Fourth General Assembly

Addressing the global rise of populism

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Introduction

Now more than ever, populism is a term that is frequently used in society. The populism trend has spread like a wildfire all across the world. There are tensions among populations that form a distrust of the current state of political affairs within many countries. Populists try to set fears about topics such as migration or capitalism among people with vague solutions and statements to buy their votes. Brexit, Trump, Viktor Orbán's takeover of Hungary, the rise of Bolsonaro in Brazil are all exemplary developments most of us are familiar with where populism has played a significant role. However, the term "populism" is still a very broad and vague political stream.

Since 1990 the number of populists in office across the globe has accelerated fivefold according to Tony Blair Institute for Global Change. They gain more political influence in developed countries whereas this global phenomenon was once traditionally present in emerging democracies only. The rise of populism has become more profound in Asia and Western Europe besides nations where populism exists for much longer including Latin America, Eastern, and Central Europe. Nowadays, the most prevalent form of populism is cultural populism.

Definition of Key Terms

Populism

Populism is a broad political stream that emphasises an antagonistic structure where society is mainly divided into "the people" and "the elite". Additionally, in this stream "the people" are being undermined by "the elite". "The people" are defined as a powerless group. "The elite" is classified as a small and illegitimately powerful group that capitalise on fears ranging from mass immigration to government institutions with intentions to decrease the power of "the people".

The three roughly most common broad ways of populism are classified as cultural, socio-economic, and anti-establishment. These variations are demarcated based on how political elites sow divisions in practice. Populists could be characterised as left as well as right-wing and therefore cannot be placed in a specific position on the left-right political spectrum. For instance, Bernie Sanders is often characterised as a left-wing populist, whereas Marie Le Pen and Trump as right wing populists.

The People

Populism comes from the word "Populus" which means the people in Latin. This term could be defined differently. "The people" are *the good* and claimed to be under threat by "the elite". For populists, the people are 'one and indivisible' (Schedler 1996: 294), but also 'ordinary' (Canovan 1999: 5). The vagueness of this term is crucial for populists to unite diverse groups under one label. Populists claim the general will of people is not represented in politics and therefore they claim to represent the will of all people. However, they also tend to introduce certain policies that aim to buy the support of voters but are most likely to be ineffective in the long run. A recent example of this is Brexit, which the concept of it may sounds appealing at first glance to a small majority of Britain referendum voters, as the result of Brexit is likely be economically ineffective due to many enterprises leaving British territory.

The elite

Populists describe the elite as opponents of "the people" and the bad. Similar to "the people", elite is a broad and vague term since it can take different meanings as well. It refers to communication that explicitly condemns the establishment, the current power holders, the incumbents, and proponents of an existing, malfunctioning system. This anti-elitism ideology is particularly rhetoric used by outsiders, political actors who are trying to gain leverage in a political system and build up name recognition.

Out-groups

The third feature of populism describes the people and the exclusion of out-groups. Constructing a specific sense of social identity from a political communication perspective is the backbone of populism. In 2018, de Vreese, C.H. et al. mentioned in The International Journal of Press/Politics: "Communicative messages can prime aspects of social identity, define in-groups (the good people), and construct out-groups (problematic minorities, self-serving elites, scapegoats presented as threats)." A clearly identified out-group is not a characteristic trait of all kinds of populism. However, the out-group rhetoric is frequently utilised by left-wing populists against capitalists and by right-wing populists against immigrants.

Fears

Disagreement and dissent are crucial in all political processes of a functioning democracy. Free speech and free press are vital to political debates that involve reason, evidence, challenge, and argument. On the contrary, populists tend to utilise journalists, elites, and foreigners as a scapegoat in combination with conspiracy theories to create fear among the population, typically amongst the 'ordinary people'.

Nationalism

Not to confuse with populism, nationalism is a sense of national consciousness that uplifts ones nation above all others and places primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups.

