danish RW politicians

Both Kristian Thulesen Dahl and Søren Espersen always use negative frames when they refer to the EU. They synchronize their emotionally loaded post activity around the same events and occasions.

Søren Espersen (twitter) is a journalist with a much bigger experience on Media than Dahl. Therefore he uses social media with higher confidence and increased ability. Almost half of his posts (41%) are based on newspaper articles from Denmark and abroad (Britain) that are backing up his arguments. These articles are always Eurosceptic articles. We would characterize him the entrepreneur-populist, who uses his journalistic experience as an effective communicative tool. More than half of his Eurosceptic posts (54%) use sarcasm and his comments often resemble the short and sharp jokes of stand up comedy. He uses a very tough approach towards the EU but manages to combine it with the lightness of a comedian.

Kristian Thulesen Dahl (facebook) gives a much more 'personal' touch in his post activity. He is posting many pictures of himself during private moments and uses repetitive quotes and images in his argumentation. Most of his posts (74,5%) are asking to be shared. He does not refer often to the media and when he does, it is because he is mentioned in the article or reportage (18,6 % of his posts). Most of his posts are characterised by negativism towards the EU together with cosy images of national stereotypes. His rhetorical frames are those of *the bearer of truth* and *the lost paradise*.

4.6.2 Interpreting populist rhetoric: the intention behind the message

Briefly, I outline the following preliminary findings:

1. The most charismatic (popular) social media actor uses sarcasm and negativism as the two most successful communicative tools.
2. The links between Danish Media and personal political communication in Social Media is very strong, often using common hashtags, allowing so the same debate to simultaneously take place in both platforms and with different modes of discourse.
3. Jyllands Posten refers to the Danish People's party almost 5 times more than to the EU. The events connected to the increased Eurosceptic discourse are the same in both platforms.

I sought to identify frames reflecting the Eurosceptic rhetoric of the two most popular DPP politicians in social media before their recent success in the Danish elections.

In the first instance I separated all EU-related posts as negative and positive. I anticipated that most of them would be negative and found out that all of them were negative. All negative posts were characterized as emotionally loaded posts and referred to the European Project expressing lack of trust. I identified five prevailing frames: Anger, negativism, sarcasm and fear.

Looking at the actual link of events and posts I would expect these frames inclined to support a populist party to:

- Gain party support
- Experience lower levels of confidence in political institutions
- Display lower levels of political involvement/interest

All the emotionally loaded frames are supposed to stimulate the immediate interest of the follower. This happens mainly with two ways:

- By transforming politics into entertainment (Søren Espersen)
- By declaring a state of emergence through fearology (Kristian Thulesen Dahl)

Finally, based on the notion that populist rhetoric is not fully engaged to the accurate message but supports the 'Intention behind the message' I argue that populism is based on a cynical view of politics combined with an instrumental view of democracy and institutions. Therefore I anticipate that a number of those who voted for Danish People's Party should exhibit higher levels of positive inter-personal trust than generalised distrust, coupled with a belief in the soundness of the democratic system.

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NOTES

(1.)

Paul Taggart introduced six features that describe the core of populism movement:

- Hostility to representative democracy
- “The people” as a heartland-center of populism ideology
- Lack of core values
- Tendency to be highly chameleonic
- Emergence as a reaction to sense of extreme crisis and finally
- Self-limiting quality of populism

(Taggart, in Meny, Surel, 2002)

(2.)

A massive wave of interest in the study of populism began developing during the 1970s and 1980s, mostly by Latin American scholars. Unlike the European pioneers, who aimed at definitions, this group of students on populism was primarily concerned with the socio-economic determinants of mass political movements that developed contemporaneously in their respective countries. Their aim was to explain “the conditions under which the political participation of the lower classes is channelled through a populist movement” (Germani, 1978, p. 95). In the end, there developed within the group two distinct approaches, one associated with modernization theory and another with structural Marxism. As all the cases studied have been either authoritarian regimes or outright dictatorships, this perception of populism could have no traveling capacity beyond these particular cases. So, the lessons from Latin American “classical” populism cannot be easily utilized in the study of populism in liberal democratic contexts.

