UOS Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (UOSJSSH)
ISSN (P) 2224-2341, ISSN (E) 2310-0249
Volume: 8, (2) 2024, Pages (70-82)
Journal Homepage: https://uosjssh.su.edu.pk/

Right Wing Populism in Europe: An Analysis of Hungary and Poland

Dr. Ghulam Mustafa (Corresponding Author)

Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad. Email: ghulammustafa@gcuf.edu.pk

Bisma Waseem

M.Phil. Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad

Abstract

The rise of right-wing populism is a significant ideology which combines populist beliefs with right-wing policies, highlighting nationalism, anti-elitism, and protectionism. Across Europe, right-wing populist movements such as Hungary's Fidesz party, Poland's Law and Justice Party are on the rise and exerting pressure on liberal democracy and reconfiguring fixed political and economic structures. The effects embrace labor, scarcity of foreign investment, and economic insecurity followed by economic stagnation, increase in economic inequality, and cultural fears as a result of globalization. Right-wing populists consider historical injustices and societal phobias and they exploit the respective sentiments with welfare programs as well as protectionist policies that may have immediate positive impact on the electorate. Also, populist ideas have impact on social relations and the institutions especially trade unions, increasing challenges in a political sphere which in turn impacts employment rights. There's a need for understanding the nature of the right-wing populism and its future implications for a society and democracy under rising international politics.

Keywords: Nationalism, Right-Wing populism, Immigration, Economic grievances, Globalization.

Introduction

Right-wing populism, also called national populism and right populism, is a political ideology that combines right-wing politics with populist rhetoric and themes. Its rhetoric employs anti-elitist sentiments, opposition to the Establishment, and speaking to or for the common people. Proponents of rightwing populism underline nationalism, conservatism and protectionism as the major principles. In the recent years, this political trend has emerged in many European, American and other continents, arising challenges to liberal democracy and reconfiguring political and economic order. In Europe this has been compounded by the increasing nationalism and anti-immigration policies lead by rightwing populist parties and leaders who have disturbed the national economies in the EU (Mudde, 2019). Most of these movements may have short term gain financially, but they often lead to shortage of human resource, low FDI inflows and fiscal imbalances in the continent. Right-wing populism has grown popular in Europe in the course of the last 20 years because of concrete political and

economic parameters such as economic decline, wage inequality, the financial crisis in 2008 as well as policy of austerity. Other conditions include the migration crisis of 2015, enhancing European cultural homogenization concern and the lack of EU actions toward such issues.

Rightwing populism also supports policies that are important for national economies as opposed to globalization, which is certain to cause economic instability in the long-run. People claim that globalization costs jobs, harms domestic industries, and results in undue pressure for protectionism as from tariffs and subsidies. While these strategies can help out some sectors as in the short-run, they also lead to trade frictions and make a country less competitive in the global market (Rodrick, 2017). The authors argue that populist leaders tend to spend more money on welfare and social programs to appeal to the public; however, such outlay leads to deficits when public debt is accompanied by reduction in the tax rates. In addition, populist anti-immigration policies including the reinforce of borders and restrictions of immigration creates lack of workforce in areas of strategic importance such as agriculture, healthcare and construction, slows economic growth as well as increases the costs of companies that rely on immigration. Populist policies may be very unpredictable where at times they come with measures that lessen investors' protection and affiliations with international organizations such as the EU. In particular, right-wing populist parties are frequently against procedures that strengthen the EU integration and prefer national decisions for collective ones. This defiance results in friction especially where countries such as Hungary and Poland infringe on the basic principles of the EU that include democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Hungary has been at the forefront of rising rightwing populism in Europe, primarily under the leadership of Viktor Orbán, the prime minister since 2010 (Enyedi, 2020). Fidesz led by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has adopted an anti-immigration and nationalist policies making Hungary, the defender of Christian Europe. His government has developed policies on immigration to Hungary, establishing fences around Hungary to control migrant entry into the country, sharply deviating from liberal democracy. Orbán has also condemned globalism and the things that he considers as the weakness of western elites threatening national sovereignty (Kovács & Scheppele, 2018). In addition to a nationalist and Euroskeptic orientation, Hungary's rightwing populism is also underscored by a consistent erosion of liberal democratic institutions in the nation. Critics have alleged that Orbán & company have tried to corrupt the judiciary, censor the media, and win electoral changes which have minimized effective opposition.