In other words, within nationalism the nation's interests is superior. On the contrary, populism is classified as a down/up antagonistic structure between "the people" who are seen as a large powerless group and is threatened by "the elite" who represents a small and illegitimately powerful group that stars on the fears of the people. Nationalistic feelings and beliefs is a tool that has been utilised by right-wing populists to play on the fears of the population of the nation .

Left-wing populism

Left wing populism mainly focuses on the ideology that believe wealth and power should be shared between all parts of society and advocates for topics such as combatting income inequality. Bernie Sanders is an example of a left wing populist. Left-wing populism primarily occurs in parts of South America and Asia. However, signs of left-wing populism is also on the rise in developed countries (MEDCs).

Right-wing populism

Right wing populism capitalises on more conservative and nationalistic beliefs that amongst others include low taxes, property, privately owned industries, less help for the poor, anti-EU and anti-immigration. Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen and Geert wilders are prominent examples of right wing populists. Opposed to left wing populism, right wing populism most likely occurs in the USA and Europe.

Elections

Political elections are formal processes of selecting a person for public office or accepting or rejecting a political proposition by voting. Foreign interference in elections in

terms of misinformation could spread conspiracy theories in the interest of populists to support their statements in order to let them win elections and therefore it may pose a danger to the validity of election outcomes.

Democracy

Democracy is a form of government whereby the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government is based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves.

There are as many different variants of democracy as there are democratic nations in the world (Council of Europe Portal). Therefore, there is not an one size fits all model or a particular system that represent the standard model of democracy. To exemplify, there are presidential and parliamentary democracies, democracies that are federal or unitary, democracies that use a proportional voting system, and ones that use a majoritarian system, democracies which are also monarchies, and so on.

According to the Commission on Human Rights, the essential elements of democracy include:

• Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;

• Freedom of association;

• Freedom of expression and opinion;

• Access to power and its exercise in accordance with the rule of law;

• The holding of periodic free and fair elections by universal suffrage and by secret
  ballot as the expression of the will of people;

• A pluralistic system of political parties and organisations;

• The separation of powers;

• The independence of judiciary;

• Transparency and accountability in public administration;

• Free, independent and pluralistic media

The rise of populism tends to undermine democracy as populists who make questionable illegitimate statements about political institutions and the accuracy of legitimate press could create a sense of distrust among the population about the structure of government bodies, processes and legitimate press.

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)

More Economically Developed Countries, which are also classified as "developed countries", are countries characterised with a high standard of living, a high GDP, dominating secondary industries such as manufacturing and are located in the northern hemisphere (see Appendix I for more information). The most advanced MECDs have leading tertiary or service industries such as banking and information technology.

The rise of populism in MEDCs is mainly explained by social(-economic) causes in terms of anti-immigration and income inequality. It chiefly holds a right-wing character. In the vast percentage of MEDCs, wealth became primarily accessible to the richest people of society due to stagnated middle-class incomes and increasing incomes of the highest classes, simultaneously. Additionally, proponents of populism situated in MEDCs are concerned that immigration and cheap labour benefits of low income countries would lead to an increasing unemployment rate. Furthermore, the fear of ethnic minorities dominating the native population or native culture is another aspect that supports populism.

Least Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)

Least Economically Developed Countries, which is also defined as "developing countries", are classified as countries that have a lower standard of living and a lower GDP in comparison to MEDCs. Opposed to MEDCs, primary industries such as farming, mining and fishing are more dominant in LEDCs. LEDCs are mainly situated in parts of South America, Africa and Asia (see Appendix I for more information).

The rise of populism in LEDCs has primarily a left-wing character as populists situated in LECDs focuses on economic inequality and the structure of political institutions. Growing wealth gaps and less stable government structures are more significant in LEDCs. Huge progresses in combatting income inequality and defeating corruption are likely to be inapplicable as in past decades the same problems were already prominent and still until this day remain unsolved. Thus, populism became on the rise, since populist politicians tried to made themselves appealing by claiming to approach these issues effectively in the interest of the people. However, these populists tend to propose solutions that seems effective short term rather than long term.

