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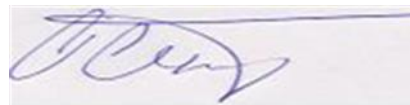|		
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes and evaluates the proposed policy recommendations. An evaluation framework has been set up for this purpose. A short discussion on methodological challenges has been included, too. In addition, recent related policy recommendations on populism have been taken into account. A total of 60 policy recommendations were identified. Despite a respectable number of proposals, only some policy recommendations can be considered as original contribution to the debate. Within this group, some of the original policy recommendations had other shortcomings (e.g. vagueness of the proposal or possible problematic political feasibility). The report proposes how to address the identified challenges in terms of the final selection of appropriate policy recommendations, the final wording of their texts as well as their distribution among proper stakeholders.

1. DEMOS Research Goals

DEMOS project was built on the assumption that populism is symptomatic of a disconnect between how democratic polities operate and how citizens perceive their own aspirations, needs and identities within the political system. Therefore, DEMOS explored the value of 'democratic efficacy' as the condition of political engagement needed to address the challenge of populism. The concept combined attitudinal features (political efficacy), political skills, knowledge, and democratic opportunity structures.

DEMOS project addressed under-researched aspects of populism at micro-, meso-, and macro-levels: its socio-psychological roots, social actors' responses to the populist challenge (such as political parties or media), and populism's effects on governance. DEMOS focused not only on the polity, but equally on citizens' perspectives: how they are affected by, and how they react to, populism. Politically underrepresented groups and those targeted by populist politics were a particular focus, e.g. youth, women, and migrants.

DEMOS aimed at contextualising populism through comparative analysis on a variety of populisms across Europe, including their historical, cultural, and socioeconomic roots, manifestations, and impacts. DEMOS offered to develop indicators and predictors of populism and elaborated scenarios on the interactions of populism with social actors and institutions both at the national and the EU levels.

Among other deliverables, DEMOS offered to develop timely policy recommendations. We attempted to assess these tentative policy recommendations based on available literature. For that purpose, we developed or adjusted the existing assessment indicators for political recommendations: the target, the objective, political feasibility, focused and supported with research evidence, using clear, readable and simple language, actionable vs rather vague, and, finally, the level of innovativeness/novelty. The meaning of individual indicators is further explained in Table 1. In some cases it was difficult to decide or to categorise particular indicators precisely. For example, whether a policy recommendation is politically feasible (High, Medium or Low) very much depends on context (political culture in a country, ideologies of those in power, etc.).

Table 1: Assessment Criteria

Who is the target of policy recommendations?
What is the objective of the recommendations?
Are suggested policy recommendations politically feasible?
Are the policy recommendations limited to the issue at hand and to the research evidence itself? Or, perhaps, are there intellectually insufficient or utterly uncontroversial categories of recommendation that should be avoided?
Are there different policy approaches suggested?
Are these policy recommendations written in a clear, readable and simple language? If not, we need to adjust the language. The best policy recommendations are clear and concise stand-alone texts.
Are these policy recommendations actionable or rather vague? In other words, is it clearly stated what should be done exactly? (and, if possible, when, by whom, how).

2. Challenges of Drawing Policy Recommendations Based on Research

It is obvious that there are many aspects that impact the quality of research outputs on which policy recommendations are based. It is useful to remind a reader about some of these challenges. The choice of methodologies impacts our understanding of populism, and vice-versa. Similarly, the quality of research on which we develop policy recommendations is relevant. For example, Herrero, Humprecht, Engesser, Brüggemann and Büchel (2017, 4810) argue that the Slovak media system structurally (and geographically) belongs to "the northern cluster which also includes Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania", but not the Czech Republic. This cluster is characterized "by the lowest levels of political parallelism, the highest levels of press freedom, and the highest levels of foreign ownership, the highest levels of journalistic professionalism and online political information use and the lowest levels of ownership concentration". However, most local observers would challenge a claim that Slovak media/journalism in comparison to e.g. the Czech media / journalism shows "the highest levels of journalistic professionalism." Obviously, this discussion has important normative and policy-making consequences.

We discuss further challenges of carrying out research on journalism and populism as an example. Two controversial issues are discussed. The first is related to the conceptualisation of "populist media" or "media populism", while the second issue is related to the sampling of journalists with a focus at gaining insights into their interactions with populist politicians or populism in general.

For the first issue, there was operationalized media populism as a multidimensional issue based on the concepts of people centrism, anti-elitism and outgroup exclusion. The online questionnaires administered to experts concentrated around a set of indicators focusing on these three dimensions. The experts were asked to evaluate the orientation of a given news outlet with regard to people centrism, anti-elitism and outgroup exclusion. The experts' opinions were measured using a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (very little) to 6 (very much). The results were surprising, suggesting that some mainstream liberal media such as *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland), *Le Monde* (France) and *Denník N* (Slovakia) show rather high levels of "media populism." This can be seen in the Table 2. *Gazeta Wyborcza* (TV Newscast) shows over 50 % level of "media populism according to almost 20 local experts (Table 2). For *Le Monde* it was about a third of "media populism" and for *Denník N* it was also more than half "media populism" identified. We selected here the Polish example for a more detailed analysis for practical reasons. First, *Gazeta Wyborcza* is a rather well-known as well as often researched outlet. Second, the Slovak example – *Denník N* – had assessment based on a rather limited number of experts (around 10). In contrast, almost 20 experts assessed *Gazeta Wyborcza* (TV Newscast).

Table 2: Polish Media and Populism

Pol	Outlet name	News outlet type	N Experts	people	elite	outgroup	populism
1	Wiadomosci (TVP1)	TV Newscast	19	4,0	3,3	4,5	4,0
2	Wydarzenia (Polsat)	TV Newscast	19	4,0	3,2	2,6	3,3
3	Fakty (TVN)	TV Newscast	19	3,7	4,4	1,9	3,3
4	Panorama (TVP2)	TV Newscast	19	3,8	3,1	4,0	3,6
5	Gazeta Wyborcza	TV Newscast	19	3,4	4,3	1,8	3,2
6	Rzeczpospolita	Newspaper	19	3,6	3,4	2,5	3,2
7	Fakt	Newspaper	19	4,1	4,7	3,4	4,0
8	Gazeta Polska Codziennie	Newspaper	19	3,2	3,5	4,6	3,8
9	Onet.pl		19	3,3	3,7	2,2	3,1
10	Wp.pl		19	3,3	3,9	2,5	3,2

Source: DEMOS project

Although it is not the best strategy to compare data from different periods and different versions (printed version versus TV newscast), still, there is some value in doing so. Thus, Leśniczak (2019) examined the presence of the populist and nationalist trends in the press articles of four Polish newspapers. He attempted to assess their stance (approval or criticism) in view of the Lehman Brothers collapse. He found out that *Gazeta Wyborcza* was the least populist and nationalist in its coverage, as documented below (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Populism and Polish Newspapers

	"Rz"	"GW"	"NP"	"Polityka"
approving (Euro-skeptical)	8	4	3	3
criticizing (pro-European)	0	15	3	4
approving and criticizing at the same time	0	5	2	4
difficult to say	4	3	0	0

Source: Leśniczak (2019), p.165

Table 4: Nationalism and Polish Newspapers

	"Rz"	"GW"	"NP"	"Polityka"
approving (Euro-skeptical)	7	3	0	0
criticizing (pro-European)	2	21	4	8
approving and criticizing at the same time	0	3	2	3
difficult to say	3	0	2	0

Source: Leśniczak (2019), p.165

Olechowska (2017) documented an ideological bias in the newspapers "Gazeta Polska Codziennie" (conservative), "Nasz Dziennik" (conservative-Catholic) and "Gazeta Wyborcza" (centre-left); in contrast, "Rzeczpospolita", remained rather neutral in its political coverage

Clearly, *Gazeta Wyborcza* is, according to *PWN Encyclopedia*, seen as "associated with the liberal-democratic orientation".[1] It seems unlikely that it would promote "media populism" in its other media tools. Therefore, one can formulate PO RE 28: one should re-think the concept of "media populism" (see also Deliverable D7.2: Reactions to populism: institutions, p.8-9).

