

# Methodological appendix

## The People's Champions?

### Populist Communication as a Contextually Dependent Political Strategy

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#### 1. Sampling strategy of the research project

The starting point for the project is a sample of 41 issues drawn from Eurobarometer polls for which the fieldwork concluded between January 1, 2012, and December 31, 2014. Eurobarometer, a policy tool of the European Commission, comprises a collection of surveys on various topics across the EU member states. The tool keeps track of important dynamics and preferences within the European demos. The standard Eurobarometer survey is repeated biannually, while the Special and Flash Eurobarometer studies are conducted ad hoc and revolve around specific topics or trends.

In this study, an issue is operationalized as a *specific* policy topic for which the EU is at least partially competent and for which citizens in all EU member states were surveyed. First, only questions that were surveyed in *all* EU member states and that dealt with citizens (as opposed to companies) were selected. Second, only issues that could be connected to a specific policy were retained. Third, since EU policymakers cannot be responsive to issues for which they lack competence, issues for which the EU has no policy competence were therefore excluded from the sample. Finally, we considered only questions that pertained to the opinion of citizens in terms of agreement or disagreement about a specific policy (see Rasmussen et al., 2018) or objective, such as the financial transaction tax, the banking union or a free trade agreement between the US and the EU. With this operationalization, less than 1% of the questions raised in Eurobarometer surveys qualified as issues.

The operationalization of issues and the criteria resulting from this operationalization can be summarized by the acronym DISCO:

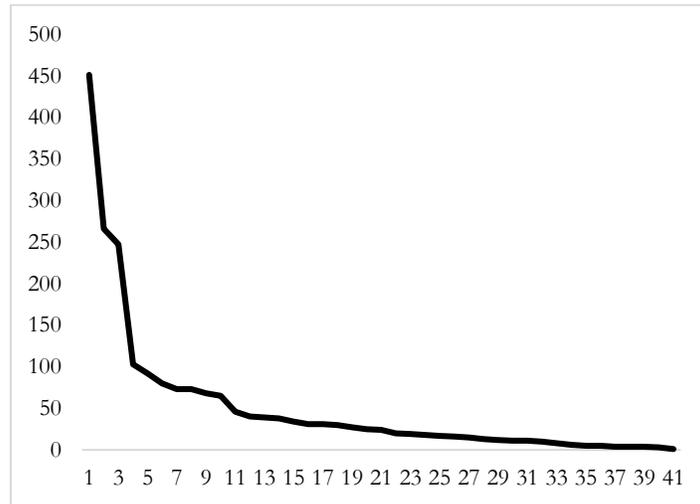
- **Data availability**: Public opinion data are available on the topic.
- **Inclusive**: Citizens in all EU member states were surveyed.
- **Specific**: The survey question deals with specific policy.
- **Competence**: The topic of the question falls (partially) within the competences of the EU.
- **Opinion**: The question pertains to agreement or disagreement vis-à-vis EU policy.

This case selection resulted in 41 different issues. The first key source of variation across policy issues concerns their public salience. We know from former research that public salience can increase the responsiveness of public policy to public opinion (Page and Shapiro, 1983; Wlezien, 2004). One important concern for studies that rely exclusively on cases for which public opinion surveys were conducted is that they involve only issues that are already salient to the public and media, which therefore biases the sample of cases (Burstein, 2014). To assess this concern, we tracked the media salience of the sampled set of cases in eight European media outlets: Euractiv, Le Monde, Financial Times, Corriere Della Sera, Aftonbladet, De Telegraaf, Fakt and Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (see section 3 for more information on the news media selection). The media salience of issues across the different media outlets is highly correlated, with an average correlation

of 0.6. This result indicates that the aggregate measure of media salience (the sum of all articles across media outlets) is a reliable measure of media salience.

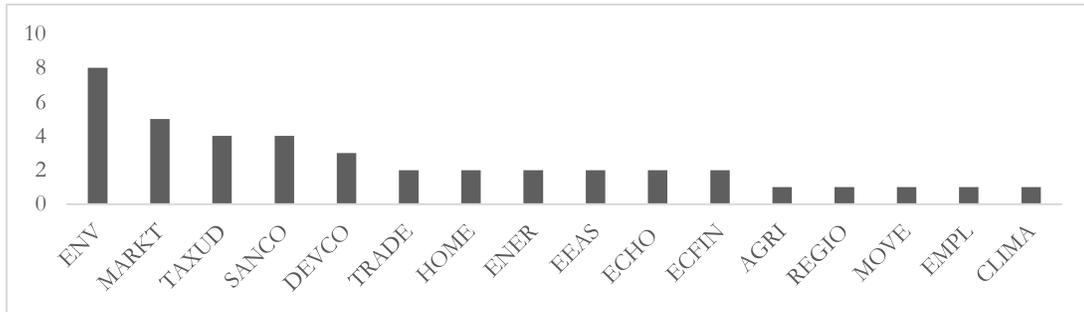
Figure 1 portrays the distribution of media articles that discussed the sampled set of issues across the selected media outlets. The distribution clearly shows that these policy cases varied with regard to media salience. Some issues, such as the financial transaction tax, received a lot of media attention, while other issues received no media attention at all. These distributions of media attention also resemble the distributions of media attention found in other projects, most notably the INTEREURO project, which relied on a random sample of policy proposals (De Bruycker and Beyers, 2015).

**Figure A1. Media salience of the sampled cases**



The sample of issues also strongly varies in terms of the policy areas addressed. Figure A2 illustrates the distribution of the cases across policy areas, operationalized by the directorate generals (DGs) responsible for the policy issue. The sampled issues are thus situated in different policy areas, and the results derived from the analysis are not specific to one policy area.

**Figure A2. Distribution of sampled issues across policy areas**



## **2. Selection of media sources**

For the selection of news media outlets, a ‘most different case selection design’ was applied to maximize the possible sources of relevant extraneous variance. We selected media outlets from different countries geographically located in different parts of Europe, with different journalistic styles that vary in format and adhere to diverse political orientations. Because of the central research objectives of the project to study the links between elites and the public, we prioritized news outlets with a wide circulation to ensure that their coverage had the potential to reach a wide range of European citizens. To ensure that we would have a substantive corpus of statements from political elites and stakeholders on the sampled set of issues, we selected four news outlets that were studied in former research projects on EU representation (most notably the DEU and INTEREURO projects) and that extensively covered EU-related topics.