Similar case can be explored in Poland; the rightwing populists, mainly the Law and Justice Party (PiS), assumed political office in 2015. The PiS, under the effective leadership of its chairman, Jarosław Kaczyński, has proclaimed conservative, catholic, nationalist, anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic views. Its leadership has been characterised by an attempt to transform Poland's judiciary which raised serious questions about the democratic values. The European Union has been opening violation procedures against Poland, claiming that the changes are going to affect judicial independence. PiS has also adopted Eurosceptic views, although Poland is one of the beneficiary states of EU funds and declares itself as the protector of Polish sovereignty (Kelemen, 2016). The government has continued to centralize media control, thereby being accused of suppressing press freedom. These actions have provoked the polarization of the Polish electorate, as supporters of PiS have justified the move of the government on the preservation of the sovereignty, while the opponent groups have accused the government of eroding the democratic values.

Research Questions

1. How is rightwing populism deal with the already established trend of globalization?
2. What are the root causes that lead to the rise of populist ideas in Europe?

Research methodology

This research aims to determine how is right wing populism gaining momentum in Europe, what are the underlying causes that led to change and what is the current situation of the countries that are mostly affected by change in governmental structure and how is this affecting their economy and overall EU cohesion. For this purpose, a qualitative research will be carried out relying on secondary sources including books, journal articles, and economic reports. The research will focus on 'whys' and 'how' to be able to answer the questions, what led to the rise of right-wing populism? And, how are Hungary and Poland keeping up with the policies that are different from the past?

Literature Review

The book *Is Europe on the 'Right' Path?* edited by Nora Langenbacher and Britta Schellenberg, published in 2011. The authors begin with analysis of the work of right-wing extremists who use the fears of society to achieve their goals and target minorities and present simple solutions to numerous social issues, this is also a primary reason for the success of the extreme right-wing parties primarily in the European parliamentary elections in 2009, as well as the following national elections in the countries such as Sweden, Denmark, and parts of Eastern Europe. This study uses a multi-national methodology that includes country profiles offering an analysis of the structure and tactics of organized radical right movements. Evidence suggest that right wing actors are gradually intensifying their electoral outcomes and that such parties employ sentiments from the people regarding immigration, economic insecurity, and cultural nationality. The book also examines different socio-political tactics used by right-wing populists, for instance simplification of issues, promoting nationalist feeling, which may appeal to sections of the population that feel they are victims of globalization. Transnational networks of right-wing parties show how cooperation increases their influence across national borders, which poses an issue for national governments that attempt to resist their movements on their own (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Berlin, Langebache, & Schellenberg, 2011).

In their article *Populism and Economic Policy: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe*, published in 2022, Magnus Feldmann and Mircea Popa aims at analyzing the relation between populism and economic policy in the context of Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, so as to enhance understanding of populism and its economic consequences. They stress that populism has mobilized quite spectacularly in CEE nations redrawing political terrains post communism. The authors provide a systematized approach as to how such leaders employ or misuse economic policies to achieve their political objectives at the risk of medium-and-long-term fiscal balance. They introduce the notion of populism basing on the previous research, where populism is viewed as a multidimensional construct always being related to economic decisions. Feldmann and Popa show that adjusting for political system transitions, through analyses of case studies on Hungary, Poland, and Romania, that such parties have come about via economic protest politics considering aspects such as inequality, unemployment, and corruption. Using these frameworks, they outline some of the economic policies typical to populist governments such as using favors of lower income demographics during election,

protectionist policies, and fiscal irresponsibility in an effort to pursue expansionist policies in the short-term (Feldmann & Popa, 2022).

Jakub Szabó's comparative study, *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce: A Comparative Study of Right-Wing Populism in Hungary and Poland* provides an understanding of national populism in these nations, definitions, manifestations, and social political consequences. It is widely defined by nationalism, anti-elite sentiments and themes such as immigration or cultural propaganda. These are generally true for all movements in Europe, but Szabó is keen to stress that national contexts are highly influential when it comes to populist rhetoric. In both Hungary, and especially Poland, right-wing populist parties have effectively capitalized on history and threats such as immigration and economic difficulties. These aspects are important to examine current populist attitudes since, after the collapse of the USSR, both nations underwent significant political shifts, during which nationalist discourses reemerged. Szabó discusses how the relations of today are defined by those of the past, with populistic presidents cultivating a sentiment of admiration for past regimes to sound the call for action. Also, increased economic discontent has led to the shift toward right-wing populism since neoliberal reforms have led to intense feelings of disillusionment among the public, which nationalist discourse offering to return national pride and protect groups of people who have been ignored for years (Szabó, 2020).

In Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism, Dani Rodrik analyses the forces of globalization and cultural identity that have spurred populist movements, specifically right-wing populism. Rodrik's article, entitled The Globalization Paradox: Why Global Markets, States, and Democracy Can't Coexist, suggests that although globalization has accelerated economic prosperity and made nations of the world closer together, globalization has also led to a backlash from populations that are feeling adrift in the wake of these changes. First, Rodrik notes that while globalization has benefited nations as a whole by increasing overall wealth, it has come at a cost to many individual workers, particularly in the West, as capital and production processes move to developing nations to avoid labor costs, leaving workers in these nations vulnerable to both job loss and reduce wages. A sense of economic insecurity cultivates anger directed at the elites and institutions seen to unduly profit from the processes of globalization. Then, trade policies are often designed to benefit multinational companies rather than local ones, contributing to the idea that the decisions on global economic matters are taken at the expense of the national one — a belief that strengthens the backing for populist executives ready to prioritize national issues. But economic factors fail to explain its striking growth in many contexts, so Rodrik goes on to highlight the cultural dimensions of populism, in particular the rise of nationalism in response to changes in: the demographics that immigration and cultural exchange have brought about. As Rodrik notes, populist appeal is rooted in anti-establishment anger born of the belief that political elites are corrupted and ineffective (Rodrik, 2021).

In *Repercussions of Right-Wing Populism for European Integration,* Ann-Cathrine Jungar examines the consequences of right-wing populist movements for the evolution of European integration, focusing on the uncertainty of such movements as the elitist as well as the movement for masses. However, the parties of the right-wing populists, she describes are often Eurosceptic according to her own words as they ‘paint the EU as a threat to national autonomy.’ And this position, of course, finds a resonance in voters who have been defeated by the EU and

globalization. Jungar also explains how the right-wing populist discourse emphasizes the opposition of nation-state and supra nationality and has established considerable obstacles to further European integration. She argued that such tension arises from the issues of economic decline, immigration concern and cultural clashes which are the major factors of populist campaigns and contribute to the EU indecisiveness and boost the political divide in the entire EU countries. Yet it is also important to record that right-wing populist parties are disclosing what is usually heating from behind and eroding, merely border-line democratic performance populism undermining consensus for the national and the EU agendas setting aggravating significant challenges to the future of European integration and liberal democracy (Jungar, 2018).

Literature Gap

A gap in the present literature is the absence of detailed comparative analysis of how Hungary's and Poland's historical, cultural, and political contexts affect the rise of right-wing populism. While ample amount has been written about the broader drivers, such as economic instability, concerns regarding immigration, and cultural nationalism, there is inadequate focus on how all of the drivers interact with the post-communist transitions.

Historical background

The origins of right-wing populism in Europe can be traced back to 19th-century, observers have identified links between this phenomenon and the tradition of nationalism, with stress on the sovereignty of the nation-state and its exclusionist racism towards certain populations (Rucht, 2018). These movements were characterized by anti-liberalism attitudes or tendencies and that which was associated with concern for loss of national identity. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries populist movements also adopted anti-Semitic elements and accused Jewish populations of contributing to various social ills. Political extremism of the Right and fascism prevails during the period between the two world wars 1918 to 1939 as Mussolini rises to power in Italy and Hitler in Germany. These movements evolved from economic difficulties, anti-Communism sentiment and bitterness over the Treaty of Versailles and trough authoritarian nationalism and patriotism (Heinisch, 2017).

