

Mariët Anna Nijmeijer

East vs. West: The effect of populism on liberal democracy in the European Union

Bachelor's project in European Studies

Supervisor: Anna Brigevidh

May 2021

Mariët Anna Nijmeijer

East vs. West: The effect of populism on liberal democracy in the European Union

Bachelor's project in European Studies
Supervisor: Anna Brigevid
May 2021

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Humanities
Department of Historical Studies



Abstract

Populist movements have become an ubiquitous phenomenon in Europe at the turn of the 21st century. This thesis examines two popular populist leaders: Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Viktor Orbán in Hungary. In this thesis, I elaborate upon why both politicians can be understood as populists and examine how both pose a threat to liberal democracy in Europe. I perform comparative case study analysis of the political platforms and rhetoric of the two leaders. By applying the same the same set of criteria to both politicians, I am able to examine whether populism functions similarly in Western Europe and Eastern Europe. I compare Wilders and Orbán on their positions on immigration, the EU, and the media. I find that both Wilders and Orbán are powerful radical right-wing populists in Europe with a solidly xenophobic and nationalistic view on politics. They characterize people who oppose them or disagree with their policies as evil "enemies." This creates a tense relationship between populism and liberal democracy. However, to what degree they pose a threat to liberal democracy is different. The differences may be traced back to the divergence in their political position where Orbán, prime minister of Hungary, forms the government. Wilders, on the other hand, functions as a significant electoral force.

Sammendrag

Populistiske bevegelser har blitt et allestedsnærværende fenomen i Europa siden begynnelsen av det 21. århundre. Denne avhandlingen undersøker to populære populistiske ledere: Geert Wilders i Nederland og Viktor Orbán i Ungarn. I denne oppgaven utdyper jeg hvorfor begge politikere kan forstås som populistiske og undersøker hvordan begge utgjør en trussel mot det liberale demokratiet i Europa. Jeg utfører en komparativ casestudieanalyse av de politiske plattformene og retorikken til de to lederne. Ved å bruke det samme settet med kriterier på begge politikere, kan jeg undersøke om populisme fungerer på samme måte i Vest-Europa og Øst-Europa. Jeg sammenligner Wilders og Orbán basert på deres holdning til innvandring, EU og media. Avhandlingen viser at både Wilders og Orbán er sterke radikale høyrepopulister i Europa med et solid fremmedfiendtlig og nasjonalistisk syn på politikk. De karakteriserer mennesker som er imot dem eller er uenige i deres politikk som onde "fiender". Dette skaper et anspent forhold mellom populisme og liberalt demokrati. Derimot, utgjør de i ulik grad en trussel mot det liberale demokratiet. Forskjellene kan spores tilbake til deres politiske posisjon der Orbán, statsminister i Ungarn, utgjør regjeringen, og Wilders fungerer som en sterk partileder.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	II
Sammendrag.....	III
List of Abbreviations	V
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Defining Populism.....	3
3. Populism as an Ideology.....	4
4. Populism and Democracy.....	5
5. Method: Case Study Analysis	6
6. The Netherlands: Geert Wilders.....	8
6.1 Wilders and the PVV	8
6.2 Wilders and Populist Rhetoric.....	9
7. Hungary: Viktor Orbán	11
7.1 Orban and Fidesz	11
7.2 Orban's and Populist Rhetoric	12
8. Populism and democracy in the European Union	14
8.1 Media	14
8.2 The EU	15
8.3 Immigration	16
9. Conclusion.....	17
10. Works Cited	19

List of Abbreviations

EU	European Union
EEA	European Economic Area
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
Fidesz	Federation of Young Democrats/Hungarian Civic Party
FN	French National Front
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PVV	Party for Freedom
PRRP	Populist radical right parties
VVD	Conservative Liberals
US	United States of America

1. Introduction

Populism is a term that is often mentioned when it comes to politics, but it is not easy to define the term populism. On the phenomena of populism, there are various points of view. In the European context, populism often refers to anti-immigration and xenophobia, opposition to cultural liberalization, and critiques of unresponsive international bodies (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017, p. 2). The majority of European populist parties are simultaneously right- and left-wing, rejecting social and economic liberalism. However, given recent terrorist attacks in Europe and the unresolved refugee crisis in the EU, west European populist radical right parties (PRRP) have shifted to an ethnoreligious discourse with strong liberal democratic and security concerns (Mudde, 2015, p. 296). Therefore, it is essential to gain an accurate understanding of populism and its relationship to liberal democracy, so that policy makers can strengthen rather than further weaken liberal democracy in Europe.

It's important to note that there is considerable debate as to whether populism is even an ideology. After all, it can be used by both the left and the right. Some scholars argue that populism is a movement, or a discursive frame, or a strategy to attract votes, or, at best, a "thin-centred ideology" (Mudde et al., 2017, p. 8). In this paper, I treat populism as a thin-centred ideology because the particular ideas under populist command are a limited range of political concepts. The core concept of populism is "the people" and populism can easily be combined with very different ideologies (Mudde, 2004, p. 544). Geert Wilders and Viktor Orbán, who are both powerful populist politicians, do not support a society where groups with different values and interests co-exist. Rather, they see society as all people having the same interests and values. As such, they pose a threat to liberal democracy in Europe.

According to Mudde et al. (2017, p. 84), populism is ultimately part of democracy, and populist movements constitute an increasing challenge to democratic politics. Populism is a natural reaction by voters against some of the undemocratic qualities of liberal institutions. Populists often do this by politicizing issues that are not discussed by the elites but are considered relevant by the "silent majority" (Mudde et al., 2017, p. 84). In this view, decisions on too many issues have been shifted from legislatures to judiciaries or bureaucracies, removing them from democratic deliberation by elected officials and creating a sense that "*there is no alternative*" for certain policies (Liddiard, 2019, p. 2). However, populism can be harmful to democracy because populism implies that the general will is not only transparent but also absolute; it can legitimize authoritarianism and illiberal attacks on anyone who threatens the homogeneity of the people (Mudde et al., 2017, p. 18).

In this thesis, I examine two European politicians that are frequently associated with populism and democratic decline in the EU: Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Viktor Orbán in Hungary. These two politicians are chosen because populism studies are typically confined to one geographic area or another; regional specificities are lacking when pan-European studies are conducted in an effort to avoid essentializing "East" and "West" (Herman, 2019). Theoretical work on populism, on the other hand, provides valuable methods for comparing the form and causes of populist rhetoric at both ends of

the European Union (EU). Both West populist and East populist leaders represent the right-wing demographic of their respective countries and utilize similar platforms; they do so in ways that resonate amongst different populations, different nationalities, and geopolitical positions, with different sensitivities to perhaps the same problems. East versus West European countries have exceptionally different pasts yet still have come under the influence of populism in very similar ways (Herman, 2019).