For the second issue, i.e sampling, Dueze (1999) has described quite in detail how challenging this task may be. Methodologically speaking, "Sampling is particularly important when studying journalists because of the wide array of environments, media and subject matters within the field." (Slaughter and Newman, 2020). When selecting a sample, therefore, researchers must be able to show that they have consulted the full range of views needed to answer the questions adequately (Young *et al*. 2018). Furthermore, "One common approach is to collect and analyze data until saturation, meaning that when new data no longer provide new information, collection stops (Mason, 2010)." (Slaughter and Newman, 2020). "Within a quantitative study, fewer participants may make it more difficult to detect patterns" (Groves & Peytcheva, 2008 cited by Slaughter and Newman, 2020). In general, "determining qualitative sample size a priori is an inherently problematic approach, especially in more interpretive models of qualitative research (Sim, Saunders, Waterfield & Kingstone, 2018). Indeed, for example, a sample size in conservation research varied from 1 to 1,400 – however, "with an average sample size across all papers ($n = 227$) of 87 and a median of 35 (Young *et al*, 2018, n. p.). This was a much larger sample than, for example, a sample for report in WP 7.3 (Table 5, see also Deliverable D7.2: Reactions to populism: institutions). In all countries except one, only 7-9 interviews were conducted. The target were journalists from the most relevant news outlets in each country. Although this methodological approach is logical, at the same time, it poses some challenges. Specifically, if the most relevant news outlets are then understood as "mainstream" and "elite" and/or "quality" newspapers, this may create or reproduce certain elitist/mainstream bias. First, it is commonly assumed that journalists tend to be ideologically more liberal, often liberal-left. Second, if there is relatively low trust in the mainstream media, or at least in some of them, it may also suggest some deeper problems within media system.

The larger sample was officially seen as a methodological problem. As put by the representative of WP7.3: "*Although we are going to employ qualitative methods of analysis, we still need to be sure that all the material is somehow comparable in terms of the amount of data we collected and the way the data was collected. In all countries except Slovakia, 7-9 interviews were conducted.*" Therefore, there was a request to "*select 7-9 interviews IN TOTAL that will still represent the general design of the sample (different types of the media: TV, radio, press, and online) and allow you provide answers to RQs as well as quotes that would support main observations.*" The justification for such a request was following: "*With one country with a significantly higher number of interviews we may face significant differences in findings (indeed, the more interviews, the more – at least potentially – points of view or arguments).* "

The last suggestion actually reveals the substance of the debate – one will get more precise findings with more data, until a certain level of saturation occurs. In other words, some findings will be more precise and more reliable than others. Therefore, effectively, the arguments by critics are that those more reliable and more precise results should be adjusted to those less reliable and less precise data, to allow international comparison. Yet, if more precise data allow a better research perspective, then they may serve as a confirmation or denial that there is no such trend as detected by less reliable data from other countries. This is, in itself, a good enough reason to have such data included (i.e. a deviant sample). The research is not only about finding some positive results but also about finding "negative" findings or about results that question some general, seemingly emerging trends. However, there are

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[1] https://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/haslo/Gazeta-Wyborcza;3904448.html

other arguments in sup   ort of having a larger sample – as discussed for example by researchers Nr. 1 and Nr. 4 below.

The research questions were following: (1) How political journalism is affected by the rise of populism in the political field? (2) How different news media deal with populism and populist actors? (3) How do different underlying conceptions of populism influence political coverage? Therefore, one can argue that rather more than less information (based on interviews) is adequate.

Table 5: Number and main professional features of interviewees by country
(Category "other" is excluded here)

	N.	Type of media			
Country		TV	Radio	Press	Online
Czechia	9	1	1	5	2
France	8	2	/	5	1
Italy	8	3	/	4	/
Poland	8	1	1	3	1
Slovakia	24	4	2	7	9
Spain	7	1	/	3	2
Total	64	12	4	27	15

In fact, more research focus was laid upon having structurally limited but mathematically homogeneous sample (i.e 7-9 per country) rather than on more data rich (sufficiently saturated) sample. This may be seen as a too rigid approach, not really contributing to gaining correct insight. The size of the sample is – or should be - determined by research need, not vice versa. For example, if the results stemming from a large sample are significantly different, it may also mean that the size of sampling was not sufficient in other cases/countries.

Moreover, the sample is imperfect anyway, and in a more serious manner. Considering the research question "2) How different news media deal with populism and populist actors?", it is questionable whether e. g. 4 answers from 3 countries (radio journalism) can answer this question fairly. There are missing radio journalists (FR, IT, ES) as well as online journalists (IT). This omission could be theoretically justified - e. g. that very few people listen to radio broadcast in those countries, or that there are only very limited online news and current affairs media in a country. In contrast, it can be argued that since TV broadcast, followed by online media, still plays the key role in (populist) political communication targeting general public, the higher share of TV journalists can be seen as justified, or, perhaps, necessary. Therefore, the inclusion of only a single TV journalist in some samples (Czechia, Poland, Spain) may be seen as an unwelcome deviation, too. It is questionable whether one can pool specific media from different countries and to create in this way a sufficient sample.

Then there is another relevant methodological issue – what was the specific job of these interviewed persons, e. g. commentators, reporters, editors, etc. This may significantly impact their perspectives on the research questions stated.

Another relevant approach that should be used is triangulation. For example, if a journalist claims that his outlet is ideologically "neutral", while another journalist claims that the same outlet is "slightly left-wing", one would need a third opinion (and perhaps more) to get the correct answer (or, at least, to find out the prevailing opinion on that matter).

We approached a few dozen experts to share their thoughts on data as presented in the Table 5. Only a few of them responded to this call. Their answers are as follows:

Expert 1 (Brindusa Armanca PhD, professor Faculty of Journalism Arad&Timișoara, also active journalist Free Europe Romania): „*The first question is if the initiators of the study specified in the methodology how many interviews are expected from each country. If not, I understand that the operation of the comparison is not conditioned by the number of the interviews. As I see in the table, other countries omitted interviews for radio (Italy, France and Spain), for online journalism (Italy), many for professional ONG. My second and last question is how accurate could the qualitative analysis be without a lot of data. My impression is that the methodology was superficial in this case. But, of course, I do not know the details of the study.*"

Expert 2 (a university lecturer, Sweden): "*Although I'm generally a quantitative research person, I am aware that sampling in qualitative research is still important and should be given sufficient weight. Much of how sampling is done for comparative research stems from the concept of 'saturation', developed originally by Grounded Theory pioneers Glaser and Strauss to stop adding more participants when they don't add additional perspectives or new information. There is also disagreement among scholars on how to measure saturation, particularly when doing comparative qualitative research - as in your case. Another alternative that emerged is 'Information Power', (Malterud, Siersma, Guassora, 2015). Slovakia's share of the total is indeed excessively high, particularly for a relatively smaller population size compared to others such as France, Italy and Spain. Saturation for Slovakia is likely reached with the current sample, but not reached for the other countries (except for Czechia perhaps). Since the total sample per country is what is the main concern, deriving from it for the sub-categories (print, online) would also be problematic. If I were to think about this quantitatively, I would take into account population sizes as a preliminary indicator of the required sample sizes per country. I am making the assumption that the population size correlates to the degree of diversity of the journalistic and media practices and perspectives (though this is arguable). If I take this path, the ideal way forward is to add and subtract from the sample sizes as shown in the 'adjustment required' column in the table:*"

Table 6: Alternative Selection of a Sample

country	pop (m)	ratio	representative sample	current sample	adjustment required
Czechia	11	5	3	9	-6
France	68	30	19	8	+11
Italy	59	26	17	8	+9
Poland	38	17	11	8	+3
Slovakia	5	2	1	24	-23
Spain	47	21	13	7	+6
Total	228	100%	64	64	(58) diff

A note on this note: One could possibly base sampling on the number of journalists in a country.

Expert 3 (Associate Professor Terézia Rončáková, a university lecturer, Catholic University in Ružomberok, Slovakia): *The editor asked the researcher to select a third of interviews done. This is logical since otherwise it must be clearly justified why there is much bigger sample for Slovakia. However, if the researcher is already familiar with a sample, his selection may be biased. Therefore, these 7-9 interviews should be selected by another person. This selection should be prioritised by the relevance of interviewed journalists, based on their names.* Moreover, clear structure and the number of interviewed persons should be specified.