**Table A1. Overview of eighth selected media outlets**

<b>News outlet</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Journalistic Style</b>	<b>Political orientation</b>	<b>Studied in former large projects on EU representation</b>	<b>Daily paid circulation in 2016</b>	<b>Number of articles identified</b>
1. Aftonbladet	Sweden	Tabloid	Sensational	Left wing, populist	No	154,900 (2014)	99
2. Corriere Della Sera	Italy	Broadsheet	Quality press	Centrist, liberal	No	310,437	262
3. De Telegraaf	Netherlands	Tabloid	Sensational	Right wing, populist	No	382,000	176
4. EurActiv	Europe-wide	Online	Quality press	Centrist, Europhile	Yes	794,992 (free)	623
5. Fakt	Poland	Tabloid	Sensational	Centrist, populist	No	270,331	40
6. Financial Times	United kingdom	Broadsheet	Quality press	Liberal-conservative	Yes	193,211	411
7. Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	Germany	Nordisch	Quality press	Centre-right, liberal-conservative	Yes	256,188	279
8. Le Monde	France	Berliner	Quality press	Centre-left	Yes	267,897	195

### **3. Content analysis of media statements and quality controls**

The relevant media coverage related to the sampled set of cases was assembled manually by the principal investigator and two student-assistants involved in the project. To increase the quality of the media searches, researchers focused on media outlets from their own country. The search in media archives was based on keywords that were carefully selected based on the name of the issue, the corresponding Eurobarometer question and desk research. The desk research included explorative searches in the selected news archives and online search engines. Translations of keywords served as a starting point in searches across outlets. However, for each outlet we first conducted explorative searches, which could lead to inductively defined keywords. This allowed us to account for potential differences in expressions across countries, languages and outlets. The occurrence of key terms would sometimes vary a bit across outlets, but not significantly. For instance, on the issue of 'Tax on financial transactions' (ID 18) the term Robin Hood tax occurred more frequently in the Financial Times. For newspapers in a language non-native to the research team, external experts were consulted to identify keywords. For reliability purposes the keywords were documented in a database which will be made available on the project's website. Importantly, not all articles that resulted from keyword searches were retained. Each article was screened by the researcher in question for its relevance. Only articles that were directly related to the sampled cases were used. Articles that only vaguely or indirectly related to the issue were omitted. Keyword searches were finalized only when an information saturation point was met, namely, when the addition of new keyword searches did not result in additional articles. The results were centralized and stored by the principal investigator, who conducted additional consistency checks by screening the content of the archived articles and by evaluating the correspondence of the overall levels of attention which issues received across outlets.

Based on extensive keyword searches, 2,085 articles were identified. Additional recall tests were performed when the media salience for certain issues strongly varied across media sources. For these issues, recall tests varied from 77% to 89% overlap (with an average overlap of 83%). For the other issues, recall tests were performed randomly and gave satisfactory results (more than 90% overlap). Furthermore, an extensive precision test was conducted by hand coding all the collected articles and their constituting statements. Namely,

each article was coded for its relevance to the sampled case. This approach resulted in a precision of 97% for articles and 93% for statements. Non-relevant articles were excluded from further analyses. From all the assembled statements, 7% were not directly connected to the legislative proposals and were therefore also excluded from further analyses. •

**Table A2. Distribution of statements for different actor types**

Actor type	Freq.	Percent
Council and member states	1,913	34%
European Commission	857	12%
European Members of Parliament	608	11%
National Member of Parliament	368	6%
Interest organizations	1,715	30%
Regulatory agencies & central banks	264	5%
International organizations	65	1%
Other (individual citizens, journalists, etc.)	101	2%

Once articles were mapped, the statements made by political actors in these articles were archived and coded. A statement is a quote or paraphrase in the news that can be connected to a specific actor. Statements by the same actor in one article were compiled to improve reliability and facilitate the coding. In total, 5,891 statements were identified from various political actors. Four student-assistants as well as the principal investigator were involved in the collection of articles and archiving of statements. An overview of the different actor types that made statements and their prominence is provided in Table A2. The statements of these actors were coded for the positions adopted for or against policy change and the various arguments articulated. Two student-assistants did the coding of statements. Intercoder reliability checks of the statement coding (based on 180 double coded statements) proved satisfactory with Krippendorff's alpha ranging from 0.7 to 0.9.

To ensure comparability across languages and issues we could not simply code populist communication by identifying key terms or through standardized dictionary approaches, which would have resulted in many

false positives. Coders had to interpret each statement in the context of the article and the issue to which it relates. We did not encounter notable differences in terms of anti-elitism or people-centrism across media outlets or languages used, but more important variation across issues. For instance, references to ‘taxpayers’ and allegation of corporate capture or corruption would be used more on issues related to financial regulation (ID18) while references to ‘consumers’ and ‘citizens’ and allegations of intransparency were more common for issues related to trade and consumer protection (ID14). As the coding involved some interpretation in the context of the issue and article in question we were able to cope with such discrepancies in the coding process. Future research may well want to explore how populist discourse comes in different shapes depending on the issue in question.

#### **4. Anti-elitist claims**

Code is applicable when the statement expresses anti-elitist sentiments. Elites (policymakers, policy institutions, corporations, politicians) are portrayed as corrupt and biased. Elites are depicted as pursuing their own self-interest or special interests above the common good or public interest.

Keywords that often occur in these statements: elite, corrupt, multinational, secret, scandal, corporation, big companies, exploit, abuse, big business, lobby

Examples:

- Tim Costello, a member of the C20 civil society group that liaises with G20 leaders, said putting Mr Juncker in charge of European efforts to combat tax avoidance was akin to placing Dracula in charge of a blood bank.
- War on Want Executive Director John Hilary said: “Millions of people across Europe have said no to TTIP, in the strongest trade campaign we have ever seen. Yet MEPs have turned their backs on their own constituents, choosing instead to side with the business lobbyists of Brussels. This is an outright betrayal of the European people, and we shall not forget it.”
- Alan Andrews, clean air lawyer for ClientEarth, said: “This is a missed opportunity. Thousands of people will die or suffer debilitating illnesses like heart disease, asthma attacks and strokes because the parliament

failed to adopt stricter pollution limits. “The British Government’s fingerprints are all over this. They have been acting as a mouthpiece for farming instead of working to protect our health from air pollution.”

- Ed Miliband, the leader of the Labour party, on Wednesday accused Cameron and his finance minister of being the only people who felt it was "a priority to fight for bigger bonuses for bankers", using a by now familiar line of attack that tries to cast Cameron, who hails from a privileged background, as someone who rules for the rich at the expense of the poor.
- “The Commission is only listening to lobbyists, rather than the citizens,” STOP TTIP representative Michael Efler commented. But he is not prepared to leave the matter there. “Now, the battle is really starting,” he says. Efler plans to challenge the European Commission’s decision in the European courts.
- Matteo Salvini, the leader of the League, accuses the government of "robbing 150,000 savers"; but the Eurovision reports show that he himself did not oppose the directive on 15 April 2014 which today caused the resignation of those titles (Salvini abstained in the final vote).
- Marine Le Pen, vice-présidente du Front national, estime que "l'Europe a perdu la tête (...) La nouvelle folie consiste en effet à priver les Etats de leur ultime espace de liberté, des dernières marges de manœuvre dont ils disposent : leur budget".
- Pour Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, député (ex-UMP) et président de Debout la République "la proposition de la Commission européenne de s'arroger le droit de vérifier en amont les budgets des Parlements est inacceptable car cela porterait atteinte à notre démocratie".
- Ed Balls, Labour’s shadow chancellor, accused Mr Osborne of trying to sneak out “a humiliating climbdown” under the cover of the Rochester and Strood by-election. “The chancellor revealed his true priorities when he decided a year ago to spend taxpayers’ money fighting a bank bonus cap while working families face a cost-of-living crisis. He should tell taxpayers how much money he has now wasted on this challenge, which we warned him against.”

