

Fighting Back: Liberal Democratic Responses to the Populist Challenge

Keynote speaker: Cas Mudde

A joint public debate of CEU Center for European Neighborhood Studies, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Policy Solutions and Political Capital

Date: June 8, 2017, 17:00-19:30

Venue: Central European University (Nádor Str. 15, 1051 Budapest – Auditorium A)

Language: English and Hungarian (with continuous interpretation)

European and American electorates are growing more receptive to exclusionary populism and the explicit rejection of the values of liberal democracy at the heart of the current anti-establishment backlash. Even though Emmanuel Macron has won the French presidential elections, Marine Le Pen's performance shows that populism remains a potent electoral force in Europe. Hungarian and Polish governments are the most illustrative examples of this flourishing phenomenon. Since the previous strategies of mainstream political elites to overcome the threat posed by populism are not enough anymore, we would like to focus on the following points:

- How should democratic forces create credible and attractive political alternatives without adopting populist rhetoric?
- How should democratic forces reframe crucial debates about difficult topics like identity, culture and migration in order to weaken increasingly nationalistic, xenophobic and authoritarian tendencies?
- How to strengthen arguments in favour of pluralism and democratic values against growing social demand for non-establishment new politics?
- Which policy solutions should be offered by democratic forces that resonate with their electorates and address grievances that are driving them towards populist?
- How could political systems (EU, US) deal with the phenomenon of nativist populism?

16:30-17:00 **Registration**

17:00-17:10 **Opening remarks**

17:10-17:30 **Keynote speech**

Cas Mudde, Associate Professor, School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA), University of Georgia, USA; Researcher, Center for Research on Extremism (C-REX), University of Oslo, Norway; Co-editor European Journal of Political Research

17:30-18:00 **Comments**

Krisztina Arató, Associate Professor, Deputy Director of the Institute of Political Sciences, ELTE ÁJK

András Bozóki, Professor, Central European University

18:00-18:40 **Round table discussion**

Chair: **Jan Niklas Engels**, Head of office, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Budapest

18:40-19:00 **Questions & Answers**

19:00-19:10 **Concluding remarks**

Péter Balázs, Director, CEU Center for European Neighborhood Studies

19:10-19:30 **Reception**