My thesis is motivated by the following research questions: How can Wilders and Orbán be understood as populists, and why do they possibly pose a threat to liberal democracy? Although Wilders is from the West and Orbán from the East, there are several similarities in the rhetoric and policy proposals of these two politicians. This is not to say, though, that Wilders and Orbán are aligned in all of their ideas and visions. As I will examine in the coming analysis, these politicians, though populists, nonetheless, diverge from one another on a number of critical social issues, causing tensions among European populists and show the diversity of populism today. I argue that the often very similar challenges faced across the East and the West are approached in a variety of different ways by these two right-wing populist leaders and that both Wilders and Orbán characterize people who oppose them or disagree with their policies as evil "enemies." This creates a tense relationship between populism and liberal democracy.

2. Defining Populism

In order to analyse why elected but controversial heads of state and politicians can be understood as populist and why they possibly pose a danger to democracy, it is essential to look more closely at the concept of populism. Populism is a diverse set of ideas on how democracy works, as well as a political ideology that calls into question the authority of conventional political elites by pretending to be the only true representative of the people (Rooduijn & van Kessel, 2019).

Populism is derived from the Latin word *populus*, which means "the people" (Heywood, 2017). From this, we understand that populism is about the power that lies with the people. Populists build their rhetoric around a definition of "the people" that embraces diversity and inclusion while also specifying who those people are and who they must battle in the Establishment in order to be heard. The «people» appear as a unified and homogeneous group with a common will: presented in a specific singular form, regardless of class, religion, language, and ethnicity (Mudde, 2004, p. 544). For populists, the people can mean the nation or more limited groups. In Wilders and Orbán's case, "the people" are their respective nations, Hungarians, and Dutch.

Mudde et al. (2017, p. 4) present populism as an ideology that divides society into two antagonistic camps, the "pure people" versus the "corrupt elite," and that privileges the general will of the people above all else. Canovan (1999, p. 5) explains that populist appeals are typically written in a manner that is "democratic" in the sense that it is directed at ordinary people. They pride themselves on simplicity and directness, capitalizing on public mistrust of politicians' evasiveness and bureaucratic jargon. Right-wing and left-wing populists share the claim that, unlike the governing elites, they would follow through with their promises (Otjes & Louwerse, 2015, p. 60). However, for some radical-right parties, the "people are natives." While for some radical left parties, "the people" are the workers.

Previous research has shown that populist parties' messages vary from those of mainstream parties (Bakker & Rooduijn & Schumacher, 2016, p. 304). Rooduijn et al. (2014) demonstrate populist parties are more likely than mainstream parties to argue that the "right" people are oppressed by an "evil" elite. To summarize, all prototypical populist parties share an anti-establishment message, but they vary in the host ideology they have embraced.

3. Populism as an Ideology

There is considerable debate in the literature as to whether populism is a type of ideology or rather a political strategy to garner votes from the dissatisfied electorate. This is due to the fact that populism is often coupled with other "thicker" ideologies such as such as nativism on the right and socialism on the left (Mudde, 2015). The emphasis on "*notions such as authority, hierarchy, order, obligation, tradition, reaction, and nationalism*" characterizes right-wing populism (Jupskås, 2020). Conversely, left-wing populists often claim that the political elite only looks after the interests of the business elite and neglects the interests of the common working man (Otjes & Louwerse, 2015, p. 62).

In Europe today, right-wing populism is more prevalent than left-wing populism because populism in Europe is closely associated with radical-right parties that have been making their discontented voices heard in the aftermath of the migrant crisis and the absorption of millions of Islamic migrants from the war-torn countries of the Middle East. The EU responded to the refugee crisis by cooperating, in solidarity, and with humanity, in accordance with the EU's founding values (European Commission, 2015). However, due to rising anti-immigration sentiment towards immigrants from the Middle East and Africa, as well as rising Euroscepticism and dissatisfaction with the European Union's economic policies, several populist leaders, such as those in Hungary and the Netherlands, but also Le Pen's party in France, have adopted a hostile position towards the EU for mass immigration. Together they found a common voice with other nationalist and far-right parties, which results in their influence growing across Europe (BBC, 2019).

Szabó, Norocel & Bene (2019, p. 33) explain that radical-right populism is generally conceived of as an ideological mix of nativist discourses with coded xenophobia added to ethnic nationalist appeals. There is an artificial separation between the people and the elite, and it often emphasizes different aspects of radical right politics, including ethnonationalism, anti-statist populism, and religious fundamentalism. Jupskås (2020) explains that right-wing radicalism is usually defined as a specific ideology characterized by "illiberal opposition to equality." At times, right-wing populism incorporates right-wing politics with nationalist rhetoric and themes to create radical right-wing populism. That being the case, the link between the radical right and populism is often assumed rather than objectively investigated and questioned.

Opposition to the Establishment such as the EU and appealing to the "common people" are all common themes in the rhetoric of a right-wing populist. Bakker et al. (2016, p. 304) explain that "a crucial skill for politicians is learning to speak the language of personality – specifically, to better navigate in the domain of personality traits by defining and communicating certain individual characteristics that are most appealing to a particular constituency at a particular time." With their xenophobic and nationalistic rhetoric as a central characteristic of their politics together with their appealing personalities as strong and firm leaders of their country they receive a significant support for their populist parties.

The new radical right-wing parties' agenda and rhetoric are focused on ethnonationalism and resistance to immigrants and a multicultural/multi-ethnic society (Rydgren, 2008, p. 739). Right-wing populism is reflected in the slogan "*own people first*." Muis & Immerzeel (2017, p. 910) explain that this means that countries should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group, the nation, and those non-native elements, other persons, and ideas, threaten homogeneous nation-states. The term "radical" thus refers to the outspoken position at the far end of the political spectrum on issues related to immigration and ethnic diversity (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017, p. 910). Based on their political rhetoric, both Wilders and Orbán are radical right-wing populists with harsh and blunt rhetoric towards immigrants. Both are responsible for dividing society with nationalistic and xenophobic rhetorical tactics that limit their audiences to those who maintain the same ideologies as them (Batten, 2019, p. 3).

