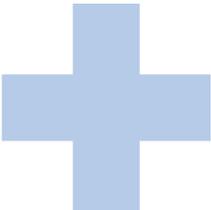


Populists at elections

Main goals

1. Why are populist political parties successful?
2. In search of the populist voter.

Supply
side



Demand
side



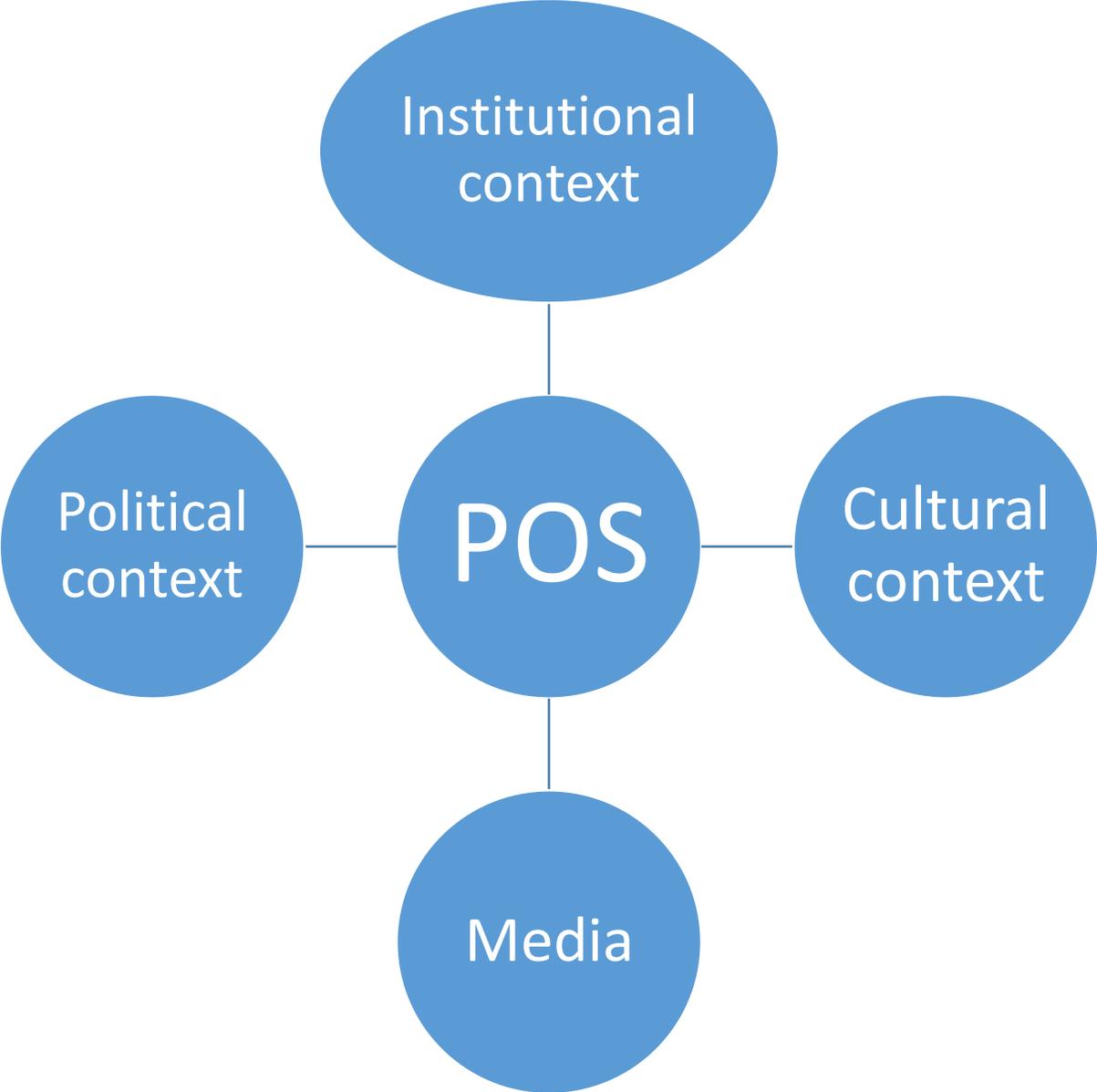
Electoral
success

External and internal supply side

External supply side

= political opportunity structures: „consistent, but not necessarily formal or permanent, dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success and failure“ (Tarrow 1988)

- Study of social movements
- „Translation“ into party politics language

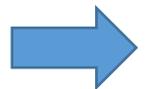


Institutional context

- Different political systems, different opportunities and limitations for the rise of populist parties (general applicability)
- Electoral system – plurality/majority systems vs PR
 - Specific effect of two-round majority system on „pariah parties“
 - Lack of a clear evidence about the effects of electoral systems
- Party law
- Federalism – based on the SOE theory
- Corporativism
 - Lack of evidence
- Conclusion: an opportunity rather than a persuasive explanation

