



**ECPS**  
EUROPEAN CENTER for  
POPULISM STUDIES

## Call for Papers

ECPS Fourth Annual International Symposium

### *Civilizational Populism: National and International Challenges*

Date/Location: May 21-23, 2025 / Warsaw, Poland

### Organizers

Prof. Jocelyn Cesari  
Prof. Ihsan Yilmaz  
Prof. Ibrahim Ozturk  
Dr. Ana-Maria Bliuc

### Partner Institutions

European Center for Populism Studies (ECPS) (Brussels)  
Georgetown University (Washington DC)  
University of Birmingham (Birmingham)  
Deakin University (Melbourne)  
Centre for International Relations (Warsaw)



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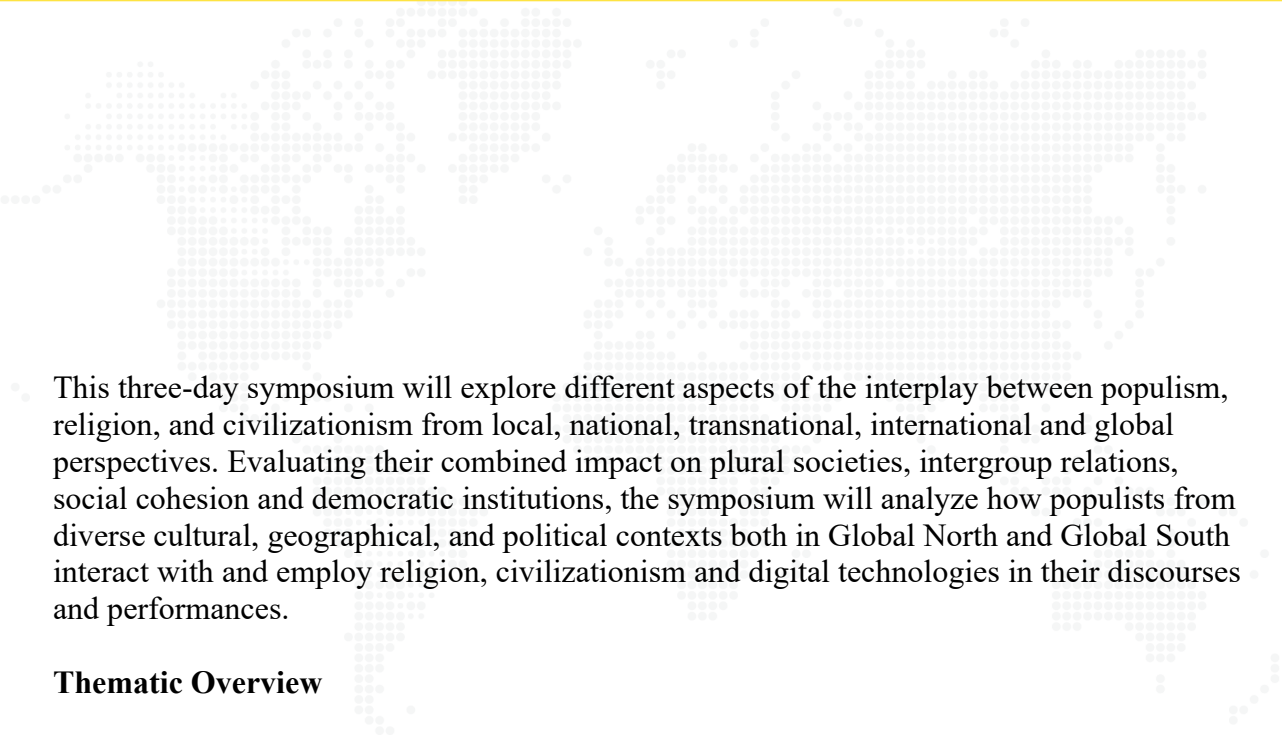
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This three-day symposium will explore different aspects of the interplay between populism, religion, and civilizationism from local, national, transnational, international and global perspectives. Evaluating their combined impact on plural societies, intergroup relations, social cohesion and democratic institutions, the symposium will analyze how populists from diverse cultural, geographical, and political contexts both in Global North and Global South interact with and employ religion, civilizationism and digital technologies in their discourses and performances.

