

# How can mainstream parties best fight populism? Drawing lessons for Germany by pooling expertise

## *Workshop Programme*

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**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**LOCATION:** Kiel Institute for the World Economy, Kiel-CEPR Research Hub,  
Chausseestrasse 111, 10115 Berlin

**ORGANIZERS:** Jacob Edenhofer, Thiemo Fetzer and Moritz Schularick

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### Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April

**14:30 – 15:40**

#### **Session I: Institutional and legal responses**

14:30-14:50

##### **Welcome**

Thiemo Fetzer, Professor of Economics, Universities of Warwick & Bonn, and CEPR  
Moritz Schularick, President, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, and CEPR

14:50-15:40

##### ***Panel and plenary discussion: Putting defensive democracy into practice***

*Defensive democracy* is part of Germany's constitutional DNA, as it were. Yet, as recent debates about legal strategies for reigning in the AfD show, putting this principle into practice is anything but straightforward. Aside from the principle's fuzzy legal scope, applying it in practice raises vexingly difficult strategic questions. Even if it is legal to ban the AfD, is it wise to do so? Similarly, do we risk an ultimately corrosive backlash by restricting the fundamental rights of those functionaries who openly trample on the rights of others or proclaim that they intend to do so? This panel aims to explore some of these questions and serve as a launching pad for the subsequent open discussion. To examine these questions, a nuanced understanding of the specific strategies that far-right parties employ is necessary.

Panelist 1: Sebastian Pittelkow (NDR)

Panelist 2: Justus von Daniels (Correctiv)

Moderator: Franziska Klemenz (Table.Media)

15:40-16:10

##### **Coffee Break**

- 16:10 – 17:30**      **Session II: How to deal with populists during electoral campaigns, when they are in opposition, and when they are in power?**
- 16:10-16:30      **Heike Klüver (Humboldt University Berlin)**  
*How to break populist parties' appeal? An experimental evaluation of mainstream parties' counter-strategies (based on joint work with Violetta Haas, Lukas Stoetzer, and Petra Schleiter)*
- 16:30-16:50      **Vicente Valentim (University of Oxford)**  
*How Mainstream Politicians Erode Norms (joint with Elias Dinas and Daniel Ziblatt)*
- 16:50-17:10      **Christoph Trebesch (Kiel Institute for the World Economy, CEPR)**  
*The Populist Playbook: What Populist Leaders Do in Power (joint with Manuel Funke)*
- 17:10-17:30      **Open Discussion**
- 18:30-20:30      **Dinner (by invitation)**

### Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> April

- 09:00 – 10:50**      **Session III: Programmatic responses – Opportunities and constraints**
- 09:00-09:30      **Online keynote and Q&A: Karin Prien, Minister of Education, Science, Research and Culture of the Land Schleswig-Holstein, Deputy State Chairwoman of the CDU Schleswig-Holstein**
- 09:30-09:50      **Tommaso Nannicini (The Florence School of Transnational Governance, EUI, CEPR)**  
*Fighting Populism on Its Own Turf (joint with Vincenzo Galasso, Massimo Morelli, and Piero Stanig)*
- 09:50-10:10      **Werner Krause (University of Potsdam)**  
*Does Accommodation Work? Mainstream Party Strategies and the Success of Radical Right Parties (joint with Denis Cohen and Tarik Abou-Chadi)*
- 10:10-10:30      **Laurenz Günther (Bocconi University)**  
*Political Representation Gaps and Populism*
- 10:30-10:50      **Open Discussion**
- 10:50-11:20      **Coffee Break**

**11:20 – 12:40**

**Session IV: Towards anti-populist and future-proof policy platforms**

11:20-12:00

**Keynote: Catherine de Vries, Generali Endowed Chair in European Policies, Professor of Political Science, Bocconi University**  
*Fighting far-right political entrepreneurs*

12:00-12:40

**Panel: How to stop dancing to the far right's tune – programmatically and rhetorically?**

Rhetorical and programmatic accommodation by mainstream parties to far-right challengers is unsuccessful, as a growing body of work shows. Despite that, accommodation has been the "go-to" strategy for mainstream parties across Europe. This panel will examine (i) why mainstream parties have so readily pursued an unsuccessful strategy, and (ii) what policies or other means would help mainstream parties to steer clear of accommodation in the future.

Panelist 1: Catherine De Vries (Bocconi University)

Panelist 2: Mark Schieritz (Zeit)

Panelist 3: Paulina Fröhlich (Progressives Zentrum)

Moderator: Moritz Schularick (Kiel Institute, CEPR)

12:40-13:10

**Lunch Break**

**13:10 – 14:30**

**Session V: Policy responses – Opportunities and constraints**

13:10-13:30

**Théo Konc (Technical University of Berlin, University of Wageningen), Jacob Edenhofer (University of Oxford)**  
*Explaining support for the AfD in hard times: Energy prices, climate policy, and the challenge of far-right populism (joint with Jan Steckel, Jens Ewald, Thomas Sterner)*

13:30-13:50

**Evelyne Hübscher (Central European University)**  
*Does Austerity Cause Polarization? (joint with Thomas Sattler and Markus Wagner)*

13:50-14:10

**Robert Gold (Kiel Institute for the World Economy)**  
*Paying Off Populism. How Regional Policy Affects Voting Behavior (joint with Jakob Lehr)*

14:10-14:30

**Open Discussion**