4. Populism and Democracy

Ádám (2019, p. 22) explains that populism is not necessarily an evil political project because populists are defending the idea of "the people" as sovereign. Pappas (2019, p. 3) states that populism as a modern historical phenomenon pertains to a type of democracy that stands midway liberalism and autocracy. Although if it wins majority support, it is likely to weaken democracy and market capitalism further because populism can never find a point of political equilibrium and stability. Based on its majoritarian concept of democracy and the primacy of popular sovereignty, populism is at odds with liberal aspects of contemporary democracies, including minority rights, checks and balances, and the rule of law.

It is frequently claimed that radical right populism jeopardizes some of the liberal democracies' institutional pillars, such as pluralism and minority security (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017, p. 917). On the other side, the politicians invoke very different versions of what 'real' democracy is or should be: pure, relatively unconstrained popular sovereignty vs. legally very much constrained liberal democracy (Pappas, 2019, p. 3). Orban stated: "*Just because something is not liberal, it still can be a democracy*" (Orban, 2014). From such a position, populism offers an alternative conception to liberal democracy that is both plausible and, under certain circumstances, quite compelling to broad electoral publics (Pappas, 2019, p. 3).

Populism is an ambiguous phenomenon and can contain different ideas, including problematic statements, such as popular sovereignty and the positive valorisation of "the people" combined with the denigration of "the elite" can have different effects on a liberal democracy (Kriesi, 2018). First of all, populists often use the phrase "rule by the people." This means that principles such as checks and balances on the popular will are rejected. Secondly, populist democracy has a monolithic conception of the people, which implies that the "general will" is always right (Kriesi, 2018). Liberal democracy requires pluralism and the recognition that we need to find fair conditions for living together as free, equal, diverse citizens (Müller, 2016, p. 3). However, in Hungary, populism has managed to conquer one institution after another, weakening the checks and balances built into the democratic system. While in the Netherlands, populist rhetoric is polarising society by not being respectful or accepting other cultures which creates a society that does not recognize everyone as equals.

5. Method: Case Study Analysis

To analyse my research questions, I employ a comparative case study analysis of the political platforms and rhetoric of Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Viktor Orban in Hungary. I chose these cases because I am particularly interested in how populism differs between the West and the East. Kriesi (2018) explains that Eastern European party systems have not yet been institutionalized to the same degree as West European party systems make them even more susceptible to populist phenomena. The public's frustration with their political elites is intensified by the low level of political and administrative performance in Eastern Europe (Kriesi, 2018).

Even though there is a significant difference in the political structure and in their political history, apart from a common nationalistic rhetoric, these insurgent populist leaders are, unified by anti-immigration sentiments, a preference for national decision-making, and Euroscepticism. Both leaders have long been influential politicians who have used revolutionary campaign tactics and portrayed charismatic profiles as leaders of not only their own parties but of the entire right-wing political spectrum (Körösenyi & Patkós, 2017, p. 316). Based on Cas Mudde's (2017, p. 4) definition of populism, both populist leaders present populism as a thin ideology that divides society into two antagonistic camps, the "*pure people*" versus the "*corrupt elite*," and that privileges the general will of the people above all else. Furthermore, I treat Wilders and Orbán both as a radical right-wing populist because both populists promote statements from a far end of the political spectrum on xenophobia, ethnonationalism, and anti-system populism, in their case, anti-Muslims and Eurosceptic rhetoric, which weakens constitutional courts, concentrate power in the hands of the executive, and marginalize groups of citizens based on ethnicity, religion, or national origin (Galston, 2018)

For each individual politician, I have selected several quotes that they have said throughout the years, which I analyse with the same set of criteria in mind, thus creating a consistent basis for examining my research question. The main perspectives that I will be comparing are their view on immigration, the EU, and the media. I chose to focus on these three dimensions because the EU is a huge part of politics in the Netherlands and Hungary. Immigration is a leading issue in Europe, especially after the migrant crisis in 2015, and is an intensely debated topic that dominates political agendas. I chose to focus on media because it is such an important source of how knowledge and news are spread. It is essential to understand the relationship between populist movements and the media because it is through media that the populists convey their message and beliefs.

Mudde & Kaltwasser (2012, p. 13) state that liberal democracy is a complex form of government based on the idea of political equality, and consequently, cannot allow a majority to deprive a minority of any of its primary political rights since this would imply a violation of the democratic process. At the same time, the core aspect of liberal democracy revolves around its ability to provide both public contestation and political participation. For that reason, I chose these two populist leaders, specifically because Orbán and Wilders are, in many ways, extreme cases with radical right-wing populism. Not only is examining the rhetoric of these individual populists necessary for the purpose

of grasping how populism exists and thrives today, but it is also critical to understanding populism based on two very different nations with very different histories. This gives us a clear understanding of how populism impacts the democracy of a country, and the EU. I believe by comparing the rhetoric of these two politicians towards the EU, the media and immigration, with close attention paid to the fact that it is received and processed differently by individuals and groups, it will give society, as a whole, the opportunity to work towards determining how language and actions exclude, discriminate, and pose a threat to democracy.

6. The Netherlands: Geert Wilders

Geert Wilders is one of Europe's most radical right-wing politicians based on his inward-looking, anti-establishment rhetoric. Wilders' anti-Islam, anti-EU agenda, which has been prominent among a significant section of Dutch voters for over ten years, has gradually turned him into one of Europe's most radical politicians (Moerman, 2017). Wilders is known for his proposed initiatives to achieve "*A strong, proud and sovereign Netherlands!*" Wilders has pledged to ban the Quran in the Netherlands, which he compares to Adolf Hitler's "*Mein Kampf*." He wants to close all mosques in the Netherlands and exit the eurozone and the EU (Moerman 2017). In 2007, he proposed that the Quran be banned in the Netherlands, and the following year, he released *Fitna*, which means Strife, a divisive short film that deconstructs Quran passages with graphic images of Islamist terrorist attacks (Ray, 2020).

Wilders has been active in Dutch politics for over twenty years (Moerman, 2017). According to Ray (2020) did Wilders begin his political career as a modest member of a mainstream political party, serving in the Dutch House of Representatives since 1998 and as a party leader for the Party for Freedom (Partij Voor de Vrijheid; PVV) from 2006. Since then, Wilders has slowly transformed into Europe's most radical politician with his extreme anti-Islam, anti-EU agenda. The assassination of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, who was a descendant of painter Vincent van Gogh, by a Muslim militant in 2004 was a significant turning point for Wilders. Later, The PVV ran in the 2009 European elections in order to "battle the European Union from the inside." At the same time, Wilders joins forces with several like-minded politicians from across Europe. One of the main allies is Marine Le Pen, the leader of the French National Front (FN) (Moerman, 2017).