Right-wing populism can therefore be associated with a significant change in the European political system which has only occurred in the present century. These movements were formerly marginalized and considered as either ultra-right wing or fanatical link to politics they have gradually invaded the political scene to become an influential feature of National and regional politics. This means that since post World War II period, far-right political parties have been on the periphery in most of Europe (Nagan & Manausa, 2018). The blatant cruelty of the Nazi and fascist regimes ensured that all forms of extremism were effectively marginalized, although left wing activism emerged and became dominant in many countries, including France and Italy far right failed to get a rooted foothold and remained a part of subculture or extremism. The Italian Social Movement (MSI) for an example got almost 9% of the vote in 1972 such incidences where right-wing extremism got political acceptance became an exception. As a rule, extreme right-wing formations stayed on the fringes of political processes, represented by neo-Nazi formations or such parties as the National Front in Great Britain. But the demise of the Cold War brought certain rather covert and incremental changes (Phillips, 2024).

The end of the cold war dismantled the clear divide between communism and capitalism where sleeping nationalists awoke. First noticeable in post-Soviet zones like the former USSR and

Yugoslavia it eventually engulfed both Eastern and Western European territories. It was the Freedom Party of Austria that had been among the first to enter the European Parliament room. With Jörg Haider as the head of the party it moved towards anti-politics and populism, immigration being the key. It gained almost 27 percent of the vote that same year and formed government coalition. From here emerged far-right populism from the election, 'the global financial crisis of 2008 that eroded confidence in mainstream political center' (Nagan & Manausa, 2018). Economic crisis and elevated rate of unemployment defined the popularity of populist parties to speak against globalization, immigrants and the European Union. These movements found their support in unsatisfied voters who regarded the candidates from the Conservative Party as their protectors and listened to the representatives of the working class.

In this regard, Hungary's Fidesz party headed by Viktor Orbán was one the most vivid examples of the trend. Until recently, Orbán was a classic representative of the axis, "neither right nor left"; since then, he has become a nationalist, angry-populist who feeds on anti-immigrant sentiment (Rydliński, 2018). As stated above, coming to power in 2010, Fidesz represents the first outright populist government in Europe. Poland had its chance in 2015 with the Law and Justice Party (PiS) and Italy more recently with Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy party in 2022. Populist parties' behavior in governments has been diverse. Hungary under Orbán has steadily eroded democratic standards of how the judiciary, media, and electoral process should be handled by violating them. While, in Italy, Meloni has been less uncompromising and an EU member state, she has supported Ukraine against Russia. Poland's PiS was moderate in a way; it had conservative approach to domestic politics but was extremely hostile against Russia. As opposed to Fidesz, PiS failed to consolidate power and lost majority in 2023, a problem that might define populists' longevity in governance.

Explaining Right Wing Populism

As it is pointed out by Paul D. Scott, the global trend is right-wing populism, and most democracies are in decline today. However, what does the right-wing populism include? It is an idea of the political process that blends conservative political content with populist motifs. This often encompasses things like demonizing so called elites, aligning oneself with the anti-establishment and representing common folk(Scott, 2019).

Right wing populists and left-wing populists reject the power that elites have in liberal democracies. Nonetheless, left-wing populism also renders defiance to the elites in business corporations, and unlike the right-wing populism, tends to support stringent measures on immigration. In Europe right-wing populism is defined as political actors, including leaders and political parties, who are most notably against immigration from Islamic countries and who doubt the European Union (EU). It connects it with such concepts as nationalism, anti-globalization, denial of environmental initiatives, and protectionism of people born in a particular country (nativism).

Drivers of right-wing populism

Cultural Factors: Immigration and National Identity

A key factor driving right-wing populism is cultural insecurity and the perceived threat from immigrants. In nations where there is a substantial shift in demographics, some citizens believe that their country native culture and identity are being worn away by globalization and immigration. This fear is often made worse by political talk that associates immigration with

social disturbance, criminal activity or terrorism. These socio-pathological processes, self-organized neo-liberal regarding these anxieties, the right-wing populists benefit most of all by positing themselves as the protectors of the nation's cultural integrity (Lüders, 2020).

That is why Hungary deserves to be discussed in detail, as the Prime Minister of the country, Viktor Orbán, has embodied nationalism as his main trend. In light of the events of the year 2015, regarding European migrant crisis, Hungary built a border barrier to prevent refugees and migrants, mainly from the Middle East, and Africa (Paris, 2022). Orbán justified this move by arguing that it is needed to preserve Hungary's Christian identity, which the prime minister mentioned many times while saying that Hungary needs to be a protector of European civilization against the issue of creeping Islamization. Likewise, in Poland, this Law and Justice Party (PiS) has embarked on high-profile rejection of quotas through a policy délier stating that accepting refugees under a mandatory EU quota endangers the Polish cultural integrity and national security (Madlovics & Magyar, 2023). By claiming and constant referencing of these themes, right-wing populists reinforce the circles of electors, interested in cultural homogeneity, and not multicultural integration.

