

ECOSOC – Economic and Social Council

Addressing the global rise of
nationalism



MODEL UNITED NATIONS
THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF THE HAGUE

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Forum	ECOSOC
Issue:	Addressing the global rise of nationalism
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Introduction

Nationalism and nativism are taking over politics on every continent. With the election of President Donald Trump in the United States, the growing power of right-wing populist parties in Europe, and the rise of strong men in states such as China, the Philippines, and Turkey, liberals around the world are struggling to respond to populist nationalism. Today's nationalists run down the "globalist" liberalism of international institutions. They attack liberal elites by saying that they care more about foreigners than their fellow citizens. And they promise to put national, rather than global, interests first.

Nationalism can be seen as a complex relationship and, like most such relationships, people have to work hard to balance the tension between self and others. While many nations have succeeded in using nationalism to develop, this same nationalism has also generated forms of exclusivism and competition that make it hard to resolve shared global problems. While some see the rise of nationalism, or you might even say, tribalism, as a sign of the end of the world, there is actually a form of self-interest that has increased growth. (Brookings, 2018)

Definition of Key Terms

Nationalism

Nationalism is best understood as a malleable and narrow ideology, which values membership in a nation greater than other groups (i.e. based on gender, parties, or socio-economic group), seeks distinction from other nations, and strives to preserve the nation and give preference to political representation by the nation for the nation (Ethnopolitics written by Florian Bieber, 2018).



However, there are also different types of nationalisms recognised today, such as: ethnic nationalism or civic nationalism, also economic and religious nationalism. Ethnic nationalism defines the nation in terms of shared ethnicity, heritage and culture, while civic nationalism defines the nation in terms of shared citizenship, values and institutions, and is linked to constitutional patriotism. There are various definitions of a "nation", however, which leads to different strands of nationalism.

	Level of Intensity	
Level of Exclusion	Inclusionary latent nationalism	Inclusionary virulent Nationalism
	Exclusionary latent nationalism	Exclusionary virulent nationalism

Bieber, Florian. "Conceptualizing Nationalism". *Is Nationalism on the rise? Accessing global trends*. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17449057.2018.1532633>. October 2018.

Populism

By definition, populism is a political program or movement that champions the common person, usually by favorable contrast with an elite. Populism usually combines elements of the left and the right, opposing large business and financial interests but also frequently being hostile to established socialist and labor parties. (Britannica, 2016)

However, in political science, populism is the idea that society is separated into two groups at odds with one another - "the pure people" and "the corrupt elite", according to Cas Mudde, author of *Populism: A Very Short Introduction*. The true populist leader claims to represent the unified "will of the people". He stands in opposition to an enemy, often embodied by the current system - aiming to "drain the swamp" or tackle the "liberal elite".

Liberalism

Liberalism is a political doctrine that takes protecting and enhancing the freedom of the individual to be the central problem of politics. Liberals typically believe that governments are necessary to protect individuals from being harmed by others, but they also recognize that governments can pose a threat to liberty. As the revolutionary American writer Thomas Paine expressed in *Common Sense* (1776), governments are at best "a necessary evil." Laws, judges, and police are needed to secure the individual's life and liberty, but their coercive power may also be turned against them. The problem, then, is to devise a system



that gives governments the necessary power to protect individual liberty but also to prevent those who govern from abusing that power.

Tribalism

In popular culture, tribalism is seen as a way of thinking and behaving in which people are loyal to their social group and their origin. Tribalism is often linked with populism and nationalism as it shares a little bit the same ideology.

Socialism

Socialism, social and economic doctrine that calls for public rather than private ownership or control of property and natural resources. According to the socialist view, individuals do not live or work in isolation but live in cooperation with one another. Furthermore, everything that people produce is in some sense a social product, and everyone who contributes to the production of a good is entitled to a share in it. Society as a whole, therefore, should own or at least control property for the benefit of all its members.

General Overview

As said before, nationalism can be seen as a complex relationship and, like most such relationships, people have to work hard to balance the tension between themselves and others. While many nations have succeeded in using nationalism to develop themselves, this same nationalism has also generated forms of exclusivism and competition that make it hard to resolve shared global problems. Economic development is an important—but not the only—goal that nations must pursue. While some see the rise of nationalism, or you might even say, tribalism, as a sign of the end of the world, there is actually a form of self-interest that has increased growth. (Brookings, 2018)

Nationalism in Asia

Japan, after the cruelties of colonialism, was ready to develop modernly. It integrated the nationalist movement and created its own “top-down” model. After the war, countries such as Korea and Taiwan were able to adapt Japan’s top-down model, its colonial institutions and a virulent anti-communist nationalism that (when combined with the security and economic opportunity by the United States) led to rapid growth. By the late 1970s, this exclusive form of nationalism was replaced in both countries by a grass-roots nationalism



that demanded more participatory modes of political and economic governance, leading to more balanced growth.