Despite Wilders' radicalism, the PVV currently is one of the most popular parties in opinion polls. Despite a growing number of voters supporting the PVV, Wilders' chances of becoming Prime Minister of the Netherlands are slim. It will not be enough to become the most powerful party in parliament (Moerman, 2017). The PVV would still need two to three coalition partners in order to form a majority government. However, Moerman (2017) explains that the other parties have all stated that they would not enter a coalition government with Wilders. Even though Wilders will most likely not become prime minister in the Netherlands, being in opposition has many advantages for Wilders; his party is a protest one, and therefore would possibly lose popularity if he were in power. Meanwhile, his power and influence have pressured other parties to comply with, or at the very least respond to, his immigration stance.

6.1 Wilders and the PVV

Vossen (2016) states that the PVV can be viewed as the Dutch version of an ideological family of nationalist parties linked by their opposition to immigration and to the political and cultural elites. Within this family, "*Geert Wilders has played an essential role as a pioneer of a new master frame, in which Islam is portrayed as the historical archenemy of the West*" (Vossen, 2016). Wilder's divisive issue with Muslims is that he believes they

are a danger to society and that they have a significant impact on Dutch traditions, economy, national identity, and national sovereignty. Wilders has stated that:

"Anybody who thinks that Islamization is a matter of just one issue cannot count. Mass immigration has enormous consequences for all facets of our society. It is a disaster in economic terms; it affects the quality of our education, increases insecurity on the streets, leads to an exodus from our cities, extrudes Jews and gays, and rinses women's emancipation through the toilet." (Damhuis, 2019)

Furthermore, the PVV in the Netherlands criticizes the elite for its multiculturalism and for selling out national interests to the benefit of Brussels or immigrants. For example, in its 2006 election manifesto, the party writes that the *"political elite systematically ignores citizens interests and problems"* (Bakker et al., 2016, p. 3). Wilders states that:

"The European Union cannot be compared to the United States. America is a nation, but Europe is not. Europe is a continent of many different nations with their own identities, traditions, and languages. Robbing them of their national democracies does not create a European democracy - it destroys democracy in Europe." (Wilders, 2013)

Besides his goal to "de-Islamicize" the Netherlands by putting a ban on Muslim immigrants and refugees, one of Wilders most essential actions on his political agenda is to leave the European Union. Wilders calls the EU politically corrupt, and he wants the Netherlands to strive to be a sovereign country with bilateral solid and economic ties with countries inside and outside the EU. Wilders has been quoted as saying:

"Europe is my home. Europe is my continent. Europe is where we live. The European Union is a political, bureaucratic organization that took away our identity and our national sovereignty. So, I would get rid of the European Union and be a nation-state again." (BBC, 2013)

At the same time, Wilders wants to be a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) like Norway, or of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) like Switzerland, so that the economic benefits remain, while the Dutch government is in control of their own rules, such as who enters the country, immigration, and their own currency (PVV, 2021). In other words, Wilders wants to take control of the Netherlands' sovereignty.

According to Ray (2020) have Eurosceptic parties been on the rise throughout the EU in the past two decades, and Wilders has shown himself eager to work with like-minded anti-immigrant politicians. In November 2013, Wilders announced an alliance with Marine Le Pen of France's National Front. The pair pledged to create a bloc in the European Parliament called the European Alliance for Freedom, a group based on the dismantling of the EU bureaucracy and the imposition of strict immigration controls (Ray, 2020).

6.2 Wilders and Populist Rhetoric

Since 2006, Wilders' language has increasingly adopted populist rhetoric. His inward-looking, anti-establishment rhetoric has a lot in common with US President Donald

Trump's political style. Wilders frequently uses rough and often insulting language like calling the prime minister "loony." He espouses virulent anti-Islam messaging by demanding the prohibition of the Quran, along with the banning of wearing headscarves (Bos & Brants, 2014, p. 704). He advocates keeping "criminal" immigrants out of Europe. To some extent, this strategy has proven successful; when he was against the euro and Turkish membership of the EU, he became a popular politician (Moerman, 2017). Furthermore, in 2012 Wilders launched a special hotline for people with complaints against immigrant workers from Eastern Europe (Moerman, 2017). At the same time, he asked supporters at a rally whether they wanted "fewer or more Moroccans in your city and in the Netherlands." When the crowd shouted back, "*Fewer! Fewer!*" a smiling Wilders responded: "*We're going to take care of that.*" (BBC, 2017)

Wilders claims to be the only representatives of "the people," also called "the silent majority." Wilders believes that he is the Netherlands' only chance to achieve sovereignty; "*There is a lot of Moroccan scum in Holland who make the streets unsafe, if you want to regain your country, make the Netherlands for the people of the Netherlands again, then you can only vote for one party*" (BBC, 2017). At the same time, he does everything to weaken his opponents, especially the Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Liberals (VVD), Mark Rutte, and often use straightforward solutions to complicated problems, as is the case with populist politicians in general. For instance, Moerman (2017) explains whereas other parties released expansive party programs, the PVV only released one page. Its main point is to "de-Islamize the country," which includes closing all mosques and prohibiting the use of the Quran. The PVV makes no mention of what "de-Islamization" entails or how it will be carried out.

All things considered, Wilders is clearly one of the figureheads of radical right-wing populism. His radical right-wing rhetoric, using xenophobic and nationalistic arguments, is often perceived as racist, and it has a negative impact on the polarization of society between the "good" Dutch people and the "evil" Muslims. He has stated that:

"There is no equality between our culture and the retarded Islamic culture. Look at their views on homosexuality or women." (Traynor, 2008)

Because Wilders has already established himself as a powerful politician, most negative publicity, like the hate-speech charges pressed against him, considerably boost electoral support for his party. He had already obtained much legitimacy and media visibility, and his party already held nine seats in the national parliament when he was charged with hate speech (Van Spanje & De Vreese, 2015, p. 126). Even though Wilders is not in power, unlike Orbán, he still has significant power and influence and pressures other parties to comply with or at the very least respond to his political stance.