Expert 4 (a university lecturer, Poland): *If we take this table alone, at first glance it looks somehow unproportional concerning the number of interviews. Slovakia is outstanding. But qualitative analysis*

is not about numbers, and the quality of comparison is not determined by the same number of cases / texts... That is true, in qualitative research, at the stage of designing research, collecting the primary data should be precisely determined also by scope or numbers, following the nature of research questions. But it is the matter of theoretical sampling, not statistical sampling. Thus, it is not so relevant to operate on the same number of texts / transcripts – because not numbers provide the grounds for comparison.

Moreover, e.g. in grounded theory, or content analysis, or even discourse analysis it is practiced to add more data during the process of interpretation, because of the emergent nature of findings, which may need additional sampling. It is a routine procedure. In my opinion, the very comparative part of interpretation ought to be based on corresponding, discovered and reconstructed concepts, categories or themes (as in thematic analysis) and structures, found and supported by evidence in every group of texts (every country sample). Therefore, the most relevant justification for comparative findings (in that kind of research) is the common set of categories / themes – together with relations among them, elaborated in the form of thematic framework or conditional matrix – which explains how the research questions should be in-depth understood, including meaningful similarities and differences. In the example, it is assumed that such summary table must be convincing by its numbers, suggesting that the research is 'comparative'. But it is not the numbers what counts here, but similar categories and structures. The only potential problem is that the table suggests some lack of compatibility during the first stage of research design, so it should be modified or re-thought.

Expert 5 (a university lecturer, Poland): *Having looked at the numbers presented in the table I think the number of journalists in Slovakia have unproportionally outnumbered other countries. This may cause bias in the analysis. Besides, to answer this research question, I think it is not important what type of media journalists come from (print, online, TV), but rather - public or private, conservative or liberal?*

Expert 6 (Györgyi Rétfalvi Ph.D.Budapest Metropolitan University, Hungary): *I would highlight not only the type of media as tv, radio, press online, etc. but if: based on the owner: are they commercial? are they public? are they community media? and geographically: local? nationwide? Etc. The "other" category I would skip, but I would use all the interviews which were conducted if you have the capacity for the processing. That is not a problem that in Slovakia 22 interviews were made and in Spain only 7. For a qualitative method you need roughly at least 10 interviews for each country. But 7 is close to 10 and more is better.*

Next, we discuss challenges in researching Party Manifestos of populist parties or, in general, using MARPOR methodology (that was used in one deliverable and was supposed to be used in another deliverable or task). We followed observation that there are the three main approaches to estimating policy positions of parties: expert surveys, the conventional content analysis of election programs by the Manifesto Research Group/Comparative Manifestos Project (MARPOR/CMP), and computer-assisted content analysis of election programs (Volkens, 2017). In Volkens´s view, all three approaches have their particular strengths and weaknesses. As a rule, the strength of one approach is the weakness of the others and vice versa. However, as we shall see, neither computer-aided methodology nor MARPOR/CMP data and methodology can be seen as really workable methodologies for research purpose.

It can be highly problematic, and in fact, it is by and large impossible to use indicators related to the rule of law and democracy that are value-free or pretend to be such (as MARPOR/CMP does). Especially in populism studies there are biases. Andor (2020) explains these biases as a result that "liberals tend to dominate populism studies in both Europe and the US..." However, we can possibly attempt to avoid these biases and to assess independently or objectively procedures, contents or possible/expected results compared to major recent scientific findings.

Among the well-known drawbacks of studying party manifestos (as different from party electoral manifestos) can be included that a manifesto may not capture ideological or value differences among various factions of the party of the party and the party leader (De Spiegeleire et al, 2017, Annex, V).

In some cases, there is a blurred line between party manifestos and electoral manifestos. For example in Poland: „*Most of the analyzed program materials have de facto the function of more extensive election leaflets than program leaflets as political documents. This may indicate a lack of faith in the possibility of using the postulates formulated in such documents in the practice of governance, but also of a lack of hope for substantive debate political over the content of program documents, perhaps due to the weakness of Polish political discourse and lack of interest media with program polemics.*" (Woźniak, 2017, 54).

In France, each party has to write its "electoral propaganda" sent to every voter by the Minister of the Interior, in charge of the organization and control of the election. The length is fixed by law and the same for every party. However it is not the one that has been distributed to French voters.[2]

In contrast, in Bosnia and Hercegovina, SNSD party distributed to its members prior to the 2018 elections its party programs (created in assemblies) and it used these documents as election platform. As the party claims, they didn't advertise it that much among wider public, but it was rather a material for their members.[3]

In Slovakia, party electoral manifestos usually have longer and shorter versions, both available to the public. However, there can be electoral manifesto in a single version, with just a few points (and with no longer version – e.g. case of Smer-SD party electoral manifesto before general elections in 2020). There were only three points of the programme, of which two were rather general ones: Pensioners deserve 13th pension, Young families deserve further support, and Physicians have duties towards Slovakia.

Widely used *Comparative Manifesto Project (*CMP or MARPOR Project) methodology has been criticised by Radosław Markowski already in 2002 as de-contextualised since it does not allow in-depth reflection on the political, social and economic context of the issues raised in political documents (Markowski, 2002, cited in Woźniak, 2017). Furthermore, among the shortcomings of this methodology should be included arbitrary coding of source material (Woźniak, 2017, 45). In general, the CMP methodology turns out to be insufficient when the researcher's goal is a deeper analysis of specific issues (Woźniak, 2017, 47).

Gemenis (2013) believes that several researchers have identified various methodological problems in the CMP data, but third-party users rarely acknowledge them." These included "the CMP uses

a coding scheme that has not been empirically validated, applies it to many documents of questionable quality by using an unreliable hand-coding process, and scales the data into L–R estimates by using a technique that many researchers consider to be problematic (Gemenis, 2013, 18). He classifies the problems associated with the CMP into four areas: (1) theoretical underpinnings of the coding scheme; (2) document selection; (3) coding reliability; and (4) scaling.

In particular, Geme**nis** (2013, 19) writes:

 "*Regarding the theoretical assumptions behind the CMP, third-party users need to place less emphasis on the 'salience theory' of the CMP. The theory cannot be validated empirically even by the*

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[2] Martin Baloge and Nicolas Hubé, University of Lorraine, France

[3] Vanja Malidzan <vanja.malidzan@snsd.org, Apr 30, 2020, via Tanja Maksić [tanjapet2001@gmail.com April 28, 2020

CMP data. As Laver (2001a) suggested, the CMP data can be better conceptualised as 'relative emphasis' measures within a given (pro/con) position, or in case researchers are interested in saliency as such, they can combine the opposing categories of the coding scheme and create scales of policy importance (Lowe et al., 2011, pp. 132–4). Nevertheless, it is also important to reiterate that it is sometimes difficult to measure parties' positions in specific policy areas by using the CMP data. For instance, Oleh Protsyk and Stela Garaz (2011, pp. 4–8) show how the multiculturalism positive and negative (607 and 608) categories of the CMP are poor proxies as they do not fully capture the intended concept."

Furthermore, Gemenis (2013, 19) writes: *"Regarding the problem of coding unreliability, there is little that third-party users can do to improve the use of the CMP data. ... Mikhaylov et al. (2012, pp. 83–5) found no significant differences among coders with different levels of experience but reported substantial differences in reliability among different coding categories. Consequently, third-party users can consider using only the frequency categories for issues that are expected to have a small probability of being misclassified and combine the frequencies of issue categories in which classification 'seepage' is expected to occur during the coding process."*

However, Gemenis (2013, 18-19) also found positive aspects of the CMP: "The CMP is a unique and potentially valuable source of data on political parties", while finishing his contribution a bit radically:"To paraphrase Philip Schrodt (2010), who made a very similar point for international relations research, data collection should not be a monoculture. The idea is that, if all the proposed solutions for the identified problems are only partial and controversial on their own, resources need to be redirected from 'fixing problems' to 'building anew'.

Zulianello (2013) offered a very detailed criticism of the CMP, too. Zulianello (2013) argues that it is probably impossible to correct the major methodological problems identified without destroying their comparability across time and space, since they are so deeply rooted in the CMP's approach.

More recently, Norris (2020) argues that "the CMP coding system was not designed to capture the core components of populism as a style of discourse -- and it is difficult to see how the data could be adapted retrospectively for this purpose."

For example, an item from MARPOR guidelines: "Foreign Special Relationships: Positive - Favourable mentions of particular countries with which the manifesto country has a special relationship; the need for co-operation with and/or aid to such countries or Foreign Special Relationships: Negative - Negative mentions of particular countries with which the manifesto country has a special relationship.