## 5. People-centric claims

Code is applicable when reference is made to the interests of public opinion, a majority, the general public, a diffuse constituency (using broad categories such as ‘the taxpayers’, ‘public health’, ‘the consumers’, ‘the people’). References to the people are used in an advocative sense, to support the politicians’ own objectives or to endorse the ideal of responsive decision making and governance in the public interest. If the statement only contained a reference to narrow or specific subgroups of public opinion such as “transport workers”, “weapon owners” or “refugees”, this code is not applicable. Please note that people-centric claims may also be anti-elitist and vice versa.

Keywords systematically used in these statements: citizen, consumer, democracy, democratic, electorate, Europeans, human health, individuals, patients, people, population, public, public health, public interest, public opinion, society, taxpayer, voter.

Examples:

- “EU-citizens want the European Union to take care of their security. The time has come for an integrated EU military force under one political command and one clear EU-budget; we need to take decisions, not just little steps forward.”
- “If the European Commission does not sufficiently protect our citizens, we will plead that our group vote against the final deal,” said Eric Andrieu, a senior MEP from the European Parliament’s Socialists and Democrats group.
- "European citizens expect the costs for the financial crisis to be borne by those on the financial markets who caused it. We cannot therefore be content with a minimalist solution in line with the US proposal, which would generate a few billion Euro - a relatively small revenue considering the huge costs," German Green MEP Sven Giegold said after yesterday's vote.
- Similarly, British Green MEP and president of Plaid Cymru Jill Evans (the Party of Wales) welcomed the FTTSaying "It is time to rein in the banks which have been largely responsible for so much economic turbulence - the cost of which has too often been passed on to ordinary people."

- Philippe Lamberts, the Belgian Green MEP who led calls for bonus caps, said Mr Osborne would “shoot himself in the foot” if he flouted public opinion to defend bankers. “If [he] wants to make that bet – be my guest – we will see who will win,” he said.
- The chairman of the British Parliament's Committee on Economic Affairs, British Liberal Sharon Bowles, judged the agreement as "a victory for ordinary citizens and taxpayers who end up paying the bill for irresponsible and risky operations by banks."
- The Greens accuse the European Commission of purposefully conducting negotiations without involving the public. “While civil society stays outside, big industry lobbyists have privileged access. Mutual recognition or harmonisation of standards under these conditions threatens to become a serious case of environmental dumping. Isolated acceptance of genetically modified corn varieties could cause a break in the dam. Even importing of antibiotic contaminated meat would not be preventable anymore.”
- Silvia-Adrian Ticau, a Romanian Socialist MEP, who led negotiations for the European Parliament, described the agreement as one that would have a “dramatic impact on citizens' lives”. Around 40% of the EU's carbon dioxide emissions come from heating, lighting and cooling buildings, a carbon footprint that needs to be drastically reduced if the EU is to meet its goals on climate change, she said.
- Dutch liberal MEP Jules Maaten (ALDE) criticised the Greens, Socialists and communities who did not support the report. "It is incredible that none of the groups on the left supported this, when finally we get European legislation that benefits the European citizen in a concrete way. These groups put national health bureaucracies before patients' rights. This is not about liberalisation, but about free movement of patients. The directive will not interfere in the way national healthcare systems are organised. I am surprised that other parties are playing political games on the back of European patients," he said.

## 6. Overview of party-issue dyads by country

**Table A3. Distribution of party-issue dyads by country (n=316)**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Dyads n</b>	<b>Dyads %</b>
Germany	62	20%
France	53	17%
United Kingdom	40	13%
Netherlands	31	10%
Sweden	28	9%
Belgium	22	7%
Italy	19	6%
Denmark	11	3%
Poland	8	3%
Austria	7	2%
Czech Republic	6	2%
Spain	5	2%
Luxembourg	5	2%
Portugal	4	1%
Finland	3	1%
Romania	3	1%
Bulgaria	2	1%
Greece	2	1%
Hungary	2	1%
Malta	2	1%
Slovakia	1	0%

## 7. Overview of the variables

**Table A4. Overview of the variables used in the regression analyses**

	<b>Variable name</b>	<b>Variable description</b>	<b>μ</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min-max</b>
Dependent variables	Populist claim	Yes=1; party expressed both people-centric and anti-elitist references (n=18) No=0; party did not express both people-centric and anti-elitist references (n=298)	-	-	-
	People-centric claim	Yes=1; party expressed people-centric reference (n=82) No=0; party did not express people-centric reference (n=234)			
	Anti-elitist claim	Yes=1; party expressed anti-elitist reference (n=37) No=0; party did not express anti-elitist reference (n=279)	-	-	-
Explanatory variables	Populist party	Yes=1; the party is populist (n=28) No=0; the party is not populist (n=288)	-	-	-
	Media salience	The amount of articles (count) that discussed an issue in eight media outlets (Le Monde, Euractiv, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Fakt, De Telegraaf, Aftonbladet, la Corriere della Sera and The Financial Times), logged because of its skewed distribution.	4.05	1.19	1.61 – 6.04
	Civil society mobilization	The number of statements in the media by civil society organizations, NGOs and social movements (logged) on the issue.	2.22	1.65	0 – 4.91
	Polarization	The degree to which national public opinion is polarized on an issue based on Eurobarometer data. See below for more information.	0.54	0.27	0.03 – 0.99
Control variables	Party in office	Yes=1; the party has been in office during the time when the issue was discussed in the media (n=138) No=0; the party has not been in office during the time when the issue was discussed in the media (n=178)	-	-	-
	Left-right	Expert estimate of the political party on a left-right continuum, based on the 2014 Chapel Hill survey.	4.84	2.04	1.00 – 9.63
	Statements	Number of media statements made by a political party on an issue.	2.45	3.23	1 – 26
	National Members of Parliament (%)	Share of national members of parliament relative to Members of the European Parliament making statements linked to the same party-issue dyad.	0.91	2.19	0 – 19
	Media Source	The news media outlets in which the political party made a statement. (Le Monde, Euractiv, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Fakt, De Telegraaf, Aftonbladet, la Corriere della Sera and The Financial Times). Since some parties could make statements in different outlets on the same issue, these dummies are not mutually exclusive.	-	-	-
	Active in domestic media outlet	Yes=1; party made a statement on an issue in a media outlet from its country of origin (n=123) No=0; party did not make statements on an issue in a media outlet from its country of origin (n=193)	-	-	-

