

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Voters, parties and the challenge of populist politics in Europe

October, 20th 2017

University of Zagreb Hall (Rectorate Building),
Trg Republike Hrvatske 14, Zagreb

In recent years there have been intense political changes in voters preferences, party performance and political and social activism of citizens which affect the functioning of democracies in contemporary Europe, both East and West. Many (though not all) traditional mainstream Liberal, Social Democratic and Christ Democratic/Conservative parties have experienced a decline in their electoral performance. Voters have partly moved away from mainstream politics: election turnout and party membership have steadily declined, some of the voters withdrawing from politics, while others embracing different varieties of populist politics. New populist parties have emerged in some countries, while in others former mainstream conservative parties have shifted towards extremist populism. In some Western European countries (Austria, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Switzerland) right wing populist parties have become strong political competitors and have been able to heavily influence the political agenda. In some Eastern European countries right wing populist parties have seized the government (Hungary, Poland) and are rapidly transforming the political institutions and establishing various forms of „illiberal states“. This all has affected the state of liberal democracies in West and East and caused deterioration of democratic standards.

The aim of the conference is to explore the causes and consequences of these developments and reflect on the direction in which contemporary democracies are heading.

The conference language is English. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in Croatian.

Registration of conference participants

9:15

Opening of the Conference

Damir Boras, rector (tbc), University of Zagreb

Max Brändle, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Zagreb

Lidija Kos-Stanišić, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

9:30

Keynote speech: Right wing populism in East and West: A threat to democracy?

Wolfgang Merkel, Berlin Social Science Center WZB, Berlin, Germany

10:15

PANEL I: DEBATE ON DEMOCRACY AND THE CHALLENGE OF POPULISM IN WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPE

Wolfgang Merkel, Berlin Social Science Center WZB, Berlin, Germany

Claus Offe, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Germany

Radoslaw Markowski, Center for the Study of Democracy, Director SWPS, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland

Nenad Zakošek, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Discussion moderated by **Ana Matan**, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

11:45 | Coffee break

12:00 | **PANEL II: APPROACHES TO POPULISM**

A psychoanalytic theory of populism

Nebojša Blanuša, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

What's wrong with populism?

Enes Kulenović, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

Debate

Moderator **Višeslav Raos**, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

13:00 | Lunch

14:00 | **PANEL III: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF POPULISM IN EASTERN EUROPE**

Democracy and populism in Europe

Claus Offe, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin, Germany

Backsliding towards clientelistic authoritarianism: the Polish case

Radosław Markowski, Center for the Study of Democracy, Director SWPS, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland

Populism and democracy in Hungary

Zsolt Enyedi, Department of Political Science, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary

Debate

Moderator **Nenad Zakošek**, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

15:30 | **PANEL IV: POLITICAL CONTENTION AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE**

Contentious politics and democracy

Danijela Dolenc, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

Populist discourse and media

Marijana Grbeša, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

Debate

Moderator **Enes Kulenović**, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb

16:30 | End of conference

Please confirm your participation:

ijp@fes.hr or **01 4807970** till Wednesday, October 18th



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