Criticism: Who defines "a special relationship"? Is there anything like "a special relationship"? For example, two reports revealed that the US did not mind to spy on its close allies (Miller, 2020, Borger, 2013). Even so, is there "ever lasting" special relationship? Or is this meant to be based on the 2018 EU Coalition Explorer?[4] However, this is not likely to be reflected in electoral manifestos. What one can assume, this was meant to be the USA. However, to be negative about the USA under President Trump administration, was, well, quite reasonable. In fact, the EU as such, and many individual M.S., often criticised the US foreign policy (see e.g. Halbfinger, 2020).[5] At the same time, to be negative

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[4] https://www.ecfr.eu/eucoalitionexplorer

[5] See, for example, AP/CBSnews (2020). European Union criticizes Trump's change to U.S. landmine policy, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/european-union-criticizes-donald-trump-change-us-landmine-policy-today-2020-02-04/

about state cooperation with Russia, can be, also, seen, as reasonable/justified attitude, for example in case of Serbia. But it all depends on geopolitical and temporary context.

For example, an item from MARPOR guidelines: State Centred Anti-Imperialism: Negative references to imperial behaviour and/or negative references to one state exerting strong influence (political, military or commercial) over other states. May also include: • Negative references to controlling other countries as if they were part of an empire; • Favourable references to greater self-government and independence for colonies; • Favourable mentions of de-colonisation.

Criticism: This can refer to the USA, China, Iran, and Russia, as well as, for example, to Israel (The 2019/2020 year plan to annex majority of occupied territories at the West Bank, see Halbfinger, 2020). But again, it depends. Moreover, it can be a fair criticism by e.g. Christian Democrats or Social Democrats, or biased criticism....in some context, this can refer to Germany, or "Brussels" or the EU - but is this latter example a state? Mention about de-colonisation can be seen only figuratively, e.g. to see Brussels as "colonial master", since there are no really colonies that would seek independence.

For example, an item from MARPOR guidelines: Foreign Financial Influence: Negative references and statements against international financial organisations or states using monetary means to assert strong influence over the manifesto or other states. May include: • Statements against the World Bank, IMF etc.; • Statements against the Washington Consensus; • Statements against foreign debt circumscribing state actions.

Criticism: in case of the Washington Consensus: "The term has evolved to denote a different set of policies from those initially conceived (Marangos, 2009). Most importantly, economic neoliberalism, which is probably just another name for the Washington consensus (privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation), does not seem to have such positive effects as some may believe (see Konczal, Milani and Evans, 2020). „Neoliberalisation meant decline of public, which was reflected in decline of citizenship and in a crisis of democracy" (Judt 2010, in Sušová -Salminen, 2019, 2).

There was no serious defense within DEMOS Project of MARPOR Project indicators that would respond to the above mentioned selected criticism. There was support to MARPOR Project only in a sense that:„*The MARPOR project has solved the question of salience by measuring % of quasi-sentences corresponding to different categories in relation to the entire number of quasi-sentences in a mannifesto. Perhaps we could come up with a different way but it would have to reflect frequency of references in some way.*"

In fact, these presumably „objective" criteria from MARPOR Project are heavily normatively biased and clearly arbitrary, as well as obsolete in view of the most recent scientific findings.

Therefore, the inspiration for selected methodology could be found in studies dealing with policy assessment/evaluation. There seems to be a gap here. As put by Smismans (2015,7): „*....there is hardly any link between scientific and policy making communities dealing, on the one hand, with policy assessment/evaluation and, on the other hand, political science, regulatory studies or even public policy studies.*"

The discussion above is indirectly but significantly related to validity and reliability of policy recommendations. Apparently, this debate about research methodology just on a few examples is controversial, and there is only a limited consensus. Yet, the choice of methodologies impacts the results, and, in the final analysis, the quality of policy recommendations. Therefore, when we stipulate that policy recommendations are based on "research evidence", one should bear in mind these possible methodological limitations. These methodological challenges should have been discussed more seriously either within particular WPs and in particular within WP10.

3. Examination of the Findings

3.1 General Comments[6]

These interesting reports may have strengthened unease of using the term "populism". It seems to capture at least three distinct phenomena:

1. xenophobic/nativist parties;
1. authoritarian (anti-democracy/anti-rule-of-law) parties;
2. a subset of political parties that the opinion makers in that society for various reasons consider to be irresponsible (considering their style as [a] excessively polarizing or [b] simplistic or considering their platforms as either [c] too radical - for example, regarding the introduction of direct democracy or left-wing type of non-orthodox policies - or [d] policy-wise too dependent on whatever population would want to hear from their representatives).

One could be deeply skeptical about any assumption that such parties can in any way be lumped together. However, there is, obviously an overlap. Therefore, it is no wonder that the research done for this project does not find much in common for these parties and cannot find any clear trait (for example, in political platforms) that would distinguish this broad category from the mainstream parties.

Categories 1 and 2 would not be (necessarily) labelled as populist parties. They are nativists or authoritarian parties/movements and would require to be researched as such (and perhaps not lumped together with category 3 under a catch-all umbrella called "populists"). Authoritarianism and xenophobia are real enough threats to liberal democracies to merit their own policy recommendations on what needs to be done to lessen their appeal among general public. We do not see in what way subsuming them under the term "populists" could be helpful. It dilutes their essence.

Category 3 is a more interesting one. It's still too vague, though, and the DEMOS research illustrates it well. It was a Lithuanian case study where the researcher stated that he is analyzing a centrist political party as a populist one because it is too centrist (centrist in an unprincipled way). That made us think that maybe there really is no essence to "populism" – or that it should be conceptualised more narrowly. That populist core might be characterized by one or more of the following features:

1) strongly polarizing rhetoric that is uncharacteristic of mainstream political parties (sometimes anti-elite, sometimes just going outside what can be characterized as a civilized conversation - for example, using "strong language", attacking opponents with ad hominem, waging character assassination campaigns, etc.);

2) proposing simplistic solutions to complicated problems (solutions are constructed in a manner to have broad appeal to the voters)

3) not having a "political substance" - instead surfing on top of different issues under discussion in society.

If that were so, then the interesting policy question would be: what is to be done to prevent damage from excessively polarized public debate or decision-makers imposing simplistic solutions to complicated problems. What needs to change in society so that there is less demand from voters for such style of politics (both among mainstream parties, new political challengers, even xenophobic and authoritarian parties - all of them can behave in a manner that could be labelled as "populist" in this sense). Among the DEMOS reports only few were looking at this issue from this angle.

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[6] This part was written by Iveta Kazoka, director, PROVIDUS, Riga, Latvia, based on a limited number of available deliverables at the time of writing.

It can be questioned the assumption/finding behind several of the reports that the common trend in "populism" is being anti-elite. This is true if one stretches the term "anti-elite" so far that it has no meaning. Or, if one discusses populist political parties in opposition.

There is a big difference if a political party is "anti-elite" because it is illiberal (so it stigmatizes as elite everyone who is a guardian of liberal democracy), or it is anti-elite because it wants to do something that the technocrats of the society or politicians in a captured state believe to be unreasonable policy (such as instituting more direct democracy or left-wing economic policies) or it is anti-elite in a sense that it challenges the governing parties by more polarizing/harsh rhetoric than is common in that concrete polity (sometimes mainstream politicians do that as well). This latter problematic approach was found to be used in some key methodologies used for studying populism.

Typically, populist parties/movements respect democratic institutions (in contrast to, for example, radical (neo-fascist) right-wing parties, radical (communist) left-wing parties or authoritarian illiberal or anti-liberal parties. Without such distinctions, we doubt that it is even possible to write policy recommendations that would have any relevance.

The report on judicial populism is very interesting. However, one can strongly disagree with some of the policy recommendations there (especially the ones that are based on assumption that it is possible/would be worthwhile to limit the discretion of a constitutional court judge), but one can respect such reasoning. The same could be said about some other reports. One can disagree with where they are coming from, but it should be respected what has been done and achieved there. However, one cannot just make up recommendations based on intuition.

Therefore, we approached this task in an innovative way – submitting suggested policy recommendations to internal validity control. More quality check materials should be, ideally, available under WP10. Moreover, we have included recent policy recommendations found or summarised in related research projects.