### **Thematic Overview**

Populism has emerged as a defining feature of contemporary politics, exerting profound local, national, international, and global influences. Increasingly, it has become part and parcel of states' transnational activities in constructing and reaching out to their "peoples" outside of their nation-state boundaries. The rise of digital technologies and the rapid advances in AI applications have only intensified the impact of populism, locally, transnationally and globally.

Often characterized as a "thin ideology," populism operates alongside core/thick ideologies such as socialism, neoliberalism, racism, or religion, serving as a potent force for impacting emotions, mobilizing the masses, shaping public opinion and securing (or seizing) political power. Within this context, civilization —in some cases — serves as a metanarrative through which populists emphasize distinctions and escalate antagonistic relations among 'the people' and 'others,' usually along religious lines. Civilizational populism not only employs the traditional 'us' versus 'them' rhetoric but also accentuates cultural, civilizational and religious identities, intensifying conflicts within, beyond and between nations. Civilizational populist discourses have also initiated discussions on transnationalism, south-south cooperation, globalization, and multipolarity, thereby potentially influencing international relations. In this new and rapidly changing context dominated by uncertainty on many levels, the symposium will focus on the complexity of populism not only from different disciplinary perspectives but also across multiple political, religious, and cultural groups beyond the North/South divide. The symposium also aims to provoke discussions on innovative ways to think about the policy implications of this complex phenomenon in cyberspace. We welcome paper proposals from scholars, media experts, civil society actors and policymakers to contribute to this critically significant dialogue.

#### ***Themes include but are not limited to:***

- Civilizational populism in the Global South and the Global North (proposals about situations in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Indo-Pacific and Southeast Asia are particularly welcome).



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- Digital technologies, including the use of AI, and civilizational populism (e.g., new opportunities to communicate and politically mobilize and the implications for the future of civilizational populism).
- Local, national and transnational dynamics of civilizational populism and their policy implications.
- Impact of civilizational populism on intergroup emotions of different ethnoreligious and political groups in societies, social cohesion and civility.
- The impact of civilizational populism in contexts of acute intergroup conflict, including political violence and war.
- Authoritarianism, authoritarian state and non-state actors and their modes of promotion of civilizational populism.
- Foreign policy, inter-state relations and civilizational populism.
- Neo liberalism, market and civilizational populism.

### **Target Audience**

Policymakers, academics, researchers, civil society organizations, and practitioners in political science, sociology, international relations, and public policy

### **Expected Outcomes**

- Nuanced and enhanced comprehension of civilizational populism.
- Identification of best practices and policy recommendations for addressing its complex challenges.
- Shaping a new research agenda in response to rapid and drastic changes in society and digital technologies, opportunities for networking and collaboration.
- Publication of selected papers and proceedings to disseminate insights and findings.

### **Format**

Keynote speeches.

Roundtable discussions.

Paper presentations.

### **Key Dates**

- Abstract Submission Deadline: 30 September 2024.
- Notification of Acceptance: 15 October 2024.
- Paper Draft and PowerPoint Presentation Submission: 15 April 2025.
- Symposium Dates: 21-23 May 2025.



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## **Submission Guidelines**

- Abstract (600-800 words) and bio submissions (300-400 words) are invited to explore the symposium's themes.
- Submissions should include a clear methodology, theoretical framework, argument and potential contributions to the existing scholarship on populism.
- Please indicate the relevance of your research to the symposium themes and its overall focus.
- Add a few keywords to your abstract.

## **Contact Information**

For inquiries and submissions, please contact the Symposium Coordinator Prof. Ibrahim Ozturk at [iozturk@populismstudies.org](mailto:iozturk@populismstudies.org)

We look forward to your contributions and the vibrant discussions ahead.

Sincerely,  
Symposium Organizers  
Prof. Jocelyn Cesari  
Prof. Ihsan Yilmaz  
Prof. Ibrahim Ozturk  
Dr. Ana-Maria Bliuc