## 8. Polarization measure

To measure mass polarization, we relied on a measure that captures the dispersion of positions vis-à-vis policy change for a specific issue within national public opinion. For each policy issue we assessed based on Eurobarometer data what share of national public opinion (in percentages) (1) supported policy change on the issue, (2) was against policy change, or (3) did not know whether they were in favor or against. The category 'don't know' was excluded since it is irrelevant for measuring the polarization of public opinion. Based on the other categories, a dispersion index was computed. The formula of this index is indicated below.

$$\text{Polarization index} = 1 - | \text{Relative share in favor of policy measure (\%)} - \text{Relative share against policy measure (\%)} |$$

This index, which ranges from 0 to 1, indicates whether public opinion in a country all adopted a similar position (value 0) or whether the positions were completely polarized (value 1). Complete polarization would mean that 50% of the public in a country are supportive of policy change while the other 50% seek to maintain the status quo. The average value of the measure is 0.54 (S.D.=0.27).

## 9. Linear probability models

Because of the complexity and potential inconsistencies of interaction effects in binary logit regression models (Berry et al., 2010; Ganzag et al., 2000), we assess the robustness of our results in linear probability models, i.e. ordinary least square regression models with binary outcome variables. Model A1 presents a model with the presence of populist communication by a party on an issue as its dependent variable. The model corroborates findings presented in Model 2 in the paper. The product terms between mass polarization and being a populist party and civil society and being a populist party are insignificant in Model A1. However, the average marginal effects (not shown) render similar results as those presented in Figure 3a and hence bolster the robustness of our hypothesis tests.

**Table A5. Linear probability model of populist communication by party on issue**

Model A1: Populism		
	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>
<b>Main effects</b>		
Intercept	-0.12 *	(0.05)
Populist party	-0.35 **	(0.11)
Media salience	0.01	(0.01)
Civil society mobilization	0.00	(0.01)
Mass polarization		
Party in office	-0.04	(0.02)
Left-right index	-0.01 †	(0.01)
National MPs	0.02	(0.03)
Statements	0.03 **	(0.01)
Active in own domestic outlet	0.12 *	(0.06)
Media source		
- Aftonbladet	0.06	(0.07)
- Corriere della Sera	0.06	(0.12)
- Euractiv	0.12 *	(0.06)
- Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	0.00	(0.05)
- Fakt	-0.08	(0.09)
- Financial Times	0.01	(0.05)
- Telegraaf	-0.02	(0.11)
- Le Monde	0.01	(0.08)
<b>Interaction effect</b>		
Populist party * Media salience	0.10**	(0.02)
Populist party * Mass polarization	-0.02	(0.05)
Populist party * Civil society mobilization	-0.00	(0.01)
<b>Model fit</b>		
N	294	
df	21	
AIC	-107.76	

Clustered standard errors at the issue level in parentheses and significance levels indicated by †<0.10 \*<0.05 \*\*<0.01

## 10. Rare events logistic regression

Only 6% (n=18) of the parties in our dataset expressed a populist claim on an issue. Populist communication by a political party on a policy issue can therefore qualify as a ‘rare event’. To take this into account in the analysis, a rare events logistic regression with clustered standard errors was computed. The analysis confirms the earlier results presented in Models 1 and 2.

**Table A6. Rare events logistic regression of populist claims**

	Model A2: Populism	Model A3: Populism
<b>Main effects</b>		
Intercept	1.68 ** (1.41)	-21.79** (4.91)
Populist party	1.90 ** (1.28)	-85.80** (0.00)
Media salience	-0.10 † (0.27)	1.17 (0.88)
Civil society mobilization	5.55 (1.42)	-0.06 (0.55)
Mass polarization	1.11 (0.58)	-2.07 (2.95)
Party in office	-2.63 ** (3.07)	-5.41** (0.94)
Left-right index	-3.62 ** (1.15)	-1.13** (0.15)
National MPs	-0.54 ** (0.11)	7.78** (1.88)
Statements	4.80 * (1.22)	0.55** (0.20)
Active in own domestic outlet	0.43 * (0.21)	3.04* (1.26)
Media source		
- Aftonbladet	4.01 ** (2.07)	6.90 (1.16)
- Corriere della Sera	5.04 ** (1.37)	6.41 (1.77)
- Euractiv	4.53 ** (1.49)	10.64 (1.88)
- Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	6.98 (1.03)	3.42 (2.31)
- Fakt		
- Financial Times	1.97 * (1.65)	-3.91 (1.01)
- Telegraaf	-2.15 ** (0.94)	-4.46 (2.18)
- Le Monde	-4.82 (1.73)	1.90 (1.28)
<b>Interaction effect</b>		
Populist party * Media salience		15.60 ** (1.06)
Populist party * Mass polarization		-2.48 ** (0.58)
Populist party * Civil society mobilization		17.31 * (7.73)
<b>Model fit</b>		
N	290	290

Clustered standard errors at the issue level in parentheses and significance levels indicated by †<0.10 \*<0.05 \*\*<0.01

## 11. Regression at the level of statements

We present models which take single statements of a party as their unit of analysis. This increases our sample size significantly ( $n=750^1$ ), but leaves us with relatively less observations on our dependent variables of people-centrism ( $n=113$ ), anti-elitism ( $n=46$ ) and populist communication ( $n=12$ ). The number of populist statements is less than the number of populist party-issue dyads because a party is less likely to include both elements of populism (anti-elitism and people-centrism) in one statement than if we consider all the statements of that party on an issue. The models at the statement level also serve as robustness checks for assessing indeterminacy problems due to a sub-optimal ratio between observations and variables in Models 1-6. For the subsequent models, the ratio between observations and predictors is more optimal.

The models at the statement level yield comparable results as the models presented in the paper. Some notable differences relate to (1) the level of significance of product terms, (2) the effects of the media outlets on populist communication and (3) the effects of making statements in election time. First, the product term between mass polarization and being a populist party is insignificant in Model A4 ( $p=.10$ ). This, however, does not yet mean that the interaction effect is not significant (Brambor et al., 2006). While the range of statistical results across different values of media salience is somewhat smaller, the marginal effects in Figure A5a depict the anticipated relationship in which more polarization makes populist parties more likely to express populist communication compared to non-populist parties. We observe a similar relationship in the models predicting anti-elitism (Model A5) and people-centrism (Model A6) separately. In these models, the product terms and marginal effects both reach statistical significance ( $P<0.05$ ) and results are in line with the party-issue dyad models presented in the paper (see Figures A5b & A5c). The product term between media salience and being a populist party is not significant in Model A5, but the marginal effects in Figure A3b are remarkably similar to those presented in the paper in Figure 1b.