Political context

- Context of party politics – relationship with and among other parties
- Level of volatility – both supply and demand sides
- Neglecting of new political issues (corruption, transparency, host ideology related issues)
- Convergence in political space (e.g. NPD and *Grosscoalition*)
 - Ignazi – a two step process: convergence after polarization



Creation of niches in the political space

- Copying populist issues – legitimization of populist parties + question of issue ownership (Le Pen – „voters prefer original over the copy“), issue salience

Cultural context

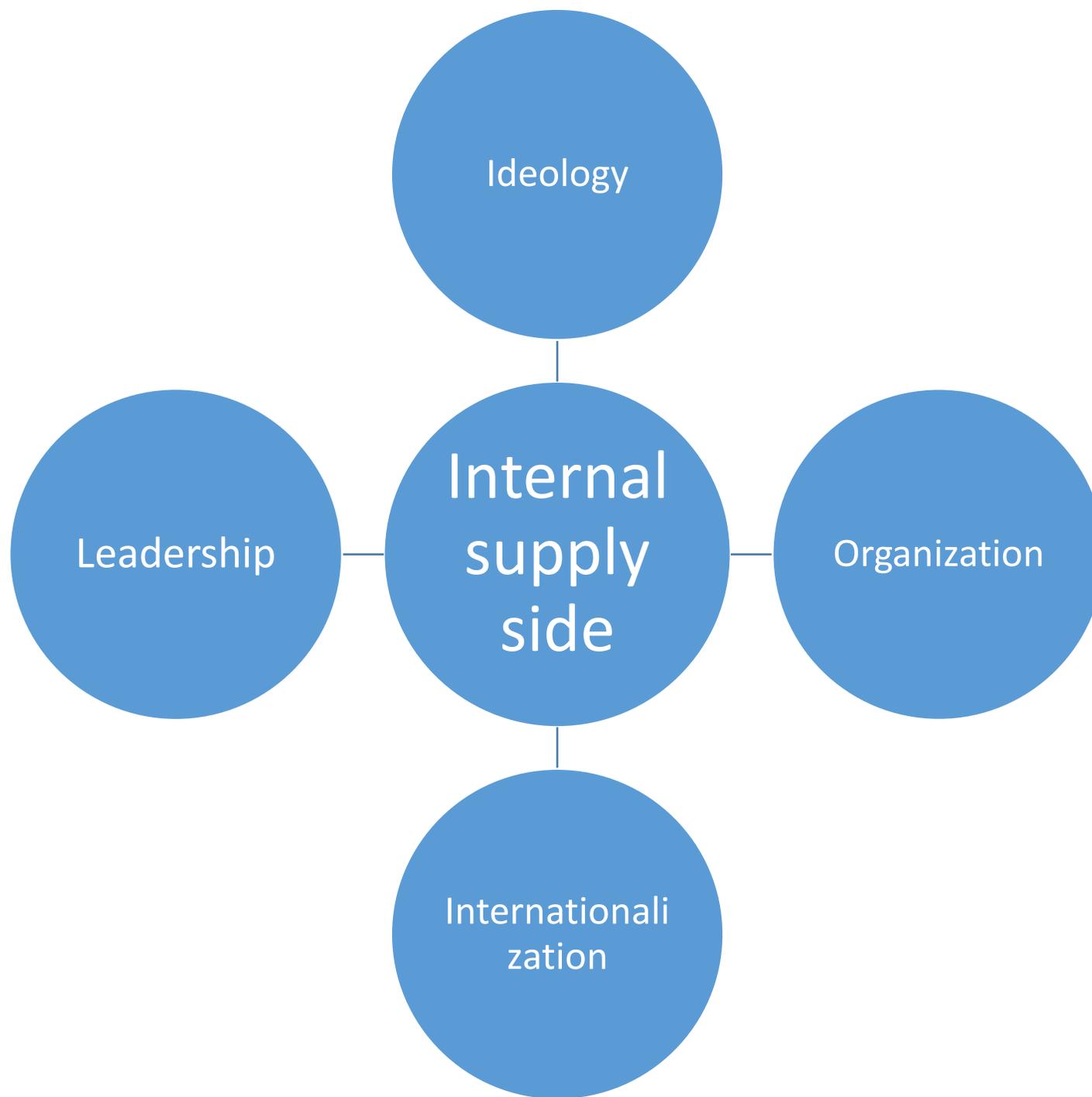
- Specific characteristics across nations
- Intellectual background (*nouvelle droit* in France, anti-partyism in the Czech Republic)
- Ideational scheme as a part of the culture
- Issue salience, organizational resources
- An atmosphere hostile to specific ideas (post-Frankist Spain, left-wing ideology in CEE)
- Ambivalent effect of stigmatization

Media

- Agenda setters
- Language of (some) media – tabloids
- Media attention
- The prominent effects:
- Issue salience
- Solutions close to populist agenda

- Populist owners of the media (Italy, Slovakia, the Czech Republic)
- Specifics of populim?