7. Hungary: Viktor Orbán

Hungary's Viktor Orbán was not considered a populist politician during his first term, which ended in 2002. However, upon returning to power in 2010, he became one of Europe's most populist prime ministers. According to Kornai (2015, p. 34) does Hungary, a member of NATO and the EU, now turn away from the outstanding achievements of the 1989–90 transition. Hungary used to function as a market economy and liberal democracy based on the rule of law and private ownership. However, after Orbán's Fidesz party came to power, Hungary made a sharp U-turn and set off resolutely in the opposite direction. The country is the first and, so far, the only one of these countries to experience such democratic backsliding (Kornai, 2015, P. 34).

Many support Orbán because they see him as a staunch defender of Hungary's sovereignty and independence (Kornai, 2015, p. 43). Unlike Wilders, who is flamboyant, Orbán has a different type of charisma. He is seen as a strongman, giving the Hungarian people security and safety. As a populist, Orbán is defined by right-wing tendencies, but one whose policies are irreconcilable with the theory and practice of the free market (Larsen, 2014). Political theorist Margaret Canovan defines Orbán as having "*exaltation and appeal to the "people,"*" and characterizes him as "*anti-elitist*" by definition. Thus, Viktor Orbán's decisive win in 2010 represented a new era in not only Hungarian but also European politics. In Hungary, the fundamental rules and values of liberal democracy have been significantly weakened (Rydliński, 2018, p. 95). Democracy, the rule of law, a freely functioning civil society, and pluralism in intellectual life are crucial elements in liberal democracy.

7.1 Orban and Fidesz

Rydliński (2018, p. 96) explains that under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, Hungary's Fidesz Party achieved a spectacular result in the parliamentary elections in 2010. Together with its junior allies, Fidesz won 263 out of 386 seats in the Hungarian parliament with the support of 52,7% of those who voted in the elections. Economic crisis and a political scandal centered on the incumbent socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány and resulted in two key factors that influenced the success of Orbán's party Fidesz. Rydliński (2018, p. 96) states that a recording emerged in which Prime Minister Gyurcsány admitted to lying to the Hungarian people about the country's economic conditions. Populist politicians tend to use swift but authoritative executive action to handle crises. Just like other populists, Orbán exploited crisis contexts to bolster his party leadership and, when in government, gain more power (Rydliński, 2018, p. 96).

Orbán constantly challenges European unity, treating the European Union as a source of additional income while using xenophobic and nationalistic arguments in his internal and external politics (Rydliński, 2018, p. 105). Orban has stated, "*We cannot let Brussels put itself above the law.*" (Euronews, 2016). This is a statement Orbán said to a mixed crowd of pro and anti-government supporters where he warned about the danger that refugees pose to the Christian traditions of Europe and criticized EU plans to distribute asylum seekers across the bloc. Such Xenophobic statements may be characterized as believing

that it is "natural" for people to live among others of 'their own kind,' along with a corresponding hostility toward people of 'another kind. However, this hostility need not be activated until 'strangers' come too close to the ingroup, for instance, in geographical or social space (Rydgren, 2008, p. 740). In this case, the EU posed a threat to Hungarian society by distributing asylum seekers across the bloc. By accepting refugees, Orbán believes that it will threaten the identity, such as consensual beliefs and practices, mores and traditional values, or the material interests of Hungary.

Relationships with the EU and various member states are an example of the Hungarian Prime Minister's nationalistic approach. Orbán has been criticized by EU institutions from the start, with them pointing out the undemocratic implications of his legislative reforms and accusing him of undermining the rule of law's basic values (Rydliński, 2018, p. 100). According to Kornai (2015, p. 44), Hungary happily accepts the EU's financial support but insists on complete control over its distribution, even as regime representatives regularly support Eurosceptic declarations. Meanwhile, Hungarian diplomats resolutely attempt to promote business relations with various Asian autocracies and dictatorships (Kornai, 2015, p. 44). Even though Orbán wants to stay in the EU for financial benefits, he rejects EU norms and values. Orbán has from the very first day in office, used the rhetoric of opposing Brussels' interference in the internal affairs of Hungary by stating that, "*We must make it clear that our problem is not in Mecca but in Brussels.*" (Gutteridge, 2016). He has also claimed that Hungary country had not opted for feudal relations between Brussels and Budapest when entering the European Union (Rydliński, 2018, p. 100). In this case, the "natural" people are the Hungarians, while "another" kind is the EU.

7.2 Orbán's and Populist Rhetoric

Orbán's focus on nationalism and his anti-immigrant rhetoric has had a substantial impact on Hungary. Under Orbán, Hungary has clearly experienced democratic backsliding. Orbán has enacted policies and utilized rhetoric that stereotypes and discriminate against Muslims. For instance, when Orbán told the Hungarian to vote against the refugee quota demanded by the European Commission, he instructed them, "*Don't put Hungary's future at risk! Vote no!*" (Rydliński, 2018, p. 99). Orbán is openly Islamophobic, claiming that a world where Christianity does not predominate is "*worrisome*" (Batten, 2019, p. 8). Since he was re-elected in 2010, Orbán has been leading the charge towards radical-right politics centered around national identity and Christian values:

"We do not want to see a significant minority among ourselves that has different cultural characteristics and background. We would like to keep Hungary as Hungary," (Szakacs & Than, 2018)

The examples mentioned above show Orbán's rhetoric is constructed eloquently, but also more bluntly. The government's discursive continuity can serve different political goals successfully, depending on the given political context, regardless of whether those goals are democratic or autocratic (Szilágyi & Bozóki, 2015, p. 164).

His rhetoric has also developed in a more robust "Us against them – mentality." This is popular for appealing to the "good" people. Like other populists, Orbán is more inclined

to make a claim to the "good" people. In his opinion, the "good" people are everyone that agrees with him. The "good" people are also separated from other nationalities, minorities, and groups in a "we" versus "them" distinction to gain support. In other words, Orbán believes;

"Hungary does not need a single migrant for the economy to work or the population to sustain itself or for the country to have a future." (The Guardian, 2016)

Furthermore, Orbán's message changes in substance and tone depending on who he's speaking to—whether it's party loyalists or European businessmen. As a result, it's not shocking that Orbán's supporters and critics, as well as Hungarian and international observers, are all confused (Kornai, 2015, p. 44).