Second, effects for different media outlets are very different in the statement-level models presented below, but this is because their coefficients should be interpreted differently. In the statement models below, these effects represent an increased or decreased probability compared to the reference category (Euractiv). In the party-issue dyad models, these effects represent an increased or decreased probability of populist

communication compared to not being present in that media outlet. For instance in Model A4 below the insignificant coefficient for the Financial Times means that parties are not significantly more or less likely to express populist claims in the Financial Times when compared to Euractiv. In the party-issue dyad model (Model 1), the significant coefficient for the Financial Times means that parties were less likely to express populism if they featured in that outlet for the issue in question (*ceteris paribus* their presence in the outlet Euractiv). All this leads us to be confident about the robustness of our findings when assessed at the level of individual media statements.

Third, the statement level models allow us to control for whether a statement was made in the six months preceding the European elections of May 2014. The models show that parties were more likely to make populist and people-centric statements in election time. Parties were not significantly more likely to express anti-elitism in election times. We did not test this in the party-issue dyad models as the dyads encompass all the statements made by a party for a particular issue, be them in- or outside election time.

**Table A7. Logistic regression of populist statements at the level of individual statements**

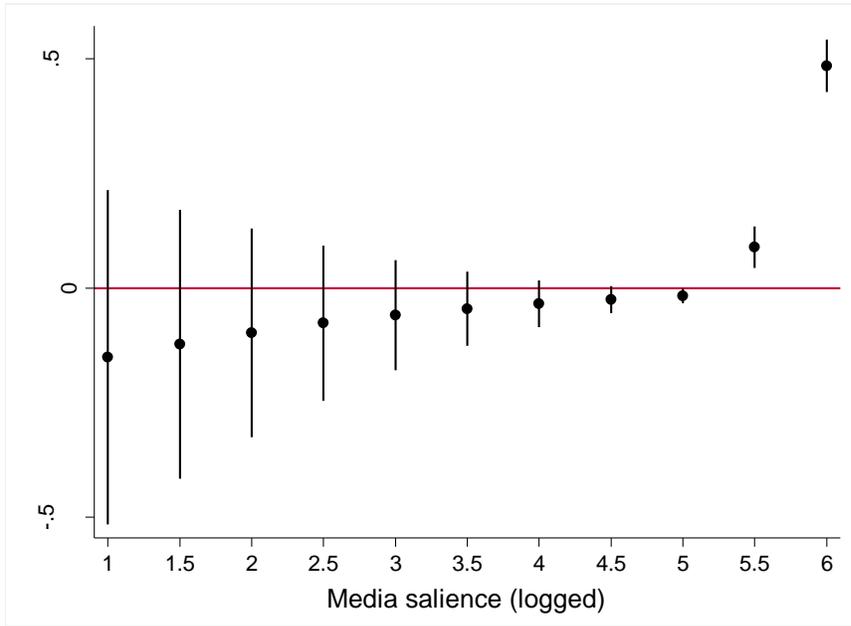
	Model A4: Populism		Model A5: People-centrism		Model A6: Anti-elitism	
<b>Main effects</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>
Intercept	-6.11 **	(1.63)	-3.19 **	(0.59)	-2.37**	(0.83)
Populist party	-81.80 **	(8.21)	-0.41	(1.17)	-3.53 *	(1.83)
Media salience	-0.86	(0.70)	0.41 *	(0.17)	-0.26	(0.19)
Civil society mobilization	1.13 *	(0.49)	-0.07	(0.09)	0.32 **	(0.13)
Mass polarization	1.37	(2.10)	-0.08	(0.50)	0.41	(0.82)
Party in office	-0.44 †	(0.69)	-0.32 *	(0.15)	-0.80 **	(0.20)
Left-right index	0.01	(0.07)	0.00	(0.04)	-0.23 †	(0.13)
National MPs	1.00 **	(0.20)	-0.10	(0.22)	1.56 **	(0.37)
Active in own domestic outlet	2.24**	(0.38)	-0.11	(0.26)	-0.14	(0.50)
Election time	1.62 †	(0.85)	0.55 *	(0.25)	0.35	(0.40)
Media source						
- Aftonbladet	-1.10 *	(0.50)	-0.37	(0.43)	0.18	(0.74)
- Corriere Della Sera	-0.32	(0.86)	-0.11	(0.56)	0.50	(1.10)
- Euractiv (reference)						
- Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	-3.17†	(1.66)	-0.58	(0.40)	-0.54	(0.80)
- Fakt	-	(empty)	0.19	(0.80)	-	(empty)
- Financial Times	0.20	(0.45)	-1.15 *	(0.45)	-0.04	(0.56)
- Telegraaf	-	(empty)	0.23	(0.49)	0.65	(0.54)
- Le Monde	-1.01 *	(0.46)	-0.09	(0.53)	0.85	(0.69)
<b>Interaction effect</b>						
Populist party * Media salience	15.74 **	(1.59)	0.08	(0.23)	0.82†	(0.44)
Populist party * Mass polarization	8.15	(5.01)	2.92 **	(1.00)	2.67 **	(1.09)
Populist party * Civil society mobilization	-3.96 **	(0.74)	-0.41**	(0.14)	-0.60 *	(0.26)
<b>Model fit</b>						
N	723 <sup>1</sup>		750		746	
Pseudo R2	0.32		0.07		0.17	
AIC	115.41		626.65		313.99	

Clustered standard errors at the issue level in parentheses and significance levels indicated by †<0.10 \*<0.05 \*\*<0.01

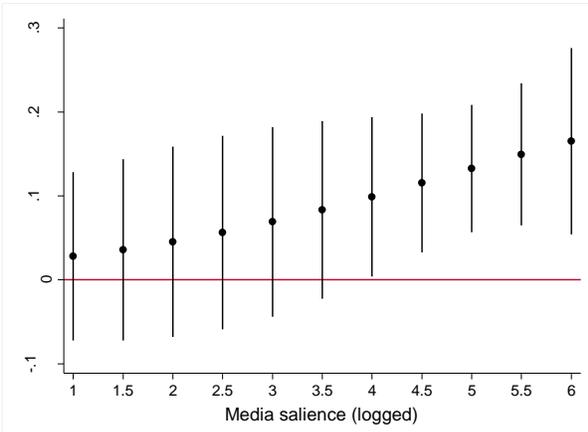
<sup>1</sup>The n in the presented regressions do not correspond with the 775 statements observed, because we could not determine the left-right scores based on the Chapel-Hill dataset for 25 statements. When imputing averages left-right scores (5) for these missing values (n=25), the results remained consistent across the models. In Model A4 the observations in Fakt (n=4) and de Telegraaf (n=23) were omitted as they lack variation on the dependent variable, resulting in an n of 746. In Model A6 the observations in Fakt (n=4) were omitted resulting in an n of 746.

