



# **Is More Europe or Less Europe the Response to Populism?**

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## Outline

1. *What is populism?*
2. *Evidence for growing populism*
3. *The roots of populism*
4. *Populism and Europe: a conceptual framework*
5. *Way forward*

# 1. WHAT IS POPULISM?

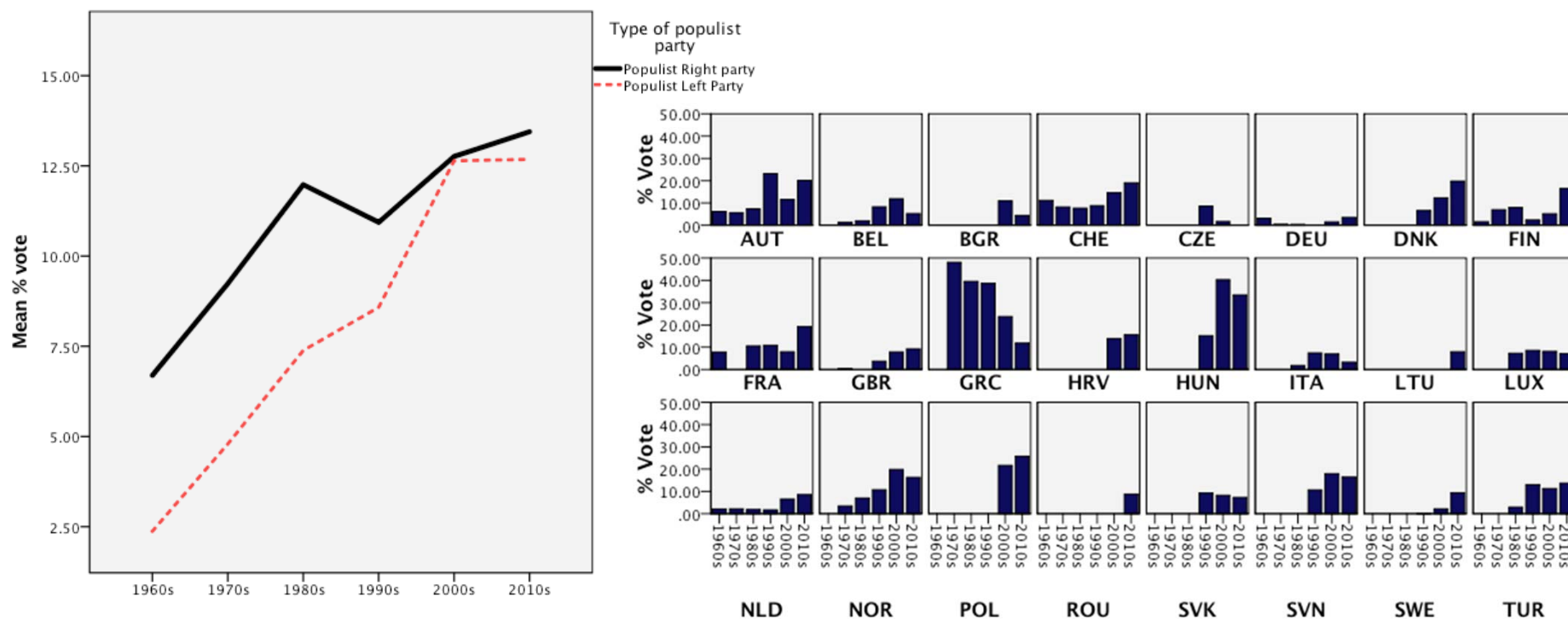


## A working definition

- Political programme or movement championing the "little man", usually by favourable contrast with a "corrupted" elite (*anti-establishment*)
- Populists are anti-pluralist by claiming to have the exclusive legitimacy to popular representation (*anti-pluralism*)
- Belief that political and social goals are best achieved by the direct actions of the masses (*anti-representativeness*).