(3.)

Country/Party	Post-crisis vote share percentage	Post-crisis vote change	Percentage vote retained post-crisis
EU Countries			
Belgium (Workers' Party of Belgium)	2.8 (average 2010-2014)	+2.0	350
Cyprus (Progressive Party of Working People)	32.7 (2011)	+1.6	105.1
Czech Republic (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia)	13.1 (average 2010-13)	+0.3	102.3
Denmark (Red-Green Alliance)	6.7 (2011)	+4.5	304.5
Finland (Left Alliance)	8.1 (2011)	-0.7	92.0
France (Left Front)	6.9 (2012)	+2.6	160.5
Germany (Left Party)	10.3 (average 2009-13)	+3.2	118.4
Greece (Communist Party of Greece)	6.5 (average 2009-14)	-1.4	79.3
Greece (Syriza)	21.2 (average 2009-14)	+11.1	424.0
Ireland (United Left Alliance)	2.2 (2011)	+1.1	200
Ireland (Sinn Féin)	9.9 (2011)	+3.0	143.5
Italy (Left Ecology Freedom)	3.2 (2013)	+0.1	103.2
Latvia (Latvian Socialist Party)	27.2* (average 2010-11)	+12.8	152.9
Luxembourg (The Left)	4.1 (average 2009-13)	+1.4	215.8
Netherlands (Socialist Party)	9.8 (average 2010-12)	-6.8	59.0
Portugal (Portuguese Communist Party)	7.9* (average 2009-11)	+0.3	104.0
Portugal (Left Bloc)	7.6 (average 2009-11)	+1.1	117.2
Slovenia (United Left)	6.0 (2014)	+6.0	n/a
Spain (United Left)	6.9 (2011)	+3.1	181.6
Sweden (Left Party)	5.7 (average 2010-14)	-0.3	96.6
UK (Respect)	0.1 (2010)	-0.2	33.3
<i>Average EU Countries</i>	9.2	+2.1	157.2
Non-EU Countries			
Iceland (Left-Green Movement)	16.3 (average 2009-13)	+2.0	114.0
Moldova (Party of Communists)	37.8 (average 2009-14)	-8.5	82.2
Moldova (Party of Socialists)	20.5 (2014)	+15.5	410
Norway (Socialist Left Party)	5.2 (average 2009-13)	-2.6	59.1
Russia (Communist Party of the Russian Federation)	19.2 (2011)	+7.6	165.5
San Marino (United Left)	8.9 (average 2008-12)	+0.3	103.4
Switzerland (Alternative Left - Labour Party/Solidarities)*	0.9* (2011)	-0.2	92.3
Ukraine (Communist Party of Ukraine)	8.6 (average 2012-14)	+3.2	159.3
<i>Average Non-EU Countries</i>	14.7	+2.2	148.2
Overall average	10.7	+2.1	154.6

Note: Parties marked with * were in coalition. Calculations from www.parties-and-elections.eu.

European radical left parties' national electoral performance (September 2008-January 2014)

(4.)

From Left to right: Kazin traces the ideological varieties of American populism, from late 19th century farmers, New Deal workers, and Cold War conservatives to the New Left of the 1960s, the New Right in the South, and the populist conservative movement under the Nixon and Reagan administrations. In the late 1940s populism "began a migration from Left to Right". Kazin discusses this shift and its aftermath through chapters on McCarthyism, the

New Left, George Wallace, and the conservative "capture" of populism under the presidencies of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan. (*The Populist Persuasion: An American History*)

(5.)

Counterpoint is a research consultancy that uses social science methods to examine social, political and cultural dynamics. With a focus on how civil society operates in different contexts, Counterpoint helps governments, NGOs and visionary businesses to develop solutions for more resilient and prosperous societies.