Figure A3. Average marginal effects of media salience for populist parties versus non-populist parties on (a) populist claims, (b) people-centric claims and (c) anti-elitist claims with 95% CIs

(a) Populist claims



(b) People-centric claims



(c) Anti-elitist claims

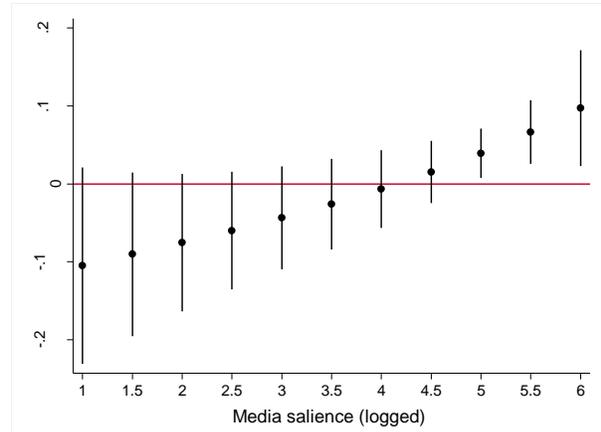
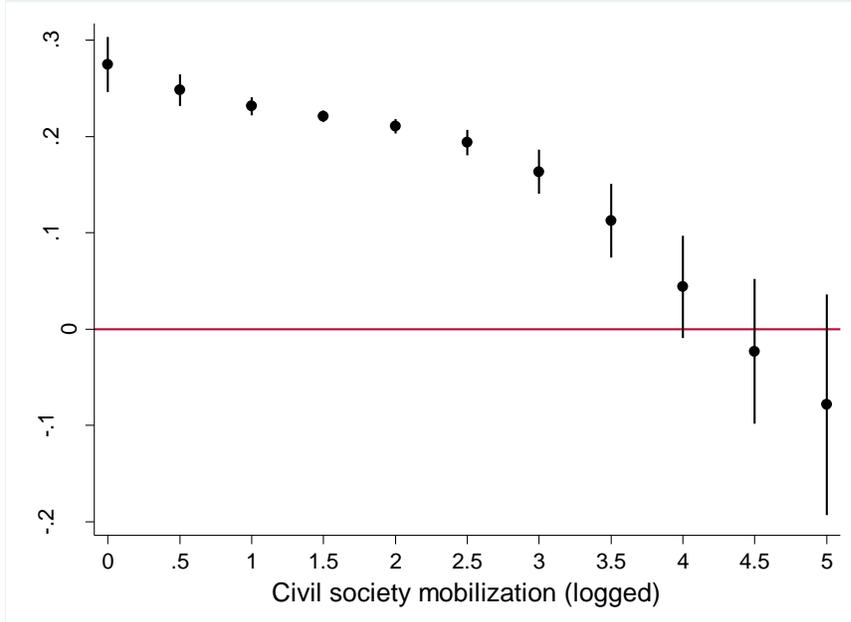
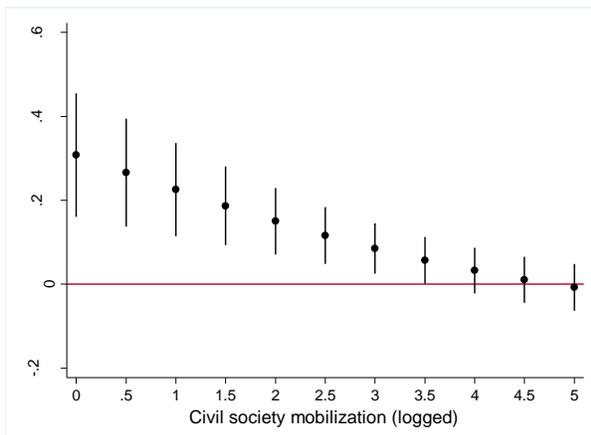


Figure A4. Average marginal effects of civil society mobilization for populist parties versus non-populist parties on (a) populist claims, (b) people-centric claims and (c) anti-elitist claims with 95% CIs

(a) Populist claims



(b) People-centric claims



(c) Anti-elitist claims

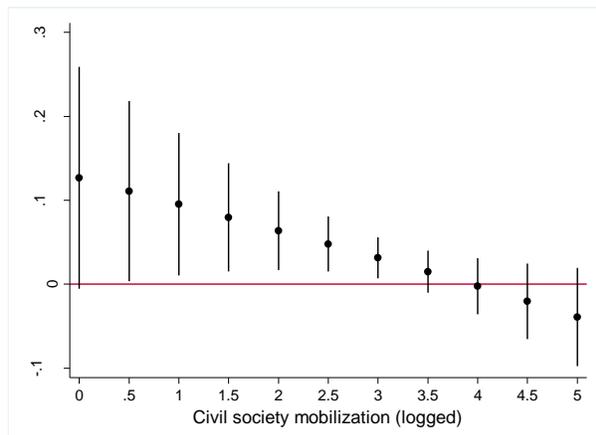
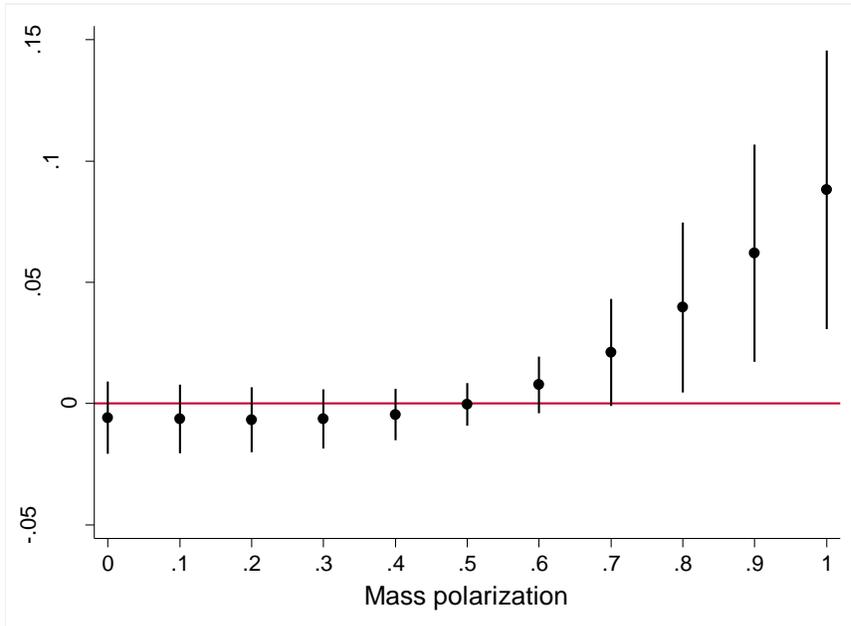
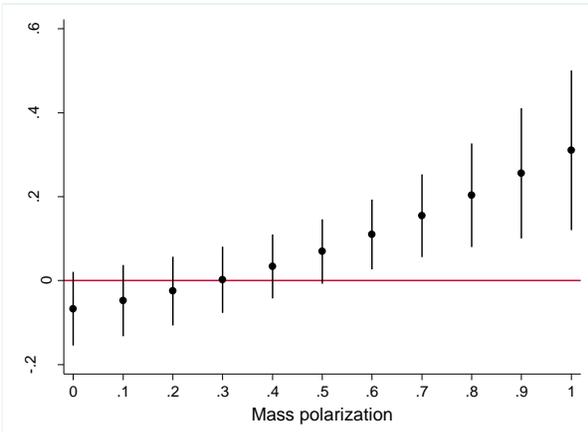