Growth was likewise driven in the populous nation-states of China and India, despite their disparity in experiments with socialist forms of development and varied U.S. influence. Growth in both nations was enabled by powerful nationalist movements—especially revolutionary nationalism in China—premised on a more equitable contract with the population than the older imperialist order.

In Southeast Asia, the rise of the nation paired with inclusion (in a Japan-centered regional economy) led to growth during the 1970s-1990s. Interdependence was cemented after the Asian financial crisis of 1997-98 as the region emerged with new ideas for shared economic security through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). While nationalist competition within ASEAN continues, it is still a major force for integration and growth.

Nationalism in Europe

The earliest forms of nationalism in Europe were closely linked to imperialism and the twin forces of economic development and exclusion, which continued well into the twentieth century. Imperial expansion was justified by a nationalism that was more racist than rational. These nations wanted to create a world where their race and culture was superior to all others. However, imperialists were able to exploit nationalism because they claimed to overthrow internal national divisiveness and represent the glory of the nation. Through the World Wars and on into the post-war peace, this “glory” has expressed itself in both hate and inclusion.

How can these impacts be so profoundly different? Scholars often distinguish two types of nationalism: an *ethnic variety* built on race, religion, and language, versus a *civic nationalism*, in which rights are granted to all citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, or culture. German nationalism is, for example, often condemned as



ethnic and exclusive, whereas Anglo-French nationalism is seen to be civic and inclusive. It is the civic model that was dominant during the first few decades after the Second World War, integrated in the protocols of the United Nations and eventually leading to a notion of development that includes the eradication of poverty and higher standards of living for all.

Unfortunately, nowadays is the alternation between capitalist expansion and a “closing off” of the national economy based on “the principle of social protection” but also on ethnic exclusivism. Today, aided by the volatility of the global economy, a narrower ethnic (sometimes even racist) vision of the nation has arised, which can be seen in the support of elected populist leaders around the world.

Major Parties Involved

United States of America

The United States has a long history with nationalism, it has always been part of the American culture. However, recently due to the election of President Trump who claims to be a “proud” nationalist, the movement has been on the rise. NPR wrote in an article that the American nationalists are mostly Caucasian and republicans. American nationalism then becomes a form of ethnic nationalism. Essentially, it indicates the aspects that characterize and distinguish the United States as an autonomous political community. The term often serves to explain efforts to reinforce its national identity and self-determination within their national and international affairs.

United Kingdom

British nationalism asserts that the British are a nation and promotes the cultural unity of Britons, in a definition of Britishness that may include people of English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish descent. British nationalism is closely associated with British unionism, which seeks to uphold the political union that is the United Kingdom, or strengthen the links between the countries of the United Kingdom.

However, recently due to Brexit we have a rise in number of participants in the nationalist party in the United Kingdom. The whole concept is to make the UK independent of Europe and Schengen, which could be qualified as a nationalist decision. The United Kingdom’s



recent general election provided a clear example of how the question of national identity is reshaping Europe's political landscape.

Netherlands

The moderate success of far-right candidate Geert Wilders in the Netherlands has led to a rise of nationalism. Wilders is one of the most sought after politicians in The Netherlands.

Austria

After the moderate success of far-right candidate Norbert Hofer in Austria there has also been a rise of nationalism.

France

After the defeat of Marine Le Pen in the French presidential elections in May 2017 some media have speculated that the nationalist and populist wave might be diminished. But they were wrong, neither is there a tide of nationalism that is engulfing the world, nor is nationalism universally in decline.

China, Turkey, Philippines

Over the past years, rising nationalism is seen everywhere and in everything. From the nationalist policies of the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi and the Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan. News coverage of nationalism has been global, looking over government policies in the Philippines, China and India.

Generally, on a global scale we can see that nationalism has been on the rise. It is starting to be a part of every continent and soon reach every country on a bigger scale.