(6.)

Civiness is the quality of institutions, organizations, procedures, to stimulate, reproduce, and cultivate civility.

(7.)

Striscia la notizia is an Italian satirical television program on the Mediaset-controlled Canale 5. Founded in 1988, it is meant to be a parody of the daily news, which airs right before the program, but Striscia also satirizes government corruption and exposes scams with the help of local reporters who are also comedians. The program is directed and produced by Antonio Ricci and is hosted by two major comedians. Usually Ezio Greggio (who co-founded the show with Gianfranco D'Angelo) is assisted by another comedian (such as Enzo Iacchetti or Michelle Hunziker) for the winter season, after which there is a change of guard with the two comedians Ficarra & Picone. The name of the show literally translates in English as "the news slither". The polysemic term *striscia* (English: strip) refers to a cartoon strip (noun) while its conjugation *strisciare* is a verb which means "to crawl" or "to slither", thus allegorically referring to a worm or snake which slithers and bores underground digging holes and exposing "cheats".

(8.)

Charlie Hebdo shooting

On the morning of 7 January 2015 at about 11:30 local time, two brothers, Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, forced their way into the offices of the French satirical weekly newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris. Armed with assault rifles and other weapons, they killed 11 people and injured 11 others in the building. After leaving, they killed a French National Police officer outside the building. The gunmen identified themselves as belonging to the Islamist terrorist group Al-Qaeda's branch in Yemen, who took responsibility for the attack. Several related attacks followed in the Île-de-France region, where a further five were killed and 11 wounded.

Most popular hashtag: #JESUISCHARLIE

(9.)

2015 Copenhagen shootings

On 14–15 February 2015, shootings occurred in Copenhagen, Denmark. Two victims and the suspected perpetrator were killed, while five police officers were wounded.

The first shooting took place on 14 February at a public afternoon event called "Art, Blasphemy and Freedom of Expression" at the Krudttønden cultural centre, where a gunman killed one civilian and wounded three police officers. Swedish artist Lars Vilks was among the speakers and is thought to have been the main target because of his drawings of Muhammad. The second shooting took place later that night (after midnight, and, therefore, on the 15th), outside the city's Great Synagogue in Krystalgade. A gunman killed a Jewish

man on security duty during a bat mitzvah celebration, and wounded two police officers. Later that morning near Nørrebro station, police tracking the suspects shot and killed a man, after he opened fire on them while he attempted to enter a location under police surveillance. The man was identified as Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein, whom police said was responsible for both attacks.

Most popular hashtag: #Krudttønden.

Newspaper 'Liberation', as a solidarity-declaration in the front page of the 16th of February paper uses the 'reply' to the popular "je suis Charlie"

line: «VI ER DANSKERE»* (*NOUS SOMMES DANOIS, 'WE ARE DANES')

(10.)

November 2015 Paris attacks

On the evening of 13 November 2015, a series of coordinated terrorist attacks—consisting of mass shootings, suicide bombings, and hostage-taking—occurred in Paris, France, and Saint-Denis, one of its northern suburbs. Beginning at 21:16 CET, six mass shootings in central Paris and three separate suicide bombings near the Stade de France occurred. The deadliest attack was at the Bataclan theatre, where attackers took hostages and engaged in a stand-off with police which ended at 00:58 on 14 November. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) claimed responsibility for the attacks.

129 victims were killed, 89 of them at the Bataclan theatre. (number still rising)

A further 415 were admitted to hospital with injuries sustained in the attacks, including 80 people described as being seriously injured. In addition to the victims, seven attackers died, and the authorities continued to search for any accomplices remaining at large. The attacks were the deadliest in France since the Second World War, and the deadliest in the European Union since the Madrid train bombings in 2004.