Economic Insecurity: Globalization and Job Loss

Economic instability is another fundamental cause of right-wing populism as well. That is, as globalizations and technologies continue to alter the economies, most common people, and particularly the country, rural, and low-education people, are laid off and paid less. These economic difficulties are portrayed by right wing populists as the outcomes of policies encouraged by liberal cosmopolitans, which are frequently associated with immigration or globalization.

Globalization specifically has intertwined the world economies, resulting to exportation of jobs to countries with lower wages and importation of goods produced at throw away prices. While this has made it cheaper for the consumer and raised profits for businesses, it has caused unemployment to rise amongst the middle and working class in the developed world. Whole populations have been left without jobs as their industries fold up due to competition from other regions or countries (Dörre et al., 2006). That is why globalization is seen by these people not as a trend that promotes development, but as a threat. In the same way, technological change in areas like automations and artificial intelligence imply a radical structural change in labor markets through the displacement of human jobs by machines and algorithms. This has especially affected low-skilled workers who cannot afford to learn or get the necessary resources to get other types of employment. In recent years, immigration is connected to economic instability, where protagonists of right-wing populism assure that immigrants take up jobs, reduce wages, and overstretch state capacities. This narrative gives a perfect and concrete group for placing the blame for economic hardships, which is appealing to anyone feeling, threatened or left out.

At the heart of this rhetoric is a more general attack on liberal elites who are portrayed as profiting from globalization, technological advancement and immigration. Right-wing populists therefore claim that while policies supported by the elites have brought negative changes in the working-class economic fortunes, they have favored the influx of cheaper imported goods. While this has reduced costs for consumers and increased profits for corporations, it has also displaced many workers in developed countries. Entire communities have seen their industries disappear, leaving them with few economic opportunities. For these individuals, globalization is often

perceived as a threat rather than a force for progress. Similarly, technological advancements, such as automation and artificial intelligence, have transformed labor markets by replacing many human jobs with machines and algorithms. This shift has hit low-skilled workers the hardest, as they often lack the education or resources needed to transition to new types of employment (Dörre et al., 2006).Immigration is frequently linked to economic insecurity, as right-wing populists argue that immigrants compete for jobs, depress wages, and strain public resources. This narrative provides a clear and tangible group to blame for economic difficulties, which resonates strongly with those who feel vulnerable or displaced.

In Hungary for instance, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán has associated immigration with economic drawbacks arguing that immigrant will be in competition for jobs and would be a drain to the country's resources. His Government has employed this to encourage high orthodox immigration policies and economic policies that primarily benefit Hungary and Hungarians (Paris, 2022). Likewise, in Poland, the governing party, the PiS has adopted the role of a protector of the working class through the social-democratic policy measure in the servicing of generous social welfare programs including that of the "500+" child allowance program(Family 500+ Programme - Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy - Gov.Pl Website (n.d.)). This matrimonial effect of demonizing the liberals while selling these programs as a return to the fairness and free citizens from the unkind effects of globalization has systematically cultivated loyalism among the undecided economically sensitive voters.

Opposition to Liberal Elites: Distrust of the Establishment

Peculiar features of right-wing populists are based upon acute mistrust of political and economic elites as well as political institutions. It is largely appreciated by citizens who are frustrated or disillusioned by political parties, governments or intergovernmental organizations (Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2022). In its essence, this anti-popular sentiment stems from a feeling that this elite is out of touch with voters. This feeling is primarily acquired from frustrations with perceived corruption in the country. A majority of citizens tend to associate external traditional politics as having high levels of unethical standards and practices with self-serving politicians and bureaucratic system. Corruption, nepotism and self-enclosed political elites strengthen this belief, which then is exploited by right-wing populists, who promise that they will 'purge' politics and put the elite into place.

There also a further complication of inefficiency and lack of accountability in regards to governance causing distrust as well. In the absence of efficient performance in the management of the affairs of society, any government or institution is seen to be neglecting important aspects in society for example, unemployment, inequality or social unrest. This is especially so because when large bureaucracies such as the EU are deemed to be imposing policies that favor the bureaucracy against national interest or that neglect local conditions. For instance, EU measure on immigration or on environmental policies may be perceived as interference in the national laws and impotent to the sovereignty in deed national voters' wish.