Timeline of Key Events

1776	America gained independence
1814	Congress of Vienna



1830s	Belgium Serbia and Greece revolt and become independent
1848	Revolutions occurring throughout most Europe
1850	Latin America revolutions: Haiti, Mexico, Central & South America gain independence

1861-1865	American Civil War
1871	Italy and Germany unify, France becomes a republic
1885	Austria and Hungary unite under one leader, but stay different states
1897	Proposition of a Jewish nation state
1905	Russians revolt against Czar
1914	Imperialism and Nationalism generated strained European relations resulting in World War 1
1929	Wall street crash, USA takes back the money lent to Germany resulting in an economic crash that strengthened the nationalist movement
1933-1945	Hitler promotes his Nationalist ideology in Germany, which causes also the second



	World War. Extremist acts such as the “Night of the long knives” were caused because of Hitler’s extremist nationalist ideology
2016	The Indian Nationalist President was elected
2017	President Trump, “a true nationalist” was elected, the start of Brexit
2018	Trump unifies nationalism, tries to bring the citizens together as one, he has also divided immigrant families and rejected many millions of them

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13570.doc.htm> “Rising Nationalism threatens multilateralism 70-Year ‘Proven Track Record’ of Saving Lives, Preventing Wars, Secretary-General Tells Security Council”. *UN*. November 2018.

This article represents a meeting at the Security Council, it consists of the speeches said by the delegates on the subject of the rise of nationalism.

- <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12104.doc.htm> , “General assembly 4, adopts 4 resolutions promoting culture of peace, multilateralism, fills vacancies in subsidiary bodies”. *UN*. December 2018.

This article talks about the four resolutions that the General Assembly 4 adopted on several subjects including nationalism. In the article you will find links to these resolutions.

- <https://uk.ambafrance.org/Rise-of-nationalism-one-of-real-dangers-for-world-today-Minister> “Rise of nationalism one of the world’s real dangers”. *Minister of France*. 2016

This is a speech made by the Minister of France concerning nationalism. The article talks about how dangerous nationalism is for our nations.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue



A noticeable attempt to resolve this issue was first of all the formation of the European Union (EU), and later on the attempt to strengthen the EU. When the EU was first founded on November 1st 1993 in Maastricht, the member countries unified themselves with the intent of becoming a greater power. Throughout the years the EU was often joined by other countries and is still today awaiting to be joined by countries such as Turkey. In the past years however, the EU has started to weaken and because of this countries has started to leave, as seen with Brexit in the United Kingdom. Currently the EU is trying to strengthen itself once again by working together intensively and regularly meeting the leaders of respective countries.

Another approach which has been welcomed by countries such as Switzerland, in order to avoid nationalism is to strengthen the economy. Switzerland has a thriving economy because of a very important and decisive action that started in World War II. In the Second World War Switzerland remained neutral in the war, which led to many wealthy individuals and organizations to deposit their finances into banks in Switzerland. Because of its wealth, they are open to trade with other countries and economies.

Possible Solutions

There are several solutions to the rise of nationalism, but the one that qualifies as best is education. The reason why nationalism exists is because the nationalists are ignorant of other cultures and races. Therefore, we need to educate the youth as fast as possible about the world and its diversity. It is important that every country has foreign exchange programs so that they may experience other ways of life. The youth is the future so the best thing to do is to educate them about life on a global scale and not just about their home country. They need to know what nationalism is, the consequences of it and how it pushes each and every country away from the other. Nationalist countries think about their economy first, their status first and of course its citizens. It doesn't open up to the outer world and isn't willing to help other countries in need if it affects theirs. There are several good examples for this, for example the United States of America. Donald Trump has boosted the economy vastly but is currently letting foreign civilians suffer in camps and separating their families. That is a nationalist issue that does not only affect the States but also the immigrants. Recently Trump said to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib, Illhan Omar and Ayanna Pressley (American Politicians) to "go back" to their home countries. These comments and decisions show the consequences of nationalism, but also how it divides the world instead of unifies it. Furthermore, the example of Brexit. The United Kingdom wants to leave the EU,



but the stakes are high for the country as well as for the member nations. If Brexit succeeds, there will be a severe decrease in the UK's economy but also in the economy of other countries. Finally, education might be the best way to deal with the rise of nationalism, for it is fast, not very lucrative and can be done globally.

However, there are also other ways of coping with the rise of nationalism. The following solutions may be creating counter parties and monitoring the participants in every country being part of a nationalist movement. But also, the politicians should start being more transparent with their ideas and ideology in general.

The point being that culture and education is the answer to stop the growth of nationalism.

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