3.2 Alternative Policy Recommendations Against Populism

We present here a brief overview on pros and cons of policy recommendations targeting populism in recent research projects other than DEMOS. This can allow us to see how other projects tackled these issues, thus avoiding duplicity while learning different perspectives. Ehin and Talving (2021) suggested as an output of POPREBEL Horizon research project following recommendations:

1. „Rebuild trust in democratic institutions and decision-making processes." – The paper does not find evidence that the electoral gains of populists in 11 CEE countries would stem from the financial or migration crises. Thus, the authors point to the voters' disillusionment with mainstream politics, their lack of trust in democratic institutions and the feeling of underrepresentation as a main driver of populist party success.

2. „Strengthen the rule of law." – The authors focus in this recommendation on corruption concerning EU funds and the strengthening of the EU institutions. Strengthening the European Rule of Law mechanism and the European Public Prosecutor's Office would effectively allow the EU to fight corruption concerning EU funds and thus make it more difficult or impossible for the populists in power to consolidate their position.

3. „Strengthen core democratic values." – This recommendation points to a rather bottom-up approach in which people's demand for democratic leaders, the rule of law and the protection of human rights is established by high quality civic education.

4. „Safeguard minority and women's rights." – This recommendation rather defines the issue at hand (cultural populism), and thus it is very vague.

5. „Support and empower civil society." – One part of the recommendation is to protect civil society from restrictive policies, and the other is to support civil society organizations with democratic agendas.

6. „Protect elections." – The integrity of elections should be protected and their results should be seen legitimate by the public.

7. „Safeguard the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary." - Corruption and politicization should not be part of the judiciary, and the courts should be more accountable.

8. „Counter populist narratives and strengthen independent media." – This recommendation again rather defines the problem - media legitimizing populist narratives. It is vague in terms of how to achieve the presence of free and independent media, e.g. in countries with already changed media landscape dominated by populists.

9. „Curb political polarization." – The non-populist actors should not use narratives that may further increase the divisions in the society. The authors recommend these actors to focus on those issues that can unite and use communication channels across party lines.

10. „Mainstream parties should not enable populism." – This as well as the next recommendation are targeting mainstream parties - how they should refrain from working with or copying populist parties. By not enabling populism the authors mean that populist parties should not be included in coalition governments led by the mainstream parties.

11. „Mainstream parties should not copy populist strategies." – Defensive nationalism should be replaced by positive patriotism and the focus of the mainstream parties should be on dialogue when it comes to issues important to the voters.

12. „Counter the trend of executive dominance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic." – This recommendation again rather identifies the problem at hand. By using states of emergency, the populists can increase their power and implement authoritarian measures.

13. „Invest in education that equips citizens with personal /social cognitive skills that help them cope in a rapidly changing world."

14. „Build transnational alliances." – Transnational alliances should be built in terms of funding for pro-democracy initiatives and on EU level (similarly to recommendation nr. 3) civic education should be strengthened.

Table 7: Assessment of Policy Recommendations

POPREBEL Project

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Novelty/ Innovative ness
1.	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Rebuild trust in institutions	Low	Yes	No	Yes	V	No
2.	Mostly EU	Strengthen the rule of law	High	No (not supported by data)	Yes	Yes	A	No
3.	Mostly M.S.	Strengthen core democratic values	High	No (not supported by data)	No	Yes	V	No
4.	Mostly M.S.	Safeguard minority and women's rights	Medium	No	No	Yes	V	No

5.	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Support civil society	High	No	No	Yes	V	No
6.	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Protect elections	High	No	No	Yes	V	No
7.	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Independence of the judiciary	High	No	No	Yes	V	No
8.	Mostly M.S.	Free and independent media	High	No	No	Yes	V	No
9.	Mostly M.S.	Curb political polarization	Low	No	Yes	Yes	V	No
10.	Mostly M.S.	Mainstream parties should not enable populism	Medium	No	No	Yes	V	No
11.	Mostly M.S	Mainstream parties should not copy populist strategies	High	No	Yes	Yes	A	No
12.	Mostly M.S.	Counter the trend of executive dominance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic	Medium	No	No	Yes	V	Yes
13.	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Invest in education to develop cognitive skills	High	No	No	Yes	A	No
14.	Mostly EU	Build transnational alliances	High	No	Yes	Yes	A	Yes(?)

There are also recommendations by Jaksa and Nagy (2020) from another Horizon Project (NoVaMigra Project) which focus on immigration and the asylum system. Thus, also the recommendations focus on how the EU should create a migrant-friendly community. However, some of the recommendations for the EU are also directly dealing with populism in addition to immigration. Only these selected policy recommendations are included below.

1. „Disarm the threat of populism by requiring stricter monitoring of and sanctions against populist political activities that incite hatred against refugees, migrants or minorities (even in indirect forms), or endorse anti-democratic practices/intentions." – The authors make suggestions for EP fractions to monitor populist tendencies in member states and to call out populist politicians on their use of fake news and propaganda. Additionally, those who incite hatred against immigrants should have their speaking time in the EP cut short or their countries should face financial sanctions. Finally, the Fundamental Rights' Agency (FRA) should be involved in the preparation and implementation of EU budget and its allocations.

2. „Empower through the press: defend and promote freedom of speech: independent journalism and critical academic research." – Even in more detail, the recommendation is for the EU to focus on local opinion-makers in illiberal democracies, financially support independent journalists through grants where media freedom is threatened, organize conferences and support social sciences and research whilst the funding requests should be reviewed on EU level (not nationally).

Table 8: Assessment of Policy Recommendations

NoVaMigra Project

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Novelty/ Innovativeness
1.	EU	Stricter monitoring of and sanctions against populist political activities that incite hatred against refugees/migrants/ minorities	High-Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	No
2.	EU	Independent journalism and critical academic research	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	No

3.3 Policy Recommendations Stemming from DEMOS

Policy recommendations targeting populism – pre-final internal analysis indicators

We have selected policy recommendations that were explicitly mentioned in our deliverables, as well as those policy recommendations that were implicitly stated within the texts of deliverables (e.g. PO RE 5 – abbreviation for Policy Recommendation Number 5).

For **Deliverable D2.2 Triggers of Populism**, we have identified following parts of the text as relevant for policy making. „*However, two of our policy variables significantly and positively correlate with populist voting. On the one hand, (PO RE 5) higher level of poverty and social exclusion is a good predictor of higher share of populist voting. On the other hand, there is a significant correlation between activation policy outcome (NEET rates of young people) and the support of populist parties. When the ratio of people neither in employment nor in education and training (as a percentage of the overall age cohort from 15 to 34 years) is higher, populist parties may gain higher voting share (p.102). „... but extreme vulnerability is a strong predictor of populist voting in the case of left-wing populism: in more vulnerable countries citizens support significantly more left-wing populist parties in the post-crisis period. In addition, vulnerability profiles in 2008 correlate strongly with welfare populist attitudes of citizens in 2016. Among the vulnerability indicators, level of unemployment is the strongest predictor of welfare populist attitudes (p.102).*

Stronger polarization significantly raises the support of populist political parties. As we know that this relation also works in the other direction (i.e. populist parties are not only responsive to existing cleavages among citizens but they are also shaping it through the use of Manichean discourses), increasing polarization has to be considered as a threatening signal preceding the potential rise of populism. Technocratic governance also operates as a strong predictor of populism (p.103). „...the exclusion of a significant proportion of young people from the labour market clearly feeds populist attitudes. We found that crisis in itself is not a strong predictor of populism, unless societies become extremely vulnerable because of macroeconomic imbalances, through excessively high unemployment and a dramatic rise in poverty and social exclusion. At the same time, crisis management policies carried out by non-elected policy experts (i.e. technocratic governance) will likely trigger populism. This is particularly true in more polarized societies of Eastern and Southern Europe. These findings imply that populism has only limited policy predictor, thus PO RE 4 should be formulated considering country-specific contexts (p.107).

Specifically identified policy recommendations: „Still, three major suggestions can be done at a more general level. PO RE 1: First, active labour market policy measures of keeping the youth on the labour

market or in the educational and training system are particularly important to limit the populist temptation. PO RE 2: Second, technocratic crisis management should be avoided as much as possible as technocratic governance typically precedes the rise of populism.

PO RE 3: Third, democratic political forces must consciously work on the convergence of future visions concerning societal development; otherwise, deeply polarized policy positions will likely trigger populism.