General Overview

Populism is such a broad political stream which makes it hard to define its effects without taking its different forms into consideration. As mentioned earlier, there are roughly three most common broad ways of this stream in society: cultural, socio-economic, and anti-establishment. These variations are demarcated based on how political elites sow divisions in practice.

History of Populism

One of the first populist movements appeared during the French Revolution which lasted from 5 May 1789 until 9 November 1799. During the later stages of the French Revolution, Robespierre and the Jacobins led a populist movement that was inspired by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophy. In Jean-Jacques Rousseau's philosophy, the general will of the social whole is centralised and if necessary "forced to be free". Additionally, his philosophy distinguishes the general will from contradictory wills of individuals and groups as Rousseau believes that since legitimate laws are based on the general will of the citizens, freedom and authority are not opposed to each other. Thus, an individual citizen who obeys the law, obeys him or herself as a member of the political community.

In the late 19th century, the People's Party played a significant role in US politics. The Party's aim was to "restore the government of the Republic to the hands of 'the plain people' with which class it originated".

In addition, after the decolonisation period of Latin America during the 19th century, populism emerged in this continent and became increasingly prominent in the 20th century. Social inequality is one of the main causes that fuel populism and also explains why it is still prominent in today's South America.

Another example is after the financial crisis of 2008, where populist movements became increasingly apparent in Europe and the United States followed by recent examples such as Brexit, the rise of Marine Le Pen, election of Trump and the re-election of Andrzej Duda. Rising feelings of financial instability, polarisation, and distrust in the government amongst the population are exemplary causes why populist politicians become more popular.

The main causes and concerns of populism

According to Moises Naim, editor of the magazine Foreign Policy, he believes that populism is simply a rhetorical 'tactic' that has always been practiced across the globe to gain and maintain power. As Naim puts it: "The fact is, that populism is not an ideology.

Instead, it's a strategy to obtain and retain power. It has been around for centuries, recently appearing to resurface in full force, propelled by the digital revolution, precarious economies, and the threatening insecurity of what lies ahead." However, this does not make populism any less dangerous.

A growing number of people, especially an older cohort from European decent, feel like they are living in how Anthony Giddens calls a "runaway world" of globalisation which he defines as a world where our existing ways of life are shaken up. In this "runaway world", feelings of deep divisions are more common. Due to the high speed and quick changes across the globe, those who see globalisation as a threat feel as if the world is losing its stable, more settled times. They believe their identity is being undermined due to people who do not sound or look like them such as immigrants. It stimulates fear and resentment-based politics rather than informed policy debates by emphasizing distinctions between groups. In extreme cases, hostility among groups could result in violence as reported by the media concerning ethnic tensions in the wake of Brexit and violent incidents at Donald Trump's rallies.

Additionally, another way to understand populism dates back to the 1970s. From the 1970s until the economic crisis of 2008, the outcomes of this period of globalisation seems to be positive and beneficial in terms of human welfare. As according to many proponents of globalisation, poverty has been reduced, the world's GDP accelerated, signs of development are more profound in (former) LECDs since previously closed economies in developing countries such as India and China have opened up. However, a growing number of people, especially in the MEDCs feel more dissatisfied. Wealth became more exclusive for the middle and lower classes as opposed to the richest people of society. Middle class incomes stagnated. A feeling that unemployment caused by cheap labour - either by jobs going elsewhere or immigration that cuts the price of their labour - rises among a substantial percentage of working-class people in the West.

Furthermore, populism questions political institutions and free press. The validity of elections, motives of political leaders, and the legislative, judicial and executive components of the government are often quick to call into question by both left- and right-wing populists in order to return political power to the people. When this is normalised within society, basic principles of democracy and peaceful transfer of power between parties are being undermined, as trust erodes in democratic institutions. This could also develop into appearances where people would rather obtain information of sources that supports conspiracy theories rather than from legitimate press, and therefore are unable to make rational fact-based decisions.