Most popular hashtag: #prayforparis

Appendix: Counterpoint's guide to populism

Party	Country	Violent?	Hostile to representative democracy?	Extremist past?	Racist?	Xenophobic?	Islamophobic?	Anti-Semitic?	Homophobic?	Sexist?	Political contribution?	Direction?
Chrysi Avgi (Golden Dawn)	Greece	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Jobbik	Hungary	Medium	High	High	High	High	Low	High	High	High	High	High
Ataka (Attack)	Bulgaria	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
British National Party	UK	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs (Austrian Freedom Party)	Austria	Low	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Slovenská Národná Strana (Slovak National Party)	Slovakia	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Vlaams Belang (Flemish Interest)	Belgium	Low	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	Low	High	High	High	High
Front National (National Front)	France	Low	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	Low	High	Low
Partij Voor de Vrijheid (Party for Freedom)	The Netherlands	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	Low	High	High
Lega Nord (Northern League)	Italy	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Sverigedemokraterna (Sweden Democrats)	Sweden	Low	Medium	High	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	Low
Dansk Folkeparti (Danish People's Party)	Denmark	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	Low	High	High
United Kingdom Independence Party	UK	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Perussuomalaiset (Finns Party)	Finland	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Fremskrittspartiet (Progress Party)	Norway	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Alternative für Deutschland (Alternative for Germany)	Germany	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
Movimento 5 Stelle (5 Star Movement)	Italy	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	High	High	High	High	High	High	High

High danger Medium danger Low danger

This is a guide to understanding and responding to the rhetoric of populist politicians. But populists come in a different shapes and sizes. While there is a core set of ideas that holds these parties together, they vary wildly on many measures. A common mistake when dealing with populism is to tarnish the more moderate parties with the brush of far right extremism. When a derogatory epithet is inappropriate, it riles the party's support base and reinforces its rebel status. In this appendix, we provide a chart for distinguishing some of the most well-known populist parties. For each party, we have devised a set of dimensions that we think are crucial in evaluating the threat it poses. We have used a traffic light system for each dimension to measure the threat.

Three key messages emerge. First, these parties differ wildly: some are far more toxic than others.

Second, despite these differences, nearly all the parties we have included have their problems. Only some are anti-democratic, racist and xenophobic. But nearly all have difficulties making constructive democratic contributions to the political system. They have been effective at being parties of “no”, but that’s not what a democratic system is about; to be a legitimate part of a democratic system you need to be willing to compromise, articulate solutions and aggregate preferences: do these parties have an interest in using the power that marginalised voters give them to do more than vocalise grievances? It is also for these reasons that we are – and should be – wary of their presence in our political landscapes. Third, this guide may indicate how these different parties should be dealt with. There is little mileage in treating the more extreme parties in our guide as legitimate political forces. They are only intent on disruption and division, and in some cases, violence. But what do we do about those parties with deeply objectionable roots that have shown a willingness to change superficially or tactically, and are busy persuading voters that they are legitimate? How do we deal with them? For a party like the FN, given its roots and background, it would take a clean break: would the French FN publicly and formally break with its roots (in the way that the Italian neo-fascists of the MSI did when they became the National Alliance)? Would they be willing to turn away potential members with hard-line views to justify their claims that they are no longer a party of the far right? Such actions could be a both a litmus test of authenticity as well as a way of distinguishing parties we just don’t like from parties that are dangerous to democracy.

Methodology

This matrix evaluates the level of danger that populist parties in Europe pose across an array of dimensions. Based on our research, we consider these dimensions as the most relevant in order to determine how dangerous these parties are. On each dimension, we have ranked the party as green (we evaluate the party as posing little to no danger on this dimension), amber (we evaluate the party as posing some danger on this dimension) or red (we evaluate the party as posing significant danger on this dimension). There is of course an element of subjectivity to the rankings. But by adopting a comparative perspective we hope to give a balanced appraisal of the populist parties we include in the matrix.

We have evaluated each party according to the behaviour of the leadership, not its rank-and-file members or its voters. For some parties, there are clear and well-known differences between the approach of the leadership and others within the party. In these cases, we have made a specific note to clarify these differences.

