

Abstract

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Kosovo's path towards the EU and Populism in 2017 General Election

Populism is increasingly widespread in the European Union countries, part of which aims to become Kosovo as well. Populist style exists in Kosovo politics, but no previous work measures its spread in this country. Kosovo politicians constantly repeat the EU membership goal, but at the same time, they have a populist style. This paper uses content analysis to examine speeches of the three prime minister candidates during the election campaign in Kosovo in June 2017, looking at the prism of population development and putting them in relation to the declarations for the goals of European integration. The speeches of the three prime minister candidates from the three largest political coalitions in these elections were analyzed to measure populism on two levels - as a thin-centered political ideology and as a political communication style. The measurement will be initially encoded with words containing populist style and then compared with the words used by these prime minister candidates for their positions concerning the EU integrations. Earlier research on the populism in the European Union countries has shown an increase of this phenomenon, while this paper aims to reflect the possible spread

of the populism in Kosovo as a country targeting EU membership. The election campaign lasted ten days. All three candidates held more than one rally a day, while our study included speeches in the seven major cities. The results of this study indicate that populism was present in 2017 General Election on both examined levels, as an ideology and as a communication style.