Moreover, populism rejects nuanced political arguments in favour of moral outrage. As a result of this, the quality of political knowledge as well as the possibility of an informed public debate is put at risk. Disagreements regarding policy could lead to conspiracy-laden attacks by populists against those whom they consider as corrupt. Thus, productive dialogues and compromises are more likely to be reduced since these attacks are mainly based on a fundamental rejection of the political legitimacy of its opponent(s). It could accelerate the effects of political polarization by further driving opponent political groups.

Cultural populism

The emphasis on race, ethnicity, religion, and/or identity is a differentiating factor that is central to this type of populism. It has been rising continuously since the late 1990s. This political stream is currently by far the most dominant. Supporters of cultural populism believe that true people consisting of native inhabitants, thus the in-group and people who are considered as new entrants or cultural outsiders are a threat to the nation-state, the out-group. Consequently, members of cultural populist parties tend to accentuate debates concerning immigration, ethnic diversity, and identity politics. Furthermore, there are three distinct types of populism on the rise: nativist populism, majoritarianism and law-and-order populism.

Nativist populism

Nativist populism is a type of cultural populism mostly found in Europe. This type of cultural populism is based on welfare chauvinism. Welfare chauvinism manifests itself in nativist populists who believe that the welfare is unable to support native inhabitants and non-native inhabitants simultaneously and therefore natives should be prioritized over non-natives. An example of nativist populists is the Prime Minister of Hungary, Orbán who goes further, arguing that ethnic homogeneity should be Hungary's starting point and turns minorities including Jews and Roma into second-class citizens.

Majoritarianism

Majoritarianism supports the idea that 51% or above of the popular vote should give the winning party the right to rule without interference from institutions such as the judiciary or a free press. Opponents of the leader or party are entitled as the out-group, a less legitimate member of the political community. Taking on an ethnic dimension could turn majoritarianism into much more harmful form of cultural populism as it allows ethnic-majority groups to overrule ethnic minorities without the need to safeguard equal rights and protections.

Law-and-order populism

Within law-and-order populism the out-group includes criminals, drug users and other legal wrongdoers. It attempts to play on the fears of citizens concerning their safety and desires of punitive politics. Furthermore, it tends to encourage punitive short-term solutions to combat various problems often, which may occur at the cost of human rights violations. A prominent example of this is the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte.

Socio-Economic Populism

A central 'us vs. them' conflict between various economic classes is considered as Socio-Economic populism. Solidarity is being expressed towards the common worker. The common worker is part of a specific social class that is constituted as *the pure people* which is not necessarily defined by national borders. For instance, the working class could be characterised as natural allies or the common worker by socio-economic populists.

Parties such as big businesses, capital owners, state elites, foreign forces and international institutions are exemplary parties that support capitalism and could be considered as corrupt elites. Socio-economic populists are known for their strong resistance to foreign influence in domestic markets. Sometimes, socio-economic populism includes an ethnic dimension. More specifically, opposed to cultural populism which primarily emphasises the idea that a particular group of people should be excluded from the other group, socio-economic populism would rather capitalise the inclusion of former marginalised ethnic groups as the backbone of the working class.

Anti-Establishment Populism

Although all forms seem to be considered as anti-establishment, this variant of populism focuses on the conflict with establishment elites rather than any specific ethnic or social group. In cultural populism, elites are mainly involved by encouraging an excessive degree of cultural openness. In socio-economic populism, elites are primarily involved in empowering economic elite and foreign interests.

Anti-establishments populists consider the pure people as the honest, hard-working citizens who are neglected by an elite-run state. These elites are characterised as the primary enemy of the people. Furthermore, anti-establishment highlights frequently that the state of corruption should be liberated, and prior regime loyalists should be purged, since it considers political elites as its enemies.