We have included parties that are considered both populist and a form of protest. We have not included mainstream parties in our study. (We have also included the Norwegian Progress Party in the study, despite Norway not being a member of the EU. We have done this in order to provide a comparison between the more moderate form of populism the Progress Party represents and the other parties in the study.)

Below we explain each dimension and give examples to show the differences between the red, amber and green categories.

Violent

Red – members of the party leadership are connected to violent acts (EXAMPLE: a Golden Dawn spokesperson attacked a Communist MP on live television. There have also been arrests of senior Golden Dawn politicians in connection with the murder of Pavlos Fyssas)
Amber – the party is connected with violent groups or party leaders have made comments encouraging violence, but there is little evidence that members of the party leadership are

themselves violent (EXAMPLE: Jobbik is connected to banned paramilitary group Magyar Gárda, but party leaders have denounced violence)

Green – no evidence of violence within the party leadership (EXAMPLE: the leadership of the Sweden Democrats has rejected violence, despite the involvement of some of the party’s politicians in violent acts)

Hostile to representative democracy

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party’s values are not aligned with the tenets of representative democracy (EXAMPLE: senior politicians from Golden Dawn have praised Adolf Hitler and the party logo resembles a swastika.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party’s values are not aligned with the tenets of representative democracy (EXAMPLE: The Front National has a history of holding hostile views towards representative democracy, advocating direct democracy and the use of referenda on most political issues, and overall calling for more exclusively majoritarian norms, including more movement-based politics rather than party political politics.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party’s values are not aligned with the tenets of representative democracy (EXAMPLE: while UKIP has advocated referenda on certain issues, it has shown reverence for the UK’s form of parliamentary democracy, including the important role of political parties.)

Extremist past

Red – there is clear evidence from the party’s history that the party promoted (or promotes) values directly opposed to democracy and human rights (EXAMPLE: the Front National originated from extremist groups opposed to Algerian independence.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence from the party’s history that the party promoted (or promotes) values directly opposed to democracy and human rights (EXAMPLE: the roots of the Slovak National Party (SNS) are in the campaign for Slovakian independence in the 1990s. It has had a chequered past, with a number of splits and changes in approach. But the SNS has claimed continuity with the historical Slovak National Party, which in turn had members connected to the Nazi regime in Slovakia, and the party has shown support for fascist leader Jozef Tiso)

Green – there is little or no evidence from the party’s history that the party promoted (or promotes) values directly opposed to democracy and human rights (EXAMPLE: the PVV does not have an extremist past. Geert Wilders founded the party after leaving the centre right VVD over a disagreement on the question of Turkey’s potential membership of the EU.)

Racist

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against people on the basis of race or ethnic group (EXAMPLE: despite efforts to conceal it, the British National Party is clearly a racist party – until recently it only allowed white members in its ranks, but was forced to drop its stipulation that members had to be “indigenous Caucasian”. The party has continued to make racist statements – for instance, wishing its members a “white Christmas” in a thinly veiled racist attack.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against people on the basis of race or ethnic group (EXAMPLE: PVV leader Geert Wilders recently caused controversy when he said he wanted

“fewer Moroccans” in the Netherlands, but for the most part he has veered away from outright racism, arguing that he is only “intolerant of the intolerant”.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against people on the basis of race or ethnic group (EXAMPLE: the leadership of the Alternative für Deutschland have steered clear of racist remarks.)

Xenophobic

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of people deemed to be different (EXAMPLE: the Austrian Freedom Party has used slogans such as “Secure pensions instead of millions of Asylum Seekers”. Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache has told certain immigrants to “go back home”.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of people deemed to be different (EXAMPLE: the Alternative for Germany has tread carefully on issues such as immigration and the EU. On the other hand, one of its slogans is “Immigration according to qualification, not into welfare”, compared by some to similar slogans used by the German neo-Nazi NPD.)⁵²

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of people deemed to be different (EXAMPLE: unlike other populist parties, the Five Star Movement has tended to avoid stoking fears around immigration, focusing instead on attacking corruption and the Italian political elite.)