Above all, just like his fellow populist colleague Wilders, it is clear that Orbán has grown to become one of the most influential voices of the radical right populism in Europe and abroad. Kornai (2015, p. 46) tells that Hungary's new right-wing government, led by Viktor Orbán, came to power in spring 2010 and has made significant changes to the country's public legal infrastructure since then. Hungary has clearly experienced democratic backsliding under Orbán. It passed a new constitution unilaterally, significantly weakening the balance of power and abolishing the principle of power-sharing. According to Kornai (2015, p. 47) it is clear that Orbán and his party have "*cemented themselves in*" to translate an expression that has become commonplace in Hungary. The many modifications made to the electoral law were intended to favor a Fidesz victory, or rather to make it a near certainty. Several of the key features of liberal democracy are violated by Orbán's government, which results in the polity ceasing to qualify as a liberal democracy (Pappas, 2019. P. 3).

8. Populism and democracy in the European Union

I argue that both Wilders and Hungary are compromising democracy in the EU but in different ways. Mudde defines liberal democracy as “A system characterized not only by free and fair elections, popular sovereignty, and majority rule but also by the constitutional protection of minority rights.” (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012, p. 13.). Larry Diamond (2004) states that liberal democracy is the build-up of four key elements: a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections; the active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life; protection of the human rights of all citizens. In other words, individual rights and freedoms are officially recognized and secured under a democratic government that functions as the voice of the people, and political authority is constrained by the rule of law, which means everyone's voice should be heard.

Orbán and Wilders have had a significant impact on the liberal democracy in their respective countries. The main difference between these populists is their political position in politics. Wilders is the leader of the Party for Freedom, in other words, a significant electoral force. Orbán, on the other hand, is the Prime minister of Hungary, which means that he is in power. Furthermore, soft authoritarianism is nothing new in modern Hungarian politics, though, with dramatic changes in recent years, Orbán has further consolidated his “illiberal state” (Laczó, 2018). This earned him allegations of conspicuous and worrisome political development and clashes with the European Union. Laczó (2018) characterizes Orbán's regime by recurrent vicious open threats, his one-party rule within what appears to be a multi-party structure, unfair competitive elections, a pluralistic media environment whose dominant party is under direct government influence, and an illiberal regime heavily dependent on being part of a union of liberal democracies. Wilders, on the other hand, has little political power but is about to divide his home country more than ever. Wilders poses a threat to democracy by his racist rhetoric that harms European values. His claims that Muslims should not have the same constitutional and foreign protections as other believers is marginalizing groups of citizens based on ethnicity, religion, or national origin which contradicts liberal democracy (Galston, 2018)

8.1 Media

Since Orbán was elected as prime minister, several significant changes were made in Hungarian society. For instance, Orbán has curtailed freedom of the press and undermined its traditional independence. Kornai (2015, p. 40) explains that Fidesz leaders had put their own people in charge of all the state-run television channels and radio stations. As a result, state media are now required to use content supplied by the government news agency, which also provides news free of charge to privately-owned media, allowing the government to exert control over what is published (Kornai, 2015, p. 40).

By contrast, Wilders wants to abolish public broadcasting altogether. Wilders sees public broadcasting as a source for promoting multiculturalism; for that reason, he wants public broadcasting abolished in its entirety. According to the PVV's party manifesto, the breakdown of the Netherlands' own identity often receives support from education and the public broadcaster. Partly for this reason, public broadcasting must be abolished (PVV, 2021); *"Why are the Christmas tree and Easter celebrations under fire, when we do see entire TV broadcasts about Ramadan? It's the world upside down"*. (Broadcast Magazine, 2021)

To sum up, both populist leaders want control over the media because it will give them greater power to control what will be broadcasted. In Wilders's case, it is essential to "shield" the Netherlands from "Islamic propaganda." In Orbán's case, the media is a threat to his political campaign, and therefore wants to control what the media publishes about his political regime. Abolishing or taking control of the media is a method that these populists do to silence oppositional voices. Szabó et al. (2019, p. 44) argue that the more integrated a position the radical-right media possess in the media space, the greater chances they have to influence the public discussion. This condition is critical for favorable discursive opportunities. By the same measure, isolation indicates a limited potential to effectively disseminate their political views, arguments, and interpretations of political events. The centralization of public media, their close ties to government affairs, and the ability to fine private media are all indicators of deterioration of freedom of expression and democracy (Rydliński, 2018, p. 99).

8.2 The EU

The EU values are common to the EU countries in a society in which inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and non-discrimination prevail (European Commission, n.d). In the Netherlands, Wilders's challenges to liberal democracy are based on the rejection of a pluralistic society. This is exemplified by Wilder's rejection of Dutch society, as well as a Europe altogether, where the EU is allowed to *"force upon us the bitter fruit of their cosmopolitan immigration policy"* (Wilders, 2017). Here, Wilders quoted Viktor Orbán, a well-known politician of illiberal democracy, with whom he expressed he shares mirrored sentiments regarding a *"Europe [of] Christian, free and independent nations"* (Wheeler, 2020, p. 37).

Orbán and the EU, on the other hand, have clashed on several occasions over democracy and the rule of law EU. Orbán tapped into feelings held by many Hungarians who perceive challenges to their national identity and believe they are regarded as second-class citizens in the EU with a message that he stands for all Hungarians against international meddling (Szakacs & Than, 2018). Both Wilders and Orbán want the economic benefits to remain. However, they see the EU as a threat to their country's sovereignty. Their tyrannical rhetoric towards refugees and immigrants lacks ethical inclusion. Europe is home to many citizens that are not white or do not practice Christianity. As populist leaders like Wilders and Orbán gain popularity and continue to promote xenophobic rhetoric, they further marginalize, ostracize, and discredit not only their own citizens but all European citizens (Batten, 2019, p. 10). This does not follow the EU values of inclusion, tolerance, justice, solidarity, and non-discrimination.

8.3 Immigration

Immigration is a leading issue in Europe and is an intensely debated topic that dominates political agendas. Wilders is known for his poisonous rhetoric, and his attack on immigration can quickly be interpreted as discrimination or hate speech. However, Dennison & Geddes & Talò (2017) explain that Wilders mainly focuses on Islam, given the Netherlands' history of immigration, from Indonesia and Suriname as well as Turkish and Moroccan labour immigrants. Dutch attitudes to these communities vary considerably: the primarily Christian Indonesian and Suriname communities are generally considered well-integrated while Turks and, to a greater extent, Moroccans are regularly decried for their higher crime rates, weaker economic performance, and supposedly languid integration efforts (Dennison et al., 2017).