For **Deliverable D3.2 Report on the state of democratic efficacy in the member states** we have implicitly identified following parts of the text as relevant for policy making: „We assume that coping with populism requires specific skills, for instance: coping with plurality and conflicts in politics and policy; practicing empathy towards others' legitimate needs and goals; scrutinising leaders and their decisions; using the media in a reflective manner (media literacy); and being able to express one's own legitimate needs, aspirations and preferences (p.8). Or, more specifically: „people with complete democratic capacities are those citizens who have (1) a certain level of factual political knowledge; (2) are regular news consumers; (3) non-intensive partisans (as a proxy of reflexivity); (4) strongly identify with the core values of democracy, i.e. political and legal equality, tolerance toward dissenting opinion, and individual autonomy, and (5) have some involvement in political activities." (p.9).

However, it was found that: „Interestingly enough, paternalists are also less populist, moreover, paternalist with incomplete democratic capacities a bit even less populist than those with complete capacities." (p.39). Maybe paternalists tend to be more supporting authoritarian political parties? Additionally, „the most populist subcategory is skeptical people with incomplete democratic capacities." (p.39). Moreover, „It seems that democratic values and populist attitudes are not mutually exclusive p.40). This is actually well-known that populism claims to be the ultimate level of democracy. Based on the text above, we can formulate following tentative policy recommendations:

PO RE 6: To increase full democratic values simultaneously with optimism level („you can do that"). Specifically identified policy recommendations: None

For **Deliverable D6.2: Report on the impact of populism on party systems, media and citizens** we found following implicit policy recommendations: *„Populists take ownership of the contradictions that best suit their Manichean view of society. The quest for this crisis ownership is what feeds the continuous process of naming, blaming, claiming of systemic contradictions that populists implement as a political strategy." (p.12).* One can deduce from this policy recommendation PO RE 7 – face crisis as soon as possible, take crisis ownership.

„Contrary to the expectation, there was no prevailing preference for alternative sources, **understood as disseminating hyper-partisan or fake news and hoaxes, often associated with** *populist parties. (p.32). There is little evidence of clear connections with websites, blogs or other content linked to or in line with Russian propaganda (p.32). The main disseminators of populists' social media posts were other political actors (p.32).* One can deduce from this policy recommendation PO RE 8 – one should see alternative media, including pro-Russian media, as less relevant directly supporting populist tool as it is commonly believed.

Based on preliminary analysis of party manifestos (38-46), one can formulate PO RE 9: it may be worth to explore populist parties (or leaders, in presidential elections) manifestos in-depth, since these include quite many relevant positive ideas. These ideas often reflect silent issues in a society.

Moreover, focus groups research revealed that groups that are targeted by populist movements in their countries have developed „echo chambers" (p.93). Therefore, PO RE 10 would be to find approaches that would ultimately lead to disruption of echo chambers both offline and online.

Specifically identified policy recommendations: Three passive strategies used by target groups to counterbalance the populist challenge: creating echo-chambers, self-censorship (not recommended), and migration – not recommended) and one form of active resistance (PO RE 11) that is embraced

especially by marginalized gender groups. Additionally, „policymakers should prioritize developing ways to use social media as a primary instrument to fight off the negative effects of populist discourse on target groups" (p.100).

For **Deliverable D5.1 Populism and Policymaking: Local, National and International Levels**, we have identified following finding on which we can build some advice: „*Without* government experience, populists become 'more populist' than their counterparts from parties *with* government experience. And these differences are evident in both socio-cultural and socio-economic terms." (p.29). Therefore, our PO RE 12 is to incorporate populist in governments, or let them govern.

Furthermore, „the content of policies cannot flagrantly violate the rule of law. This is particularly important for criminal justice policy, PO RE 13 follows – focus on the rule of law (p.41, but see also discussion below) as well as PO RE 14: „the policy process needs to be as open and inclusive as possible" (p.41). Moreover, polarising, polemical and acutely confrontational speech (p.42) should be prevented (PO RE 15). Non-populist 'mainstream' democratic politicians should formulate their policy messages in a more citizen-oriented manner (in rather everyday language and less technocratic, area-specific expert wording). (p.42): PO RE 16. Additionally, PO RE 17: More efforts are needed to support professional media outlets (p.42). There is a need of strengthening publicly and easily available fact-checking initiatives and platforms in major policy areas at national and European levels.(p.42): PO RE 18. Then, to invest in supporting independent local journalism initiatives (p.42): PO RE 19.

For **Deliverable D6.1 The Impact of Populism on the Institutions and Processes of Constitutional Democracy**, „It is recommended to involve a plurality of institutional actors in the appointment of judges and administrative authorities. It appears that this helps to resist the populist tide (p.45): PO RE 20. Additionally, or in contrast, 'the access to the judiciary careers is efficiently regulated to assure a substantial independence of both the prosecutors and the judges' (Validation Report 10.3). In any case, any provision enhancing the rigidity of the constitution, shall be particularly welcome, as it eliminates the risk of the constitution being reduced to an instrument of everyday politics (PO RE 21). It is recommended to preserve the role of constitutional courts, as supreme interpreters of the constitution. More specifically, the constitutional court's competences should be clearly defined by the constitution and the law, and any attempt to narrow it down should be avoided (PO RE 22). This recommendation was modified by Comment 2 stemming from D10.3 Validation report (2nd period):" the AB recommends distinguishing problematic cases/countries, where these practices are not followed or are unproblematic."

Constitutional Courts should seek to establish more firmly their legitimacy, for example, by loosening the rules for standing (PO RE 23), especially in countries where access to constitutional justice is narrow and adopting transparency rules for the proceedings and judgments. (p.45). To empower constitutional courts with an explicit power of reviewing the constitutionality of constitutional amendments, at least with regard to the procedures followed for constitutional revision (PO RE 24). It is advisable to enact reforms that enhance the parliament's representativeness (PO RE 25) depending on the electoral system (Validation Report 10.3, Comment 3). It is recommended to reinforce national democratic institutions (PO RE 59), and in particular the judiciary, rather than trying to impose EU values through dialogues, as envisaged by the Rule of Law Framework. Among the tools available to the Commission and the ECJ, the most effective to enforce compliance with rule-of-law values, seems to be the infringement procedure pursuant to Article 258 TFEU (p.45). This recommendation is identical with PO RE 13. It should be mentioned that Validation Report 10.3, in Comment 4 " questions whether the EU has the authority to sanction those countries that do not comply with the recommendation". In any case, more specific know how is provided such as the infringement procedure remains the most effective enforcement mechanism which provides a solution to existing problems. This could entail a combined use of the expedited or accelerated procedure, interim measures (the value-based approach). This approach combined with accelerated procedure

and interim measures could enhance the effectiveness of the infringement procedure and make it the most viable solution in the ongoing 'rule of law crisis (p.28).

The effective participation of lay people in the administration of justice may be a useful way to decrease the efficacy of populist rhetoric depicting courts as elitist institutions (p.46). (PO RE 26).

The possibility of introducing ecentralizedzed quality control for judicial argumentation may be considered in a ecentralized way and the quality indicators should be as objective as possible and clearly formulated (PO RE 27).

For **Deliverable D4.2 Populist attitudes and emotions** we identified the following study finding as potentially relevant for policy-making: *"Our study results confirm the recently established research approach that populism is predominantly correlated with (negative) emotional factors (e.g., Aslanidis, 2018; Fischer et al., 2018; Wirz et al., 2018; Nguyen, 2019), while socio-economic factors have no impact on developing populist attitudes (Rooduijn & Burgoon, 2018)."* (p. 13, PO RE 28). Specifically identified policy recommendations: None

Deliverable D4.4 Cognitive Processes and Populist Arguments; Democratic Efficacy in Schools found that *"anti-bullying programmes in schools building on either empathy or injustice may form the political attitudes of the youth and decrease the populist appeal"* (p. 6, PO RE 30). Another finding of the study is that: *„It seems that provoking the feeling of injustice may also have a positive effect in terms of solidarity with the excluded and a rejection of exclusionary populism."* (p. 61, PO RE 31).