This type of populism can appear in some cases as less socially divisive than either cultural or socio-economic populism since it draws the attention of political elites as the enemy whereas the other two populist variants also recognise members of the general public as outsiders.
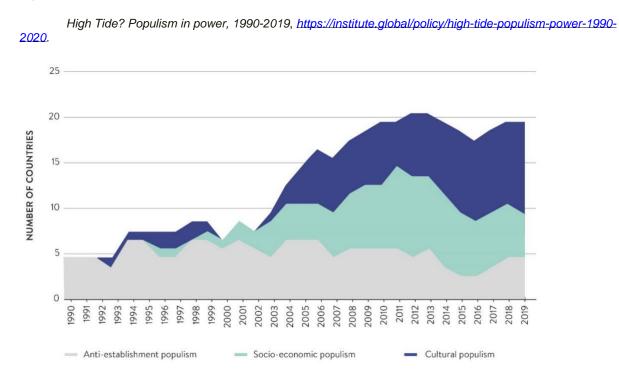
Table 1

Three Ways That Populists Frame 'Us vs. Them' Conflict

	Cultural Populism	**Socio-Economic Populism**	**Anti-Establishment Populism**
The people	'Native' members of the nation-state	Hard-working, honest members of the working class, which may transcend national boundaries	Hard-working, honest victims of a state run by special interests
The others	Non-natives, criminals, ethnic and religious minorities, cosmopolitan elites	Big business, capital owners, foreign or 'imperial' forces that prop up an international capitalist system	Political elites who represent the prior regime
Key themes	Emphasis on religious traditionalism, law and order, national sovereignty, migrants as enemies	Anti-capitalism, working-class solidarity, foreign business interests as enemies, often joined with anti-Americanism	Purging the state from corruption, strong leadership to promote reforms

Source: Kyle, Jordan, and Limor Gultchin. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, 2018, *Populists in Power*

Fig. 1. Types of Populism in Power, 1990–2019

High Tide? Populism in power, 1990-2019, *https://institute.global/policy/high-tide-populism-power-1990-2020*.
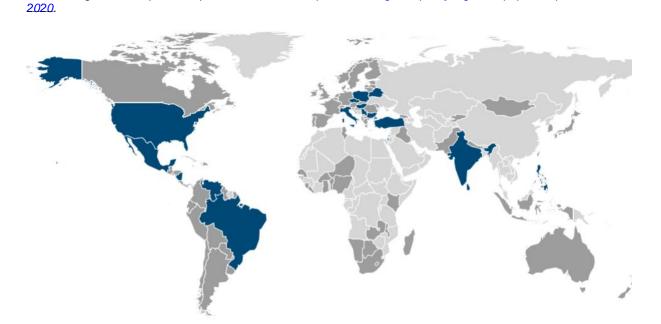

(Kyle, Jordan, and Brett Meyer. Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, 2018, *High Tide? Populism in Power, 1990-2020*, *https://institute.global/policy/high-tide-populism-power-1990-2020*.)

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Fig. 2. Populist leaders or parties in power in year 2020

High Tide? Populism in power, 1990-2019, https://institute.global/policy/high-tide-populism-power-1990-2020.

Populist leaders or parties in power[i]   Populist leaders or parties not in power[ii]   Non-democracies/no data

i We include populists initially elected in democracies. Some autocratise over time.
ii Our database is coded based on scholarly evidence of populism. It may not reflect all existing populists in power.

(Kyle, Jordan, and Brett Meyer, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change, 2018, *High Tide? Populism in Power, 1990-2020, https://institute.global/policy/high-tide-populism-power-1990-2020.*)

United States of America (USA)

Donald Trump won the presidential elections in 2016 when no one expected this. He used his slogans "America First" and "I Will Make America Great Again" to appeal to ordinary citizens. Through these slogans, he promised to bring the country to prosperity and solve its many recently occurring problems. Trump decided to take a powerful, by many considered even aggressive, stance towards other nations (such as Iran) and immigrants (not limited to South America). He held immigrants, especially those coming from Latin America, accountable for stealing away American jobs from Americans. Since he is in office, Trump also frequently uses the method of scapegoating towards journalists, Muslim refugees, and Mexican immigrants, which many ordinary, commonly lowly-educated people in America listen to.