Islamophobic

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Muslims (EXAMPLE: the PVV advocates the banning of the Koran.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Muslims (EXAMPLE: the Front National’s Marine Le Pen has made inflammatory statements about Muslims, but she has avoided the more extreme language of the PVV, preferring to couch her views in the context of French secular values.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Muslims (EXAMPLE: there is little evidence of the leadership of the Five Star Movement discussing Islam or Muslims in a negative way.)

Anti-Semitic

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Jews (EXAMPLE: Márton Gyöngyösi, Jobbik’s deputy parliamentary leader, in 2012 asked for a list of Jews in Hungary posing a “national security risk” to be created.)

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Jews (EXAMPLE: Austrian Freedom Party leader Heinz-Christian Strache was at the centre of a scandal in 2012 when he posted a cartoon on his Facebook page that some argued could be interpreted as anti-Semitic. However, Strache has made attempts to renounce his party’s anti-Semitic past by showing support for Israel.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party stokes fears of Jews (EXAMPLE: Geert Wilders, leader of the PVV, has presented himself as an opponent of anti-Semitism and a firm supporter of Israel.)

Homophobic

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against gay people (EXAMPLE: Ataka leader Volen Siderov recently proposed an amendment calling for “public manifestations of homosexuality” to be punishable with imprisonment.)⁵³

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against gay people (EXAMPLE: the Sweden Democrats are opposed to gay adoption and gay marriage.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against gay people (EXAMPLE: The PVV is a supporter of gay marriage.)

Sexist

Red – there is clear evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against women (EXAMPLE: The BNP leadership has a history of sexist behaviour – in one instance, leader Nick Griffin made a misogynistic comment on Twitter about television chef Nigella Lawson.)⁵⁴

Amber – there is mixed evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against women (EXAMPLE: last year, Finns Party leader Timo Soini criticised the gender balance of the cabinet, arguing that the dominance of women demonstrated the Social Democrats’ failure to support working class men.⁵⁵ In response to claims of chauvinism, female party leaders argued that the party was not sexist.)

Green – there is little or no evidence – either from the party manifesto or comments by the party leadership – that the party discriminates against women (EXAMPLE: The Front National, under new female leader Marine Le Pen, shows little evidence of sexism.)

Political contribution

Red – the party makes little political contribution, attacking current policies but offering hardly any realistic reforms or solutions. It is a primarily destructive force (EXAMPLE: UKIP has failed to offer a clear political programme – leader Nigel Farage has rejected his party’s previous manifesto as “drivel”. UKIP MEPs do little to engage in policy work in the European Parliament, for the most part voting against any piece of legislation put to them, even those that are theoretically in line with the party’s values.)

Amber – the party makes a limited political contribution in some policy areas, but otherwise hampers and derails constructive debate (EXAMPLE: the AfD, known in Germany as the “party of professors”, has contributed an alternative perspective to the macroeconomics of the Eurozone crisis, but the party is divided over many key policy areas and its positive platform is unclear.)

Green – the party is a constructive political force that contributes to responsible policy-making and a healthy political debate (EXAMPLE: the Norwegian Progress Party is now close to being this kind of political actor since its entry into government with the Conservatives.)

Direction

Red – the party is transforming into a more radical and destructive political force (EXAMPLE: the PVV has radicalised over recent years, with Wilders’ language prompting defections from high-profile members.)

Amber – there is no clear evidence suggesting that the party is either becoming more moderate or more radical (EXAMPLE: the Austrian Freedom Party has made some attempts

to present itself differently, but its efforts are not as extensive as Marine Le Pen’s “de-demonisation” campaign.)

Green – the party is transforming into a more moderate and serious political force

(EXAMPLE: Marine Le Pen, leader of the Front National, has made efforts to ‘de-demonise’ her party.)