Internal supply side



Ideology

- Flexibility of populism (lecture about definition(s) of populism) as an advantage of populist parties
- Combination of the populist core and a host ideology (salience of the two components)
- Strongly related to issue salience (external supply side)
- The winning formula (Kitschelt) or the winning formulae?

Leadership

- Important roles of leaders for the success of political parties (dealignment, personalization, celebritization of politics)
- External and internal
- Charismatic leaders - ambiguity of the term charisma
- Polarizing force of strong/controversial leaders (Le Pen, Babiš, Berlusconi)
- Back to the definition – is a strong/charismatic leader specific to populist parties?
- Leaders as an oppositum of technocratic structures of (established) parties; leaders as personalization of salvation

Organization

- Crucial role for functioning of a political party – breakthrough or persistence?
- Is there a something special about populist parties` organization?
 - Few members
 - Movement-like parties (X FN, Dawn, ANO, OĽaNO)
- Electorally successful with very weak organization (PVV, Dawn)
- Fractionalization – electoral persistence (FrP[DK] X FN)
- Membership and local strongholds – persistence of populist parties
- Weak organization – challenge for populist parties in government

Internationalization

- Cross-border cooperation
- European parties + other transnational forms of cooperation
- A way of legitimization of a party, socialization
- No populist European party/transnational organization
- Important role of the host ideology – RRP cooperation, left-wing parties, liberal parties (centrist populism)
- Role model parties (populist spillover) – FN, Scandinavia

Internal supply side - conclusion

- The role of populist parties as agents
- Determinant of credibility of a party
- Weak/incompetent leadership, factionalization, no international contacts, lack of ideology – low credibility of a party
- Important „input“ of electoral success

Demand side – is there a populist voter?

- Rich literature dealing with voting behaviour (Pauwels 2015):
 - The sociological approach
 - The socio-psychological model
 - The economic model of voting
 - Retrospective voting
 - Issue voting
 - Campaign effects

The sociological approach

- **The Columbia school** (1940s) – *The People`s Choice*
- Social determinism – how does social environment influence voting behaviour?
- High correlation of social variables and vote choice
- **Cleavage theory** – Rokkan, Lipset
- Transposition of the existing social conflicts into politics (state – church, centre – periphery, urban – rural, class)
- „defreezing“ of the European party systems from the 1960s

The social psychological model

- Party identification as the crucial variable
- Related to social characteristics and other variables (issue opinions, candidate images) – funnel of causality
- Party identification as a cue for political decisions
- Overall decline of party identification

Economic model of voting

- Closely related to rational choice theory
- Maximization of utility as the main theoretical assumption
- Voters seeking as much information as possible – „perfectly informed voter“
- Proximity model – voting the political party with closest policy positions

Other approaches

- Declining predictability of voting behaviour
- **Retrospective voting** – evaluation of government performance
- **Issue voting** – reaction to decreasing power of social-structural models
 - Voters choose parties in accordance with their competency to solve the most important issues
- **Candidates/leaders effects** – personalization of politics

Theory and populist voting

- Social structural model vis-a-vis the process of realignment
- Economic model – policy positioning/proximity
- Issue voting
- Party identification (a different approach from the Michigan school)

- Strongly linked to supply side (ideology, organizational structure)
- Problems – chameleonic nature of populism (host ideology matters), survey based research X lack of comparable data (case studies, small N comparative studies)

Social structural models – modernization thesis

- Support for RRP among so-called losers of modernization
- Based on negative perception of social transformation processes
- Social breakdown and deprivation thesis – from industrial to postindustrial society; individualization + erosion of collective identities
- New skills needed to cope with modern society (flexibility, entrepreneurship)
- Demand for RRP:
 - return to traditional values
 - protest vote against incompetent established parties
 - dealignment and increasing importance of new issues (e.g. immigration)
- Results: less educated, unemployed, less qualified male workers supporting RRP (Bezt, Luebbers, Ivarsflaten...)

Economic voting, issue voting

- A comparative study of Netherlands, Germany and Belgium (Pauwels)
- Including protest voting, economic, issue voting
- Dissatisfaction with democracy explaining voting for all populist parties regardless their host ideology (confirmed also by Hawkins /2010/ - Chavez in Venezuela)
- support for direct democracy as underlying factor of support of the populist parties
- Less-educated voted for populist parties (exception of SP and PDS), confirmed in Venezuela and Kriesi (2008) – losers of globalization
- Issue voting confirmed

Leadership effects

Van der Brug, Mughan (2007)

- Testing the effects of charisma on electoral support of political parties (populist X others)
- Control for socio-demographic variables and issue voting
- Not significantly different impact of leaders on populist voting

Conclusion

- Chameleonic nature of populism
- Number of explanatory factors – a complex explanation
- Demand and supply side
- Host ideology matters