Figure A5. Average marginal effects of polarization for populist parties versus non-populist parties on (a) populist claims, (b) people-centric claims and (c) anti-elitist claims with 95% CIs

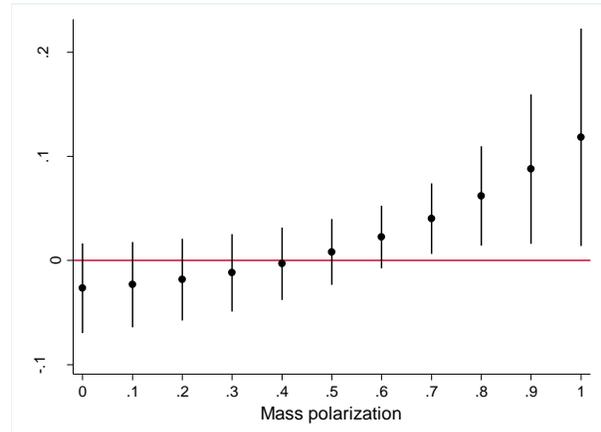
(a) Populist claims



(b) People-centric claims



(c) Anti-elitist claims



## 12. Between and within country variation and multilevel analyses

Our pan-European content analysis covers news outlets from seven different countries and one pan-European outlet. We were able to identify party-issue dyads coming for 85 parties from 21 different countries. Most of these dyads relate to parties from countries from which we selected news outlets (77%), i.e. Germany, France, The United Kingdom, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and Poland. However, we identified a substantive set of claims from parties from other EU countries, from which we did not select news outlets (23%), e.g. Spain, Belgium, Portugal, Austria, Denmark, etc. The party-issue dyads which we analyze in the paper are nested in countries. The data could thus potentially qualify for a multilevel analysis. However, as shown in Table A8, we found little to no within-country variation of populist claims for parties from countries from which we did not sample media outlets. Namely, as Table A9 shows, 17 out of the 18 populist party-issue dyads come from parties that made claims in media outlets from their home country. For people-centrism, in contrast, we found much more within-country variation. The data show that parties almost exclusively express populist claims in media outlets from their own country. This fits with our conception of populist communication as a political strategy to sway voters. After all, it is less strategically opportune for parties to express populism in foreign newspapers as their voters are not systematically exposed to this rhetoric. Table A9 shows that this pattern mostly applies to anti-elitist and not to people-centric communication.

This is an important finding, but it also has consequences for how we model the data. Since we lack within-country variation for full populist communication for more than half of the countries in our dataset, a multilevel regression at the country-level is not appropriate (albeit maybe for the model predicting people-centrism). This is why we present a model with clustered standard errors and fixed effects for media outlets in the paper. We do include a control variable for whether the party in question made a statement in a media outlet from its country of origin in these models. Moreover, to account for between-country variation, we present robustness checks, including a multilevel model with random intercepts for countries and parties (Table A10) and a model with fixed effects for countries (Table A11). These robustness checks corroborate our earlier findings.

**Table A8. Overview of populist, people-centric and anti-elitist party-issue dyads by country**

Country	Populist dyads	People-centric dyads	Anti-elitist dyads	Total
DE	7 11%	20 32%	10 16%	62
FR	3 6%	10 19%	8 15%	54
SE	3 10%	7 24%	5 17%	29
UK	2 5%	8 21%	3 8%	39
BE	1 5%	7 32%	3 14%	22
IT	1 5%	7 37%	1 5%	19
NL	1 3%	6 19%	3 10%	31
AT	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	7
BG	0 0%	2 100%	0 0%	2
CZ	0 0%	2 33%	0 0%	6
DK	0 0%	3 30%	2 20%	10
EL	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2
ES	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5
FI	0 0%	1 33%	0 0%	3
HU	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2
LU	0 0%	0 0%	2 40%	5
MT	0 0%	1 50%	0 0%	2
PL	0 0%	3 38%	0 0%	8
PT	0 0%	2 50%	0 0%	4
RO	0 0%	2 67%	0 0%	3
SK	0 0%	1 100%	0 0%	1
Total	18 6%	82 26%	37 12%	316

**Table A9. Overview of populist communication by media outlet in home country**

		Party made at least one statement in a media outlet from its country of origin		
		Yes	No	Total
Populist communication	Yes	17	1	18
	No	105	193	298
	Total	122	194	316
		Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 25.1072$ Pr = 0.000		
People-centrism	Yes	36	46	82
	No	86	148	234
	Total	122	194	316
		Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 1.3098$ Pr = 0.252		
Anti-elitism	Yes	25	12	37
	No	97	182	279
	Total	122	194	316
		Pearson $\chi^2(1) = 14.8284$ Pr = 0.000		