These people right-wing populists benefit from such feelings by presenting themselves as warriors for the 'man on the street' against an exploitative and corrupt 'political class'(Scott, 2019). They choose rather plain and unambiguous words to express their solidarity with the people they represent, to set themselves apart from the elites. The Polish governmental party PiS has been critical of the judiciary, and accused it of still being staffed by post-communist elites. Thus, attributing all these institutions as problems that must be overcome in order to advance the

nation right-wing populists in both nations garner support from people who are disenchanted with the political establishment (Wasilewski, 2010).

Religious and traditional values; appeal to conservatism

Right-wing populists always draw their support from religious and traditional beliefs since the faith and adage play a crucial role in the lives of a nation. These values define the norms of behavior and political performance, that is why they became as powerful weapon for populists who position themselves as protectors of moral and cultural values from liberalism, feminism and homosexual movement (Berman, 2021).Another way the right-wing populists suggest progressive ideas are undermining welfare, they contend that progressive whittling away at the family unit and denigrate religious values. It is sharply relevant for religious and conservative audience who can experience the alienation from the society while perceiving the equality as an infringement of traditions. That is why populist actors emphasizing their roles as protectors of faith and tradition activate cultural insecurity. It is not uncommon to draw a sharp and black and white divide of the world, portraying liberal policies and anything coming from outside as a threat to national origin. This rhetoric mobilizes different groups united only by the need to save themselves and their culture, which exposes this as a significant component of right-wing populist movements.

Since taking office in Hungary in 2010, Orbán had made anti- gay policies, married couples' tax relief and providing incentives to have children. His government has also implemented legislation that is homophobic and that these ordinances are in order to protect Hungarian Christian culture. Same is the case of Poland where PiS has supporting the Catholic Church and the strict law against anti-abortion. These policies find an echo with voters resenting liberal social movements as an affront to their cultural and religious beliefs (Ślarzyński, 2024).

Euroscepticism: Resistance to EU Policies

Popular Eurosceptic opinions, or rather, critical attitudes toward the EU, also play a major role in the development of right-wing populism in Europe. This skepticism draws from the realization of the infringement of sovereignty by the supranational authority of the EU(Pirro et al., 2018). European right-wing populists are convinced that the measures introduced by the EU, designed for the benefit of the union as a whole, are diametrically opposed to the national interests of many countries. This narrative holds a lot of interest to a populace that perceives the EU's institutions as encroaching on national sovereignty rights. The main phenomenon that occupies Euroscepticism is the conflict of national interests with the concentrated European. It is not a coincidence that right-wing populists constantly portray the EU as an irresponsible and non-transparent bureaucracy that overrules democratic decisions of the member states. Them, they depict the union as an organization that has little regard for local people and their needs but only serves the globalization goals, which make it represent two worlds, where the common man is on one side, and the EU representatives on the other (Elsas et al., 2016). These welfare state policies are recipient-relative or immigrant-selection policies as a focus of this critique. EU legislation on asylum and migration, or, as it is the case frequently draws upon burden-sharing among EU member states, is perceived by right-wing populists as endangering the national security and cultural integrity. Some scholars hold that when it comes to these policies they make countries to open their borders to accept migrants and refugees regardless the available facilities on capacities of the country as well as the attitudes of the citizens towards immigrants and

refugees. This story gives people the feeling of losing control of borders and resentment towards both the EU and national governments implementing the latter's decisions. Likewise, right-wing populists generally disapprove of EU action on climate change because, they argue, regulation is detrimental to domestic industries and economies. People also claim these policies are costly for business and citizens, damaging the overall competitiveness of nations, and providing relatively little in return. It makes them the emblems of protection in local economies and mercantile trades against the tendency of giving up as the trimming of international treaties require.