The authors of **Deliverable D7.1 Reactions to Populism: Citizens and Policy Brief Annex** suggest that *„legal authorities and social media platform providers should be held responsible for controlling for and preventing the various forms of hate speech disseminated by populist politicians on these platforms"* (p. 33, PO RE 32). Even more specifically, the study addresses in this recommendation both social media providers and policy makers: *„Social media providers should increase efforts to control for and prevent the spread of harmful messages, and policy should invest in media literacy to mitigate these effects."* (p. 6, PO RE 32 and PO RE 33). This deliverable, in the second part, provides many specific recommendations based on the interviews conducted with project managers of EU-funded projects to tackle populism. These policy recommendations are based on experiences with projects addressing populist narratives. First, projects addressing populist narrative should seek to listen to all citizens and seek to understand all perspectives expressed in order to create the most inclusive, approachable environment (PO RE 50). Second, future projects addressing populist narrative should seek to embrace self-production by participants and introduce more organic, bottom-up processes to empower participants (PO RE 51). (e.g. through involving citizens from the planning and design phases through to the implementation stages, projects' participatory activities can evoke a sense of ownership in participants and increase the likelihood of project sustainability). Lastly (PO RE 52), projects can benefit from thinking outside of the box in relation to the physical environments of their activities (p.39). Considering that "Collective Narcissism" (that refers to a constellation of beliefs about the superiority of one's ingroup so that when other people criticise one's ingroup, ingroup members personally feel insulted), was a significant predictor of populist attitudes in Spain and Poland, while, with minor caveats, Zero-Sum Beliefs (ZSB) emerged as central predictors of populist attitudes, agreement with populist politicians, and intention to vote for a populist party in UK (p.33), one can formulate following PO RE 53: Support education curricula and media reporting so that there is higher tolerance towards external ingroup criticism and broader understanding of win-win situations in social life.

The appendix of the deliverable also includes a chapter on policy implications and recommendations which are concerning the populist rhetoric. Most of them (that were not duplicated) are included below.

Specifically identified policy recommendations: PO RE 34: *"Sufficient and easy-to-access public funding for (innovative) projects addressing populism must be ensured."* (p. 40), PO RE 35: *„Policymakers should become more proactive in using the outcomes of projects addressing populism."* (p. 40), PO RE 36: *„More synergies between different kinds of projects should be enabled to embrace the added value of diverse projects addressing populism."* (p. 40), PO RE 37: *„Civil society actors should establish dedicated channels to facilitate the exchange of expertise between project managers addressing populism."* (p. 40), PO RE 38: *„The established parties should discuss and propose solutions at European level, by reducing the distance – real and perceived – between the elites and the people. This means finding shared and effective solutions in relation to the crisis of migrants, the crisis of sovereign debt, and the economic and social inequality within each country as well as across European Union Member States."* (p. 54), PO RE 39: *„...mainstream politics should be more active in social media and not let populist actors dominate the field of public communication."* (p. 54), PO RE 40: *„The European Commissions should enable further research to develop a revised assessment framework for projects in the field. A more inclusive approach on project outcomes would be helpful to understand better projects' actual impact."* (p. 54).

Deliverable D7.2: Reactions to populism: institutions, first summarised some previous findings in available strategies for the mainstream parties for tackling populist parties: to ignore the populists, confront them directly or accommodate them. The current strategy prevailing in the European Parliament seems to be neither marginalisation nor confrontation of populist voices, but a flexible mix of the two, depending on the circumstances (p. 50). Thus, PO RE 41 can be indentified as *„there is no general recipe for dealing with the challenges posed by populists in the European Parliament or the rise of populist parties in national party systems."* (p.51).

Similarly, and secondly, it was found that there are no national answers to "populist threats" in legal terms (or in constititutional law), which are effective everywhere, every time. (p.54). (PO RE 42). Thirdly, *„a proportional electoral system is the most effective against populist tendencies"* (PO RE 43), p. 54.

Fourthly, "the unpluralistic approach to the party system is more widespread (or at least mentioned more often) than the pluralistic approach" (p.54). Therefore, PO RE 44 is that "democracy must be protected from the "enemies" of democracy (sometimes in ways which could hardly be described as democratic)."

Fifth, the possible measures taken against "populist threat" of extreme majoritarianism include mainly building or supporting strong independent institutions (PO RE 45).

Sixth, *"there are four different ways to exert control over the concept of "unconstitutional constitutional amendment" by populist parties. The concept is relevant as a means against populist constitutional change, when there are no eternity clauses in the Constitution."* (p.55). Therefore, PO RE 46 can be – use the concept of "unconstitutional constitutional amendment", if it is possible.

Seventh, "both political and judicial actions against the restriction of rights are widespread." (p.55). Therefore, PO RE 47 can be stated as to use political and judicial actions against the restriction of rights.

Eight, (PO RE 48) the best practices for legal reactions to anti-constitutionalist tendencies as well as best procedures (in contrast to best legal reactions) for the electoral laws, should follow procedures as set up by the Venice Commission (pp.58-59).

Ninth, (PO RE 49), following the Venice Commission, "the whole constitutional system should be designed to ensure the supremacy of the legislature as a fundamental premise of the rule of law" (p.60).

At the school level, a common theme of importance seems to be "the creation of a safe environment, as well as the development of critical thinking and a culture of debate as well as the importance of teacher autonomy and competence" (p.91), seemed to be of importance (PO RE 54).

Deliverable D8.2: Citizens on countering populism provides three specific recommendations for policymakers based on the opinions of EU citizens. First, *"participatory activities appear to be a valuable way to strengthen democracy"* and even more specifically, *„increased citizen participation in political decision-making could improve the quality of democracy and the quality of decisions by local, national, and EU institutions"* (PO RE 55, p. 4). Second, *„stronger preventive measures are needed to protect minorities from hate speech (online)"* (PO RE 56, p. 4). This includes also „penalising media when they reproduce hate speech and banning people or groups who use hate speech on social media". Third, *„while more restrictive (and legislative) measures should be implemented to stop fake news being spread, journalists should also be allowed to work more independently"* (PO RE 57, p. 4). This is a bit contradictory recommendation – in most countries, there is missing or increasingly blurred definition of a journalist. This recommendation probably reflects that an overwhelming majority of participants stated that they resided in Hungary.

Deliverable D8.3: Tools addressing the populist challenge presents 5 tools that can be used in order to fight fake news and/or educate about populism. One of the interventions tested in Hungary „might provide an example of how it is possible to use family values to motivate people to use their cognitive capacities to spot fake news and to be vigilant for real news in a political context which is much less clear than in the Western-European or American ones" (p. 51). The results of the intervention can be interpreted as PO RE 58: „Opening the door towards intergenerational discussions can make both the younger and the older people more competent in recognising fake news" (p. 48-49). There also is an implicit policy recommendation „to restore the balance between opposing groups in a community, improve perspective taking for the view of an opposing group (p.84) which can be seen as in line with PO RE 50 and 51.

In general, this deliverable provides examples of tools that can help in achieving the objectives of recommendations PO RE 53 and 54 without any specifically identifiable recommendations for policymakers. Part 3, however, includes recommendations for individual citizens and teachers on what to do for a better democracy (p. 80-81).

Deliverable D8.1 **Deliberation and populism. Report on the effectiveness of deliberative techniques in fighting populist arguments,** has brought confusing or contradictory results of exploratory type. It looks like that only the most open-minded would change their opinion in a debate, providing that there is a high level of proper argumentation present.