**Table A10. Multilevel binary logit model of populist communication with random intercepts for countries and parties**

	Model A5: Populist		Model A6: People-centrism		Model A7: Anti-elitism	
<b>Main effects</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>
Intercept	-21.13 **	(5.02)	-4.28**	(0.64)	-4.57**	(1.68)
Populist party	-81.42 **	(20.00)	-3.91**	(1.51)	-9.65*	(4.95)
Media salience	1.09 **	(0.37)	0.62**	(0.16)	-0.05	(0.20)
Civil society mobilization	0.04	(0.54)	-0.08	(0.12)	0.37*	(0.15)
Mass polarization	-3.45 †	(1.86)	0.36	(0.82)	0.66	(0.70)
Party in office	-5.64 **	(1.58)	-0.67	(0.44)	-1.73**	(0.49)
Left-right index	-1.14 **	(0.39)	-0.05	(0.12)	-0.47**	(0.17)
National MPs	7.69 *	(3.21)	-0.56	(0.65)	2.33*	(1.20)
Statements	0.58 *	(0.27)	0.32*	(0.13)	0.17*	(0.09)
Active in own domestic outlet	3.54 **	(1.05)	0.58	(0.45)	0.48	(1.07)
Media source						
Aftonbladet	6.52 **	(1.99)	-0.42	(0.87)	1.31	(0.92)
Corriere Della Sera	6.30 **	(2.10)	-0.33	(0.69)	2.28**	(0.55)
Euractiv	10.84 **	(3.00)	0.67	(0.56)	2.06*	(0.96)
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	3.28	(2.53)	-0.41	(0.71)	0.72	(0.62)
Fakt			0.79	(2.44)		
Financial Times	-4.24 **	(1.44)	-0.98*	(0.44)	-1.02	(0.84)
Telegraaf	-4.80 **	(1.37)	-0.60	(0.64)	0.68	(1.27)
Le Monde	2.02	(1.25)	-0.88	(0.66)	1.61†	(0.85)
<b>Interaction effect</b>						
Populist party * Media salience	14.71 **	(3.18)	0.60†	(0.37)	1.69*	(0.84)
Populist party * Mass polarization	18.73 *	(9.68)	5.10*	(2.15)	6.40*	(2.75)
Populist party * Civil society mobilization	-2.48 **	(0.98)	-0.37†	(0.21)	-0.72†	(0.44)
<b>Random intercept</b>						
Country level intercept	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
Party level intercept	0.00	(0.00)	0.29	(0.68)	0.00	(0.00)
<b>Model fit</b>						
N	290		294		290	
AIC	46.93		307.05		160.50	

Robust standard errors at the issue level in parentheses and significance levels indicated by †<0.10 \*<0.05 \*\*<0.01

**Table A11. Binary logit model of populist communication with fixed effects for countries<sup>2</sup>**

	Model A8: Populist claim		Model A9: People-centrism		Model A10: Anti-elitism	
<b>Main effects</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Coef.</b>	<b>S.E.</b>
Intercept	-4.09 **	(1.50)	-3.99 **	(0.94)	-2.56 *	(1.28)
Populist party	-68.23 **	(9.66)	-5.94 †	(3.11)	-8.03	(5.71)
Media salience	0.52	(0.62)	0.53 **	(0.19)	-0.05	(0.30)
Civil society mobilization	-0.03	(0.34)	0.01 *	(0.12)	0.29	(0.20)
Mass polarization	-0.44	(2.17)	0.20	(0.81)	0.70	(0.97)
Party in office	-0.62	(0.81)	-0.31	(0.36)	-0.75	(0.54)
Left-right index	-0.55 *	(0.18)	-0.07	(0.10)	-0.49 **	(0.16)
National MPs	1.29	(1.00)	-0.64	(0.50)	1.96 **	(0.69)
Statements	0.38 *	(0.15)	0.38 **	(0.09)	0.26 **	(0.09)
Country						
AT	(empty)		(empty)		(empty)	
BE	-1.19	(1.48)	0.69	(0.68)	1.17	(0.99)
BG	(empty)		(empty)		(empty)	
CZ	(empty)		1.17	(1.01)	(empty)	
DE	-1.77	(1.53)	-0.10	(0.62)	-0.43	(0.89)
DK	(empty)		-0.19	(1.29)	1.44	(1.19)
EL	(empty)		(empty)		(empty)	
ES	(empty)		(empty)		(empty)	
FI	(empty)		1.53	(1.27)	(empty)	
FR	-0.53	(0.93)	-0.38	(0.62)	0.49	(0.75)
IT	-0.43	(1.30)	1.60 *	(0.82)	0.03	(1.32)
LU	(empty) -		(empty)		2.06 †	(1.10)
MT	(empty) -		0.73	(1.46)	(empty)	
NL	-0.92	(0.89)	0.11	(0.65)	0.03	(0.94)
PL	(empty) -		1.96	(1.22)	(empty)	
PT	(empty) -		1.06	(0.93)	(empty)	
RO	(empty) -		2.37 *	(1.19)	(empty)	
SE	0.94	(1.28)	0.53	(0.69)	0.53	(0.95)
SK	(empty) -		(empty)		(empty)	
UK (reference)	-		--		--	
<b>Interaction effect</b>						
Populist party * Media salience	12.59**	(1.81)	1.01 †	(0.59)	1.38	(0.93)
Populist party * Mass polarization	8.20 †	(4.30)	5.33 *	(2.27)	6.33	(4.14)
Populist party * Civil society mobilization	-2.16**	(0.65)	-0.62 †	(0.36)	-0.68	(0.56)
<b>Model fit</b>						
N	240		272		252	
AIC	99.71		289.81		171.47	

Clustered standard errors at the issue level in parentheses and significance levels indicated by †<0.10 \*<0.05 \*\*<0.01

<sup>2</sup> Countries for which we lack variation on the dependent variable are omitted from the analysis due to perfect prediction. Because of collinearity problems, fixed effects for media outlets and for whether a statement was made in a news outlet from the party's country of origin were omitted from the analyses. The product terms in Model A10 do not produce significant results, but an inspection of the marginal effects (not shown) render significant findings for all three interactions.

### 13. List of populist parties in the dataset

Table A12. List of populist parties in our dataset

Party ID	Party name	Country
2111	ANO 2011	Czech Republic
310	Alternative für Deutschland	Germany
306	Die Linke	Germany
215	Danish People's Party	Denmark
610	Front national	France
9009	La France insoumise	France
9005	Il Popolo della Libertà	Italy
845	MoVimento 5 Stelle	Italy
815	Forza Italia	Italy
811	Lega Nord	Italy
1014	Socialistische Partij	Netherlands
1003	Partij Voor de Vrijheid	Netherlands
2605	Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	Poland
2814	Obyčajní Ľudia	Slovakia
1108	UK Independence Party	United Kingdom

## 14. List of statements and parties per issue

**Table A13. List of statements and parties per issue in our dataset**

IssueID	IssueName	Statements	Parties
14	Free trade agreement	170	36
18	Tax on financial transactions	105	25
27	Banking union	56	24
17	Tax havens	29	19
42	Tobacco internet	30	15
24	Shale gas	15	14
46	Single use Plastic	24	14
16	Common defence and security policy	24	11
32	Regional development	25	11
3	Wages financial sector	62	10
9	Credit rating agencies	15	10
12	Air quality	12	10
44	Tobacco flavours	22	10
40	Energy efficiency	26	9
2	Firearms	11	8
4	Financial support to farmers	13	8
11	Eurobonds	38	8
39	Greenhouse gas	9	8
20	Illicit tobacco trade	11	7
38	Government budgets	14	7
8	Reduced VAT	8	6
22	Biodiversity	8	6
47	Micro plastic	7	6
23	Litter in oceans	6	5
1	Rail competition	6	4
21	Water problems	6	4
5	National emission ceilings	3	3
6	Accessibility for disabled	3	3
7	Common policy on migration	3	3
10	Plastic waste	3	3
15	Common foreign policy	3	3
25	Energy and development aid	5	3
28	Development aid	3	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>775</b>	<b>316</b>

## 15. References

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