Orbán, on the other hand, has grown to become one of the most influential voices of the radical right in Europe abroad, and Wilders openly supports Orbán on his views on immigration. Both populist leaders have bombarded the citizens with terrifying stories about Islamic immigrants and shown massive support for nativist campaigns against immigrants (Mudde, 2018). They passionately defend the ideology of nationalism and the concept of anti-globalism, which is typical for radical right-wing populists. They argue that, in the 21-century, Europe is being compromised by Muslim immigration. These populist leaders are interested in curating the same sort of society in Europe, one in which white Euro-Christian heritage dominates.

All this leads to the conclusion that Wilders and Orbán can be understood as populist and that they do pose a threat to democracy on several democratic aspects. Key features such as a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections are severely weakened in Hungary. The executive and legislative branches are no longer separate; both are controlled by Prime Minister Orbán, who has positioned himself at the very pinnacle of power (Kornai, 2015, p. 35). Hungary's new constitution, called the Basic Law, was drafted by a small group within Fidesz without any comprehensive public discussion. Kornai (2015, p. 35) explains that protests were ignored, and the document was pushed through the law factory in short order. At the same time, Wilders is a threat to liberal democracy for denying a large group of individuals, i.e., Muslims, active participation in the political process and in civic life. Furthermore, both radical right-populists are a threat to liberal democracy by weakening the protection of the human rights of all citizens with their ostracising rhetoric.

9. Conclusion

The goal of this thesis was to take a deeper look at two of the most prominent radical right-wing leaders in Europe today: Geert Wilders and Viktor Orbán. The central aim was to evaluate why both these leaders are called populist by scholars and the news media, and to gain an understanding of how Wilders and Orbán possibly pose a threat to democracy. I conclude that both Wilders and Orbán are powerful radical right-wing populists in Europe with a solid xenophobic and nationalistic view on politics. They characterize people who oppose them or disagree with their policies as evil "enemies." This creates a tense relationship between populism and liberal democracy.

By analyzing their rhetoric and actions, I show that Wilders and Orbán have employed similar strategies and messages. However, to what degree they pose a threat to liberal democracy is different. The differences may be traced back to the divergence in their political position. Orbán, prime minister of Hungary, forms the government. Wilders, on the other hand, functions as a significant electoral force. Wilders is about to divide his home country more than ever. His radical right-wing rhetoric, using xenophobic and nationalistic arguments, undermines the civility of the relations among citizens. Wilders is working towards a polarised society in the Netherlands, where minority groups are discriminated, and political opponents are disrespected. Orbán, in comparison, has been a much more significant threat to democracy. The defence mechanisms built against dictatorships, such as freedoms, checks and balances, the rule of law, tolerance, independent social institutions, person and group rights, or pluralism, are inevitably under attack in Hungary under Orbán's leadership (Enyedi, 2017).

These radical right-wing populists could fuel a populist revolt in Europe, which will have a significant impact on the EU and the rest of the world by undermining a considerable part of the world's population. Their harsh rhetoric and illiberal measurements will divide not only their country but also the EU. Checks and balances, the rule of law, negative polarisation, and the protection of minority rights will continue to weaken. The importance of this thesis is, therefore, to understand how populism poses a threat to democracy because the emergence of populism in the twenty-first century is an unavoidable phenomenon. Orbán and Wilders hold a hostile stance towards principles of liberal democracy: separation of powers, constitutionalism plus judicial review, protection of minority rights, and a fine-grained net of international commitments. Orbán and Wilders are in many ways' extreme cases with radical right-wing populism; hence, understanding their success may help policymakers in the EU prevent the spread of populism across the continent and beyond (Ádám, 2019, p. 285).

The limitations of my thesis are based on my research being narrowed to few perspectives that are affected by populism due to limited time and a limited word count. I focused mainly on Wilders' and Orbán's rhetoric and actions and how that has impacted liberal democracy and the country's culture and executive and legislative branches, based on three political dimensions: their relationship with the EU, immigration, and the media. However, populism impacts the liberal democracy of a country in more areas, for example, economically. Therefore, I believe that my thesis would be more substantial if I

compared several eastern European countries and several Western European countries, including more of their political past and structure. This would have given me a more vigorous discussion and better arguments.

I believe that future scholars could improve my research by broadening the case study analysis. A comparative analysis with two case studies does not necessarily give a complete view of how populism poses a threat to democracy. Most European countries have exceptionally different pasts, and the thesis would be more accurate if it were based on several case studies, preferably populist leaders from right-and left-wing populism. At the same time, this thesis does not cover how populism can have a positive effect on democracy and how, for example, populism might be an equilibrium solution between democracy and outright dictatorship for countries with weaker political systems and institutions.

10. Works Cited

- Ádám, Z. (2019) Explaining Orbán: A Political Transaction Cost Theory of Authoritarian Populism, *Problems of Post-Communism*, 66:6, 385-401,
- Bakker, B. N., Rooduijn, M., & Schumacher, G. (2016). The psychological roots of populist voting: Evidence from the United States, the Netherlands and Germany. *European Journal of Political Research*, 55(2), 302-320.
- Batten, H. (2019). Rhetoric of the Far Right: A Rhetorical Analysis of Donald Trump and Viktor Orbán. *The Review: A Journal of Undergraduate Student Research*, 20(1), 6.
- BBC. (2013). Geert Wilders on bringing down EU. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-25356773>
- BBC. (2017). Dutch populist Geert Wilders talks of Moroccan 'scum'. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39016179>
- BBC. (2019). Europe and right-wing nationalism: A country-by-country guide. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006>
- Bos, L., & Brants, K. (2014). Populist rhetoric in politics and media: A longitudinal study of the Netherlands. *European Journal of Communication*, 29(6), 703-719.
- Broadcast magazine. (2021, January 10). *PVV wil afschaffing publieke omroep*. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.broadcastmagazine.nl/radio-televisie/televisie/pvv-wil-afschaffing-publieke-omroep/>
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political studies*, 47(1), 2-16.
- European Commission. (n.d.). *The EU values*. Retrieved March 2021 from <https://ec.europa.eu/component-library/eu/about/eu-values/>
- European Commission. (2015). *Refugee crisis: meeting of First Vice President Timmermans with a delegation from the "For a Thousand Lives: Be Human" appeal*. Retrieved March 2021 from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-is-new/news/news/2015/20151021_2_en
- Enyedi, Z. (2017). Five views: Is populism really a threat to democracy?. *LSE European Politics and Policy (EUROPP) Blog*. Retrieved 2021 from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/07/24/is-populism-really-a-threat-to-democracy/>