France

Marine le Pen, the populist leader of the National Rally, proposed strict anti-immigrant and anti-Islam statements. Emmanuel Macron won the 2017 presidential campaign in France but Marine Le Pen, the populist candidate, won approximately 1/3 of the total votes. Therefore, despite the majority of French voters being against populism, there is a significant amount of the population who are in favour of it.

United Kingdom (UK)

According to Corface's analysis on the rise of populism, which is published in 2017, the United Kingdom is ranked as the highest European populist nation with a score of 73%. Brexit, the project of leaving the EU has been active for the past 6 years, which came into force after the Brexit referendum outcome in 2016 of with a small majority of 51.9% leave votes opposed to 48.1% for remain. Even though this is a threat to the British economy with many firms and banks leaving the UK and the currency likely to fluctuate negatively, pro-Brexit politicians still received significant support from the public. The rise of populism is due to the distrust in multiculturalism in terms of fears of losing control of immigration and national sovereignty from international institutions.

Poland

Poland is one of the European countries which are heavily affected by populism. The populist party *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* [Law and Justice] won 39% of the votes in the 2015 election. National populist policies have been applied since. This includes closing borders for refugees as well as violating the rule of law, especially in the form of attempts for judicial independence. Poland's assaults on democracy and human rights are seen as an increasing threat to the EU, as recognised by the EU itself as well as several of its member states.

Germany

During the European migration crisis of 2015, the democratic German chancellor Angela Merkel gave asylum to a high proportion of immigrants compared to most other European countries. After the migration crisis, support of populist parties in Germany has grown rapidly especially far-right ones such as the AFD party, also known as *Alternative für Deutschland* [Alternative for Germany]. The AFD is Germany's biggest populist party and ended up in the 3rd position in the 2017 election. It capitalises anti-migration and anti-islam beliefs as it plays on the fears of people with regards to the influence of the Islam and ethnic minorities.

Hungary

As is the case in Poland, in Hungary liberal organisations like the free press or independent judiciary are being terrorised by the populist coalition. The populist party Fidesz was founded by the prime minister Viktor Orban, who was originally a liberal and not a populist at all, in the 1990s. Fidesz received 63% of the votes in the 2018 election. Only after being elected for the first time did Orban show his real face, an extreme right-wing populist. In the 1990s, Hungary was one of the less economically developed, post-communist European states at the time, wanting to economically catch up with the Western world. This is the reason why a large number of the Hungarian population started supporting this populist leader, who promised the crowd to bring a better economy to the nation. Orban's policies are considered to violate human rights as they are against immigrants, foreign religion and ethnicity, and the elite.

Venezuela

Unlike in Europe, in most Latin American including Venezuela populism is located in the left-wing of the political spectrum. Similar to the rest of South America, populism is prevalent in the country due to economic inequality issues. Since the 1900s, the government has promised to bring economic equality to the nation. However, still, huge progresses in response to economic inequality are not applicable.

According to Kirk Hawkins, an expert on Latin American populism at Brigham Young University, in the past two decades, Venezuela's populist governances has "resulted in the systematic rollback of civil liberties, beginning especially with media freedom." News outlets are claimed to be running in the interest of the elites. Additionally, especially under the former president Chavez' office term, the judicial power and political opponents were scapegoated as he labelled them as elite and corrupt. As a result, currently, the courts and electoral council contains of mostly people who support and act in the interest of Chavez / Maduro's (current president of Venezuela) since judges who were opposed to Chavez were suspended.

