

Section 9 – Elezioni e comportamento di voto

Panel 1. Mapping populist attitudes in Europe and beyond.

Chair: Carolina Plescia

In recent years, citizens in Europe show increasing political discontent and mistrust, with little faith in the ability of mainstream parties to address key contemporary challenges like rising unemployment and slow economic growth. Concurrently, there is an increasing success in recent elections of ‘populist’ parties like the Alternative for Germany in Germany and the Five Star Movement in Italy. Formerly dominant mainstream parties have lost substantially in terms of vote share, often making government formation more challenging (Kriesi et al. 2012).

Given these challenges and developments, this panel invites papers studying the determinants of populist attitudes. The electoral success of populist parties has inspired studies on how populism can be defined (Mudde 2004, 2007), how the populist upsurge can be explained (Albertazzi & McDonnell 2008), how it affects public opinion (Akkerman et al. 2014), parties (Pauwels 2011), policy making (Albertazzi & Mueller 2013), liberal democracy (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2012) and on who votes for populist parties (Rooduijn 2017). We claim however, that to fully understand the populist phenomenon and the challenges it brings to party government (Caramani 2017), we should not only focus on the supply and the demand side of populist parties but also study populist attitudes among citizens. The change of focus from the determinants of vote choice for populist parties to the determinants of populist attitudes allows for populism to manifest itself in varying degrees transcending a simplistic dichotomy populist vs. not populist (Rooduijn 2014). In addition, the exploration of levels or degrees of populism allows investigating the varying manifestation of populist attitudes, not restricted to support for populist parties, including abstention, protest and mainstream party support (Hooghe et al. 2013).

This panel invites contributions examining populist attitudes by focusing at the individual-level. The main aim of the panel will be to model the determinants of populist attitudes mainly focusing on the demand side factors. The focus of the panel spans both single-case and comparative studies. Ideas for papers include discussions of whether different types of cognitive mechanisms (e.g. disenfranchising, political knowledge) play a role in triggering populist attitudes, the extent to which economic or cultural treat evaluations relate to populist attitudes, how populist attitudes penetrate and proliferate among ordinary citizens in their everyday discussions and new empirical applications (like survey-based experiments) of the mechanism-based approach.

Paper proposals, including a brief abstract of about 200 words should be submitted by May 20, 2018 to the panel organisers Moreno Mancosu (moreno.mancosu@carloalberto.org) and Carolina Plescia (carolina.plescia@univie.ac.at).