

Populism

Political Science

What the term describes analytically, beyond its use as an insult.

Features and debates.

Common features

A homogeneous people against a corrupt elite

Claim to embody the popular will directly

Hostility to intermediating institutions

Can appear on left or right

Anti-pluralist in its strong forms

Debated causes

Economic insecurity and regional decline

Cultural and demographic change

Declining trust in institutions

Party system failure to represent

Educational reference. The economic and cultural explanations are not exclusive, and the balance differs by country.