The Philippines

President Rodrigo Duterte present himself as a member of the out-group as he claims to be in power of the name of the ordinary people as opposed to who he calls "traditional politicians" who are "corrupt". He seems to erode established media, neglect academic and scientific knowledge as he had scapegoated journalists and academic researchers in the past. Furthermore, Duterte plays on the fears of criminals, primarily drug traders as an attempt to remain appealing among the Filipino population.

Brazil

Jair Bolsonaro, current president of Brazil, is a cultural populist that capitalises law-and-order issues and the threat that criminals pose to Brazil's 'ordinary people'. During the midst of Brazil's political and economic crisis including a prolonged recession, surging crime rates and corruption scandals at the highest levels of the Brazilian government, Bolsonaro stood up. He emphasised these crisis by promising to eliminate crime and corruption, primarily in brutal manners. During his campaign, Bolsonaro frequently expressed his support towards Brazil's military dictatorship and made a promise to combat his political enemies.

Timeline of Events

Date	Description of Event
1892-1908	1st populist party in the USA is formed
The 1930s	The Great Depression results in the first wave of populism due to the massive unemployment rate and charismatic leaders promising to make things better. The resulting wave of populism in South America lasted until 1960.
1955	Right-wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (FPO) was founded.
1967	First-ever conference on the topic of populism held at the London School of Economics.
The 1990s	First immigrants looking for asylum in Europe, especially Germany. Signs of xenophobia increase and far right-wing populist parties are formed.
The 1990s	Eastern Europe. This correlates with a rise of prejudice and xenophobic discrimination towards migrants.
1993	Independent Party of the UK founded
1997	Asian financial crisis results in a rise of populist politicians.
1999	In Austria, the FPO is now the second-largest party. This implies a clear growth of populism.
The 2000s	A significant rise of populism worldwide
2001	The terrorist attack, known as 9/11 results in a rise of xenophobia and islamophobia, which ignites a rise of populism

2002	Jean Marine
2007 - 2008	Global Financial Crisis
2015 - present	The European refugee crisis results in increasing cultural diversity. This leads to xenophobia amongst the population.
2016	Bernie Sanders runs a platform of tackling socioeconomic inequality but loses the presidential campaign
2016	Donald Trump wins the US presidential election with significant use of populism.
2017	The Dutch Populist party PVV led by G. Wilders comes in second place in the March elections.
2019	The first UN debate with regards to populism in the form of a panel discussion was held during the 40th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council.

UN involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

It seems to be that no resolution dedicated to populism as a main topic has been passed. However, some components of populism such as xenophobia, racism, discrimination have been addressed separately in the past.

Ahead of the 73rd of the General Assembly session (held in 2018), in response to populism, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres emphasised "the need to reform, renew and reinvigorate multilateralism at a time when it has never been needed more." Guterres has expressed its concerns towards the increasing polarisation and populism within nations, decreasing international cooperation among them, and "fragile" trust in international institutions.

The first UN debate about populism has been held on 15 March 2019 during the 40th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council which was in the form of a panel discussion. Because this debate was held in the form of a panel discussion, it was simply a discussion whereby various viewpoints regarding populism among some member states and observers, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organisations, were exchanged and no resolution concerning populism in particular had been discussed, written or released.

The following resolutions addresses some components of populism including xenophobia, racism and discrimination.

- Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (2001)

- New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, 3 October 2016 **(A/RES/71/1)**

- From rhetoric to reality: a global call for concrete action against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, 9 October 2017 **(A/RES/36/24)**

- International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, 19 December 2018 **(A/RES/73/127)**

- A global call for concrete action for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action Statement of financial implications, 22 December 2018 **(A/RES/73/262)**

- Report of the Human Rights Council on its 40th session, 3 June 2019 (A/HRC/40/2)

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Although Secretary-General António Guterres has expressed its concern in a speech during the 73rd General Assembly session in 2018 and an UN panel discussion concerning populism has been held in 2019, no UN sessions in the interest of forming resolutions concerning populism as a main topic have been held and therefore no resolutions about populism as a whole have been written or released so far.