Table 9: Assessment of Policy Recommendations

DEMOS Project

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova-tive/ Novel
PO RE 1	Implicitly, both EU and M.S.	Higher employment among younger generation	High	Yes	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 2	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	Avoiding technocratic crisis management	Low	Yes	No	No	V	No
PO RE 3	Democratic political forces	Political consensus	Medium	Yes	No	No	V	No
PO RE 4	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	Country-specific policies	Medium	Yes?	Yes, implicitly	Yes	A	No
PO RE 5	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	Lower level of poverty and social exclusion	High	Yes	Not specified	Yes	V	No
PO RE 6	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	To achieve full democratic values simultaneously with high optimism level	High	Yes	No	Yes	V	Yes?
PO RE 7	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	Resolving crisis as soon as possible, ideally at onset	Medium	Yes	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 8	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	Lower Policy focus on alternative media	High	Yes	No	Yes	A	Yes
PO RE 9	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	In-depth study of populists´ manifestos	High	Yes	No	Yes	A	Yes?
PO RE 10	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	Distruption of echo chambers both offline and online.	Low	Yes	No (but it is logical that there should be different approaches used	Yes	V	No
PO RE 11	NGOs?	Active resistance by marginalised groups	High	Limited	Yes	Yes	A	No
PO RE 12	Implicitly, E.U. M.S.	To incorporate populists in governments, or let them govern	Medium	Limited	No	Yes	A	No
PO RE 13	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	Focus on the rule of law	High	Limited	No	Yes	A	No
PO RE 14	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	Open and inclusive policy process	High-Low	Yes	No	Yes	A	No
PO RE 15	Political parties, media	To limit polarising, polemical and acutely confrontational speech	Mediu-Low	Yes	No	Yes	V	No

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova-tive/ Novel
PO RE 16	Politicians, political parties	Formulate policy messages in a more citizen-oriented manner	Mediu-Low	Yes	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 17	?	To support professional media outlets.	High	Limited	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 18	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	To strengthen fact-checking initiatives and platforms	High	Limited	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 19	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	To invest in supporting independent local journalism initiatives	High	Limited	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 20	EU M.S.	To involve a plurality of institutional actors in the appointment of judges and administrative authorities.	High-Low	Limited	No	Yes	A	No
PO RE 21	EU M.S.	Enhancing the rigidity of the constitution	High-Low	?	Yes?	Yes	A	No
PO RE 22	EU M.S?	The constitutional court's competences should be clearly defined	High	?	No	Ye	V?	No
PO RE 23	EU M.S?	Constitutional Courts should seek to establish more firmly their legitimacy	High-Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	No
PO RE 24	EU M.S?	To have an explicit power of reviewing the constitutionality of constitutional amendments, at least with regard to the procedures followed for constitutional revision	Medium	Yes	No	yes (not for non-lawyers)	A	No
PO RE 25	Implicitly, both EU and selected M.S	To strenghten representative roles of parliaments	High-Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	No
PO RE 26	EU M.S?	Lay people sit together with professional judges	High-low	Limited	Yes	yes	A	No
PO RE 27	EU M.S?	Institutionalised quality control for judicial argumentation	Medium	Limited	No	yes	A	No

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova-tive/ Novel
PO RE 28	Research community	One should re-think the concept of "media populism"	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	Y
PO RE 29	Politicians, research community	Negative emotional factors impact developing populist attitudes	Low	Yes	No	Yes	V	No
PO RE 30	Mainly M.S.	Anti-bullying programmes in schools may form the political attitudes of the youth and decrease the populist appeal	High	Yes	No	Yes	A	Y
PO RE 31	Implicitly, both EU and M.S	Provoking the feeling of injustice may have a positive effect on rejection of exclusionary populism	Low	Yes	No	Yes	V	Y
PO RE 32	Social media providers, legal authorities	Prevent the spread of harmful messages/hate speech	Medium	Yes	No	Yes	V	N
PO RE 33	Implicitly both EU and M.S. Policy makers	Invest in media literacy to mitigate the effects of social media	High	Limited	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 34	Both EU and M.S.	Sufficient and easy-to-access public funding for projects addressing populism	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 35	EU Parliament, Policymakers	To be more proactive in using the outcomes of projects addressing populism	Medium	Yes	No	Yes	V	Y
PO RE 36	Both EU and M.S.	Synergies between projects to embrace the added value of projects addressing populism	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 37	Civil society, EU institutions	Establish dedicated channels to facilitate the exchange of expertise between project managers addressing populism	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	Y
PO RE 38	Political parties	Solutions at EU level, by reducing the distance	Medium	Limited	Yes	Yes	A	N

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova-tive/ Novel
PO RE 39	Mainstream political parties	More politicians active on social media	High	Limited	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 40	EU	Further research to develop a revised assessment framework for projects in the field	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	Y
PO RE 41	Both EU and M.S. (political parties)	There is no general recipe for dealing with the challenges posed by populists in the European Parliament or the rise of populist parties in national party systems,	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 42	Both EU and M.S. (legal system)	There are no national answers to "populist threats" in legal terms (or in constitutional law), which are effective everywhere, every time.	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 43	Both EU and M.S. (electoral system)	A proportional electoral system is the most effective against populist tendencies	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 44	Both EU and M.S.	Democracy must be protected from the "enemies" of democracy (later questioned approach)	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 45	Both EU and M.S.	Building or supporting strong independent institutions	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 46	Both EU and M.S. (constitutional law)	Use the concept of "unconstitutional constitutional amendment", if it is possible.	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 47	Both EU and M.S. (judiciary and political sphere)	Use political and judicial actions against the restriction of rights.	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova-tive/ Novel
PO RE 48	Both EU and M.S. (constitutional and electoral law)	The best practices for legal reactions to anti-constitutionalist tendencies as well as the best principles for electoral law should follow procedures as set up by the Venice Commission.	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 49	Both EU and M.S.	The whole constitutional system should be designed to ensure the supremacy of the legislature as a fundamental premise of the rule of law.	Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 50	European Commission?	Listening to everyone – adopting an inclusive approach;	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 51	European Commission?	Ensuring meaningful participation	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N?
PO RE 52	European Commission?	Enabling the project in alternative environments	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N?
PO RE 53	M.S. (education)	Support education curricula and media reporting so that there is higher tolerance towards external ingroup criticism and broader understanding of win-win situations in social life.	High-Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 54	M.S. (education)	The creation of a safe environment, as well as the development of critical thinking and a culture of debate as well as the importance of teacher autonomy and competence"	High-Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 55	Both EU and M.S.	Participatory activities strengthen democracy	High-Medium	Yes	No	Yes	V	N

	The Target	The objective	Political Feasibility	Focused + Research Evidence	Different approaches	Clear, readable and simple language?	Actionable or rather vague?	Innova- tive/ Novel
PO RE 56	Implicitly both EU and M.S.	Preventive measures to protect minorities from hate speech	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	N
PO RE 57	Implicitly both EU and M.S.	More restrictive measures to stop fake news and also more independence for journalists	High	Yes	No	Yes	V	N
PO RE 58	Educators on both the M.S. and EU level	Intergenerational discussions make people more competent in recognizing fake news	High	Yes	Yes	Yes	A	Y
PO RE 59	the EU and selected M.S.	To reinforce national democratic institutions	High-Low	Yes	Yes	Yes	V	N
PO RE 60	Research Funding Agencies	Supporting in-depth (focused) research on a single topic or a few single topics instead of supporting too ambitious research The latter approach should be seen as exploratory research.	High	yes	Yes	Yes	A	N

4. Final List of Policy Recommendations

Our pre-selection allows us to draft the best policy recommendations in a form of policy briefs. Ideally, there can be selected those policy recommendations that are **a) novel/innovative** as well as those that **b) support already known relevant policy recommendations regardless whether they are innovative or not.** This should be a subject of further debate (e.g. the authors of tentative recommendations should check of whether the summary of their policy recommendations is correct, and whether the suggested categorisation is accurate). For example, some policy recommendations were based on a rather specific sample (e.g. majority of participants in a pan-European survey were actually from a single country), or there were suggested corrections or changes in the Validation Report 10.3. In another case, the key finding was actually omitted from draft policy brief. We consulted some of these tentative suggestions and issues with the authors.

It should be mentioned that possibly some key deliverables were not available when finalising this report (e.g. **Task 9.1 Summarising research on populism and democratic efficacy,** Task 9.2 Foresights and scenarios on the consequences of populism in Europe and Task D10.3 Validation Report (Final or the Third Period).

The final decision about which policy recommendations should be selected for dissemination should be done either collectively (e.g. using the Delphi method), or by the coordinator´s staff. It is a challenge as the assessment criteria explained in the Table 1 suggest, and the results as presented in Tables 7, 8 and 9 confirm. There are very few original policy recommendations. Moreover, some original policy recommendations are rather vague.

Obviously, it is not the best approach to disseminate a score of policy recommendations.

In any case, there should be considered already existing policy recommendations from other projects (Tables 7 and 8).

Moreover, those "selected among selected" policy recommendations, **should be co-written with (or supervised by) the authors of those original tentative policy recommendations**. We have already provided some critical feedback on the first three available tentative policy recommendations briefs.

The dissemination strategy should also be specifically adjusted, as indicated in the Table 9. In most cases, it was not clearly stated who is addressee of these policy recommendations, so we made our own suggestions. Dissemination also depends on availability of specific mailing lists within WP11.

This report, and innovative approach to policy-making within research and innovation projects, is in line with a call for innovativeness on which Horizon Europe research and innovation actions should be based.

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