- Damhuis, K. (2019, July 24). "The biggest problem in the Netherlands": Understanding the Party for Freedom's politicization of Islam. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-biggest-problem-in-the-netherlands-understanding-the-party-for-freedoms-politicization-of-islam/>
- Daimond, L. (2004, January 21). What is democracy?. Retrieved 2021 from <https://diamond-democracy.stanford.edu/speaking/lectures/what-democracy>
- Dennison, J. Geddes, A. Talò. (2017, March 3). The Dutch aren't turning against immigration – the salience of the immigration issue is what drives Wilders' support. Retrieved 2021 from <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/03/03/the-dutch-arent-turning-against-immigration/>
- Euronews. (2016, March 15). Hungary: PM Orban blames refugees for undermining Christian Europe. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.euronews.com/2016/03/15/hungary-pm-orban-blames-refugees-for-undermining-christian-europe>
- Galston, W. A. (2018). The populist challenge to liberal democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 29(2), 5-19.
- Gutteridge, N. (2016, July, 28). Hungary taunts Merkel over terror and says 'our problem is not in Mecca, but in Brussels'. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/694022/European-Union-Hungary-PM-Viktor-Orban-Angela-Merkel-ISIS-terrorism-migration>
- Heywood, A. (2017). *Political ideologies: An introduction*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Herman, Lise. (2012, January 9). Is populism in Western Europe and Central Eastern Europe the same thing?. Retrieved 2021 from <http://www.nouvelle-europe.eu/en/populism-western-europe-and-central-eastern-europe-same-thing>
- Jupskås, A.R. (2020). What is populism?. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/groups/compendium/what-is-populism.html>
- Jupskås, A.R. (2020). What is right-wing radicalism?. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/groups/compendium/what-is-populism.html>
- Kornai, J. (2015). Hungary's U-turn. *Society and Economy. In Central and Eastern Europe | Journal of the Corvinus University of Budapest*, 37(3), 279-329.
- Körösényi, A., & Patkós, V. (2017). Liberal and illiberal populism: the leadership of Berlusconi and Orbán. *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 8(3), 315-337.
- Kriesi, S.H. (2018, April 10). The populist challenge: why Eastern Europe is different?. Retrieved 2021 from <https://voxukraine.org/en/the-populist-challenge-why-eastern-europe-is-different/>

- Larsen, J. (2014). Viktor Orban and the rise of the populist right. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/can-europe-make-it/viktor-orban-and-rise-of-populist-right/>
- Laczó, F. (2018, March 27). Populism in power in Hungary. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.eurozine.com/populism-power-hungary/#>
- Liddiard, P. (2019). Is populism really a problem for democracy. *Wilson Center*. Retrieved 2021 from https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/publication/liddiard_is_populism_really_a_problem_for_democracy_august_2019_0.pdf
- Moerman, T. (2017, March 14). How Geert Wilders slowly transformed into one of Europe's most radical politicians. *Insider*. <https://www.businessinsider.com/who-is-geert-wilders?r=US&IR=T>
- Mudde, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and opposition*, 39(4), 541-563.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (Eds.). (2012). *Populism in Europe and the Americas: Threat or corrective for democracy?*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2015). Populist radical right parties in Europe today. *Transformations of populism in Europe and the Americas: History and recent tendencies*, 295-307.
- Mudde, C. (2015, 17 February). The Problem with Populism. Retrieved 2021 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/feb/17/problem-populism-syriza-podemos-dark-side-europe>
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Mudde, C. (2018). Orbán's Hungary is not the future of Europe: it represents a dying past. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.sv.uio.no/c-rex/english/news-and-events/right-now/2018/orbans-hungary.html>
- Müller, J. W. (2016). *What is populism?*. University of Pennsylvania press.
- Muis, J., & Immerzeel, T. (2017). Causes and consequences of the rise of populist radical right parties and movements in Europe. *Current Sociology*, 65(6), 909-930.
- Pappas, T. S. (2019). *Populism and liberal democracy: A comparative and theoretical analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- PVV. (2021). Het gaat om u Verkiezingsprogramma 2021 – 2025. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.pvv.nl/images/09012020/verkiezingen2020/0acxyuew34z/VerkiezingsProgramma2021-Final.pdf>
- Ray, M. (2020, September 2). Geert Wilders. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Geert-Wilders>

- Rooduijn, M., & van Kessel, S. (2019). Populism and Euroscepticism in the European Union. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*.
- Rydgren, J. (2008). Immigration sceptics, xenophobes or racists? Radical right-wing voting in six West European countries. *European Journal of Political Research*, 47(6), 737-765. DOI:10.1111/j.1475-6765.2008.00784.x
- Rydliński, B. (2018). Viktor Orbán—First among Illiberals? Hungarian and Polish Steps towards Populist Democracy. *Modelling the New Europe. An On-line Journal*, (26), 95-107.
- Szabó, G., Norocel, O. C., & Bene, M. (2019). Media visibility and inclusion of radical right populism in Hungary and Romania: A discursive opportunity approach. *Problems of Post-Communism*, 66(1), 33-46.
- Szakacs, G., & Than, K. (2018, April 8) From liberal hero to right-wing icon, Orban's appeal trumps rivals. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-hungary-election-orban-newsmaker-idUKKBN1HF0YW>
- Szilágyi, A., & Bozóki, A. (2015). Playing it again in post-communism: the revolutionary rhetoric of Viktor Orbán in Hungary. *Advances in the History of Rhetoric*, 18(sup1), S153-S166.
- The Guardian. (2016, July 27). Hungarian prime minister says migrants are 'poison' and 'not needed'. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/26/hungarian-prime-minister-viktor-orban-praises-donald-trump>
- Traynor, I. (2008, February 17). 'I don't hate Muslims. I hate Islam,' says Holland's rising political star. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/feb/17/netherlands.islam>
- Van Spanje, J., & De Vreese, C. (2015). The good, the bad and the voter: The impact of hate speech prosecution of a politician on electoral support for his party. *Party Politics*, 21(1), 115-130.
- Vossen, K. (2017). *The Power of Populism: Geert Wilders and the Party for Freedom in the Netherlands* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Wheeler, A. C. (2020). *Transatlantic perspectives on contemporary populism: A narratological approach to the rhetoric of prominent US and European populist leaders* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/108000/WHEELER-THESIS-2020.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Wilders, G. (2013, November 21). The Resurgence of European Patriotism. Retrieved 2021 from <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-resurgence-of-european-patriotism-1385066982>