Therefore, no formal, direct attempts seems to be put into practice to solve the issue of populism so far, but only a few components of populism including racism have been addressed in UN meetings and resolutions so far. However, there have been many protests, mainly arguing that all people's rights should be respected equally, not only those of the ordinary majority as all people need, deserve, and should have the same rights. It is important to note that populists often violate human rights, which is the main issue with populism.

A separate resolution that solely dedicates on addressing all aspects of populism seems to be effective as it outlines more comprehensively the actions that should be taken in response to combat multidisciplinary aspects of populism.

Possible Solutions

Especially in countries with more unstable political systems, some people who vote for populists do not necessarily think that the populist ideas are valid, however, they feel a sense of distrust towards the current political system that has been added up over the past few years or decades and feel the urge for a change. They hope that populist politicians instead of mainstream traditional parties are able to fulfil their needs.

It is important to address why populism exists and experiences growth in the first place. Populism exists due to the feelings of dislike and social unfairness in the crowd. If people's well-being is increased, they are likely to diminish experiencing the feeling of unfairness. Most people need and like to feel engaged and being listened to. Populists often combine cultural dislike and economic recession to create an illusion of corruption. They also frequently emphasise and overuse the word *corruption.* The risk of people's social status is the basis of the support which populist leaders receive.

Recently, non-populists often analyse the mistakes and wrong strategies of populists. It would seem appropriate to transfer the focus towards coming up with better solutions instead. To get back their votes, democratic politicians have to propose appealing ideas as well as more realistic solutions to problems than populists can offer, as well as seemingly investing the same or even more effort into addressing the same issues as populists, instead of focusing on the mistakes and strategies of the populists.

Furthermore, there needs to be a reform in the democrats' ideas, addressing people's needs more, listening to the people, and explaining the appropriateness of choices to them. Interacting more with the voters is something that populist politicians are very successful at. In their way, non-populists must increase their communication ability and transparency towards the nation. Before any elections take place, all political parties should be honest and notify the public of their intentions. This information can be communicated through national broadcasting services and newspapers.

Currently, social media greatly assists populist leaders, such as Trump, to communicate with the people frequently. The problem is that unlike other, more formal ways of communication, social media allows much more controversial and offensive statements and comments than other media. Besides, the information gained from social media is likely to be less reliable compared to national newspapers, for instance. Many people prefer getting information only from social media, which can result in obtaining twisted truths. People need to be made aware of and educated about the high risk of bias, which is common to occur in social media platforms.

Education is one of the foundations that forms our view of the world. It is crucial that there are resources available promoting critical thinking, multidisciplinary thinking and on how to recognise disinformation especially in times where the rise of disinformation and populism is unprecedented. Notwithstanding that honesty is challenging to control, when people are more educated, they are more likely to be able to think critically, rationally and therefore may have a more realistic picture of reality in terms of the consequences of different forms of political decision making whether this concerns the election of politicians into office or important political changes (such as Brexit) related.

Because of advancements in technology, foreign interference in elections becomes more common. The increase of foreign interference and from third parties on national levels poses a growing threat to secure elections and therefore democracy. Stronger and more effective policies regarding this threat should be evaluated to ensure a strong democratic system.

Transparency in campaign finance is also necessary. Mysterious third-party donors and undisclosed donations are a highly problematic issue in Europe as well as the United States of America as potential corruption cases, foreign interference and improper purposes of politicians remain undetected. Therefore, it undermines the legitimacy of the political system and threatens the trust of voters.

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Appendix or Appendices

Appendix I: A map that shows the locations of LEDCs and MEDCs

This map demonstrates where all LEDCs and MEDCs are situated.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zs7wrdm/revision/2#:~:text=MEDCs%20are%20countries%20which%20have,and%20a%20much%20lower%20GDP.&text=Most%20of%20the%20southern%20hemisphere,northern%20hemisphere%20are%20more%20developed.

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