Another subject to which Euroscepticism is often attributed is judicial reform. Typically, right-wing populists regard the bodies which make sure the rule of law and democratic procedures in member countries are respected as the infringement on certain states' sovereignty. These leaders continue to remind the gathering that judicial reforms are internal affairs and any interference by the EU is an extension of the EU defiance of the will of the people hence fanning anti-EU crusade (Pirro et al., 2018). Other sources of power for Euroscepticism include dissent with globalization trends and concerns with sovereignty loss. A lot of citizens see the EU as a globalist project that water down differences for the sake of similar approaches and beliefs. These anxieties are exploited by right-wing populist actors as such movements adopt a protector of nationalist and nation state self-governance from EU policies and borders. This stance against the EU enables right-wing populists to portray their movements as the democratic liberators from centralized authority that the voters feel they have been sold out by. Despite this, critics warn us that this form of rhetoric actually provokes people into oversimplifying issues of health, economy, and politics as well as creating opportunities for the nation and politics to go it alone, which some would see as the road to devastation.

While in power, Orbán has often squared off with the EU on matters of media rights, and immigration legislation (Rydliński, 2018). He presents these controversies as the fight for the sovereignty of Hungary describing the EU as a Goliath that tramples on the members' mandate. At the same time, the ruling PiS party in Poland has declined to reverse the judicial reforms criticized by EU as erosive of the rule of law. The PiS justify these reforms as being the necessity to preserve euro realignments of Poland's national interest and fighting against certain soviet leftovers that were the tendencies towards corruption. Right-wing populists are making themselves as merely the holding of the independence of the countries in Hungary and Poland targets some voters who see the EU as interference into its internal affairs.

Conclusion

The right-wing populism in Europe especially Hungary and Poland is caused by social economic factors, cultural factors and political factors. People of country's middle class who have experienced economic insecurity due to globalization and IT revolution became unhappy, disillusioned and this is why populism attracts them. Religious and traditionalist narratives that are inherent in the genes of the Hungarian and Polish societies have been taken over by right-wing populists to occupy the moral and nationally historical high ground against progressives. In a similar vein Euroscepticism has risen to be another important factor, where leaders of populist parties are rallying people against the EU which they present as an external force threatening national autonomy and imposing policies that are adversarial to the people's aspirations and customs. In this respect, what appears to link these drivers together is the fact that right-wing

populists are adept at harnessing sentiment and posing as the political force which represents ordinary people against an out-of-touch liberal elite and malignant outside forces. They are not only successful in responding to actual socio-economic issues but are also experts at constructing the stories close to cultural and national perceptions. These cases make it possible to explain how these dynamics work out in the matters of particular contexts, namely, Hungary and Poland in terms of historical, political, and civilization orientations towards the populist right-wing movements. This is especially pertinent with regards to the history and political transformations of post-communist countries. One cannot discuss the social transformations in Hungary and Poland in the post-communist period without recognizing that the Eastern European nations were tested with the options of reestablishing their national and political identities and rebuilding their political economies in a worldly climate full of changes. With decentralization, the state central bureaucracies were removed and market forces gave some countries serious social and political upheavals transformed from state-planned economies into market-oriented economies, and incorporated into Global and Europe based systems. The causes of right-wing populism all stem from the process of communism to democracy, the joining of the global structures, and the discontent with the liberal-democracy. Knowledge of this background is important to explain the existence of right-wing populism in these nations because it is necessary to find policies covering economic anxieties and cultural fears, at the same time promoting democratic norms and patriotism.

References

Berman, S. (2021). The Causes of Populism in the West. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *24*(Volume 24, 2021), 71–88.

Christopher Phillips. (2024, June 9). The rise of right-wing populism in Europe. *Al Majalla*.

Dörre, K., Kraemer, K., & Speidel, F. (2006). The increasing precariousness of the employment society: driving force for a new right wing populism? *International Journal of Action Research*, *2*(1), 98–128.

"Family 500+" programme - Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy - Gov.pl website. (n.d.). Retrieved December 31, 2024, from https://www.gov.pl/web/family/family-500-programme

Halikiopoulou, D., & Vlandas, T. (2022). Understanding Right-Wing Populism and What to Do about It. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.

Lüders, A., Mühlberger, C., & Jonas, E. (2020). Motivational and Affective Drivers of Right-Wing Populism Support: Insights From an Austrian Presidential Election. *Social Psychological Bulletin*, *15*(3), 1–17.

Madlovics, B., & Magyar, B. (2023). Kaczyński's Poland and Orbán's Hungary: Different Forms of Autocracy with Common Right-Wing Frames in the EU. *Journal of Right-Wing Studies, 1*(1).

