

Communication Strategies and the Rise of Populist Discourse during the European Parliament Elections of May 2019

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Abstract: *The aim of this paper is to highlight communication strategies used in populist politicians' discourse during the campaign for the European elections in May 2019. The methods of research include primary source analysis (political statements and interviews), secondary source analysis (political theory related to populism) and the comparative study of different instances of populist discourse across the European political environment. Although there is no universally acknowledged definition of populism, this political phenomenon has affected European politics to a large extent in the recent years. Right-wing political parties throughout Europe have taken advantage of populist communication strategies in order to attract the support of the voters by exploiting sensitive topics such as the refugee crisis, financial disaster (in the case of Greece), migration and workforce, Brexit, and terrorist attacks in combination with a certain dose of anti-European rhetoric. Many political commentators have noticed that, given the constant rise of support for populism in recent years, this type of approach could destabilize the European Union as populist parties might have gained legitimacy and might have become important political actors in the European political milieu after the elections.*

Keywords: *populism, European elections, May 2019, communication strategies, crises*