Nagan, W. P., & Manausa, S. R. (2018). The Rise of Rightwing Populism in Europe and the United States. *International Journal of Social Science Studies, 6*.

Paris, R. (2022). European populism and the return of 'illiberal sovereignty': a case-study of Hungary. *International Affairs*, *98*(2), 529–547.

Pirro, A. L. P., Taggart, P., & van Kessel, S. (2018). The populist politics of Euroscepticism in times of crisis: Comparative conclusions.

Political Populism. (2017). In *Political Populism*. Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG.

Rucht, D. (2018). Right-wing populism in context : A historical and systematic perspective. *Populism and the Crisis of Democracy*, 67–84.

Rydliński, B. (2018). Viktor Orbán – First among Illiberals? Hungarian and Polish Steps towards Populist Democracy. *Online Journal Modelling the New Europe*, *26*, 95–107.

Scott, P. D. (2019). Under Siege: The Rise of Right-Wing Populism or has the Demos Become Crazy? *Galáxia (São Paulo)*, *42*, 5–22.

Ślarzyński, M. (2024). The Emergence of Right-Wing Partisanship in Poland, 1993–2018: Reconciling Demand-Side Explanations of the Success of Illiberalism. *Perspectives on Politics*, *22*(3), 692–716.

van Elsas, E. J., Hakhverdian, A., & van der Brug, W. (2016). United against a common foe? The nature and origins of Euroscepticism among left-wing and right-wing citizens. *West European Politics*, *39*(6),

Wasilewski, J. (2010). The assault on democratic elitism in Poland. *International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology*, *111*, 173–196.

Enyedi, Z. (2020). Right-wing authoritarian innovations in Central and Eastern Europe. *East European Politics*, 362-377.

Feldmann, M., & Popa, M. (2022). Populism and economic policy: lessons from Central and Eastern Europe. *Post-Communist Economies*, 219-245.

Ferrari, D. (2021). Perceptions, Resentment, Economic Distress, and Support for Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe. *Politics and Governance*, *9*(3), 274-287.

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Berlin, F., Langebache, N., & Schellenberg, B. (2011). *Is Europe on the "rigth" path? Right-wing extremism and right-wing populism in Europe.* Universität Tübingen.

Jungar, A.-C. (2018). Repercussions of right-wing populism for European integration. In *Bridging the Prosperity Gap in the EU* (pp. 46-84). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Kaya, A. (2018). Mainstreaming of right-wing populism in Europe. *Cultural Policy Yearbook 2017-2018*, 25-38.

Kelemen, R. D. (2016). Poland's Constitutional Crisis. How the Law and Justice Party is Threatening Democracy. *Foreign Affairs*.

Kovács, K., & Scheppele, K. L. (2018). The fragility of an independent judiciary: Lessons from Hungary and Poland—And the European Union. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 189-200.

Mudde, C. (2019). *The Far Right Today.* John Wiley & Sons.

Rodrick, D. (2017). Populism and the economics of globalization. *National Bureau of Economic Research.*

Rodrik, D. (2021). Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism? Economics, Culture, and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism. *Annual Review of Economics, 13*, 133-170.

Rogalewski, A. (2020). Right wing populism in Poland: a challenge for trade unions. *International Union Rights, 27*, 8-9.

Roger, S. (2024). *The Political Economy of Hungarian Authoritarian Populism: Capitalists without the Right Kind of Capital.* New York: Taylor & Francis.

Schraff, D., & Pontusson, J. (2023). Falling behind whom? Economic geographies of right-wing populism in Europe. *Journal of European Public Policy, 31*(6), 1591-1619.

Sen, S. (2010). Right-wing populism and the European Union. *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, 9*(2), 56-71.

Stubbs, P., & Lendvai-Bainton, N. (2019). Authoritarian Neoliberalism, Radical Conservatism and Social Policy within the European Union: Croatia, Hungary and Poland. *Development and Change*, 540-560.

Szabó, J. (2020). First as tragedy, then as farce: A comparative study of right-wing populism in Hungary and Poland. *Journal of Comparative Politics, 13*(2), 24-42.

Wodak, R., & KhosraviNik, M. (2013). Dynamics of discourse and politics in right-wing populism in Europe and beyond: An introduction. In *Right-wing populism in Europe: Politics and discourse* (pp. xvii-xxviii). Bloomsbury.