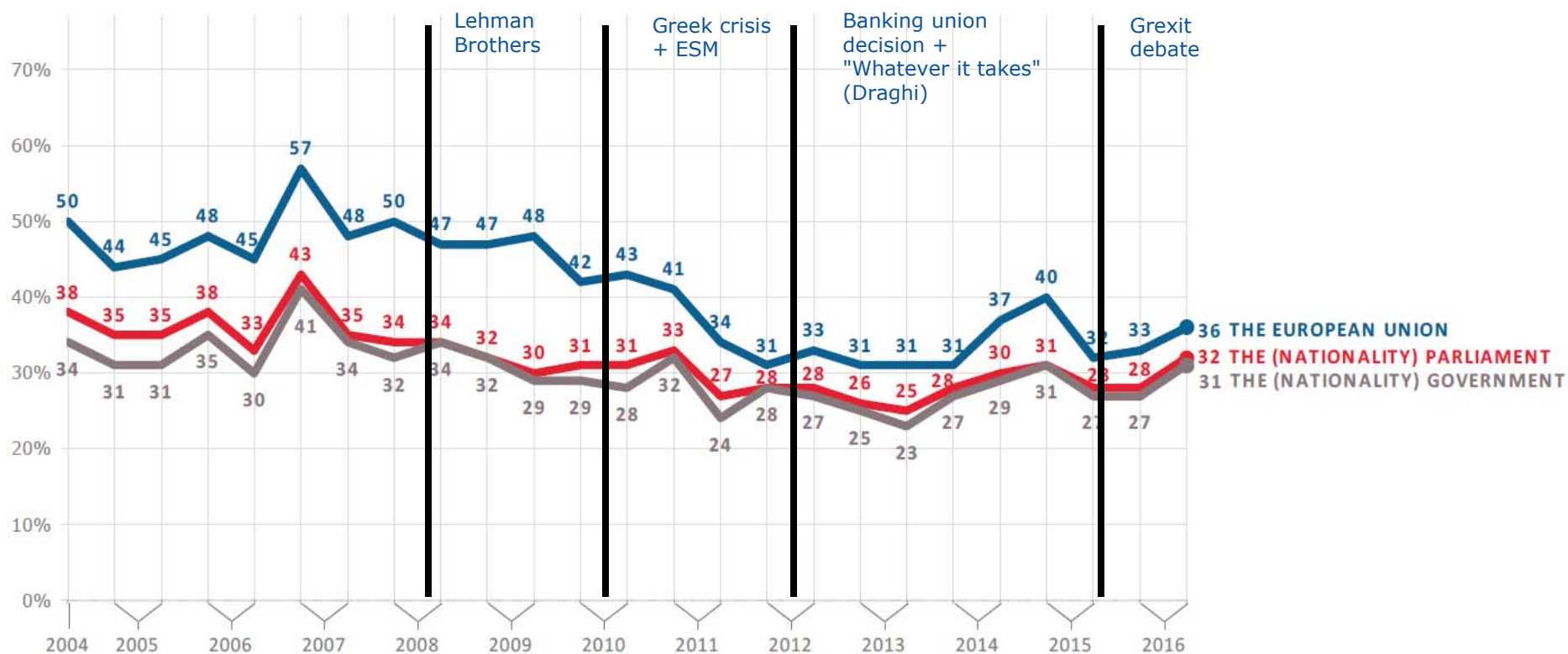
## 2. EVIDENCE FOR GROWING POPULISM

# Populist parties in European societies on the rise in national elections



Copied from: Inglehart, Ronald, and Pippa Norris. "Trump, Brexit, and the rise of Populism: Economic have-nots and cultural backlash." (2016), p.37

# Trust in Europe vs. national institutions



# 3. THE ROOTS OF POPULISM





## Two perspectives

### Economic insecurity perspective

- Rising **income and wealth inequality** as well as **economic insecurity** among left-behinds fuels popular resentment of the political elites

**youngsters** having lost hope, low-waged unskilled **workers**, long-term **unemployed**, households dependent on **shrinking social benefits** turn against neoliberal elites

### Cultural-identitarian backlash

- Reaction against **progressive cultural change** resulting from intergenerational shift toward post-materialist values, such as **cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism**

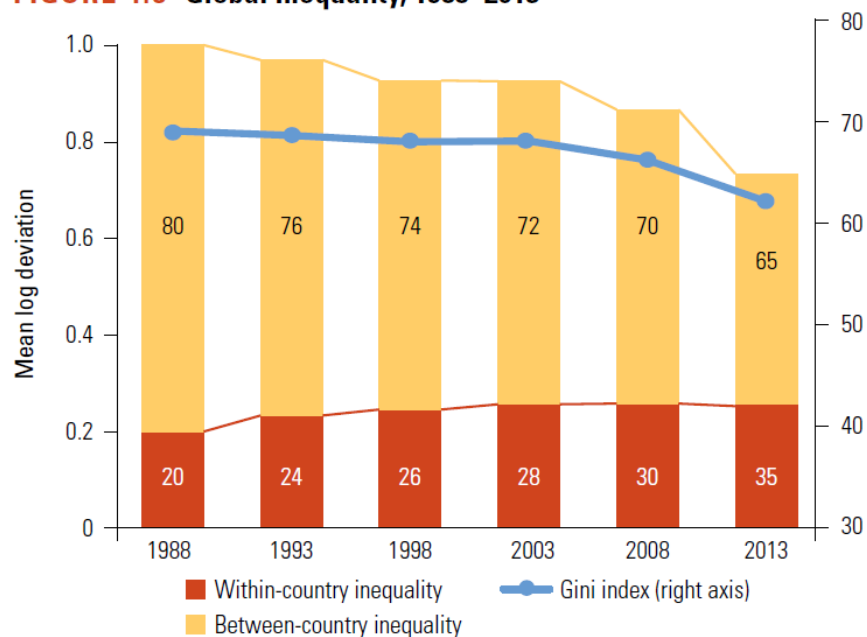
**less educated, older generations and right-wing authoritarians** react to erosion of their privileges and societal status

## 3.1 POPULISM AND INEQUALITY

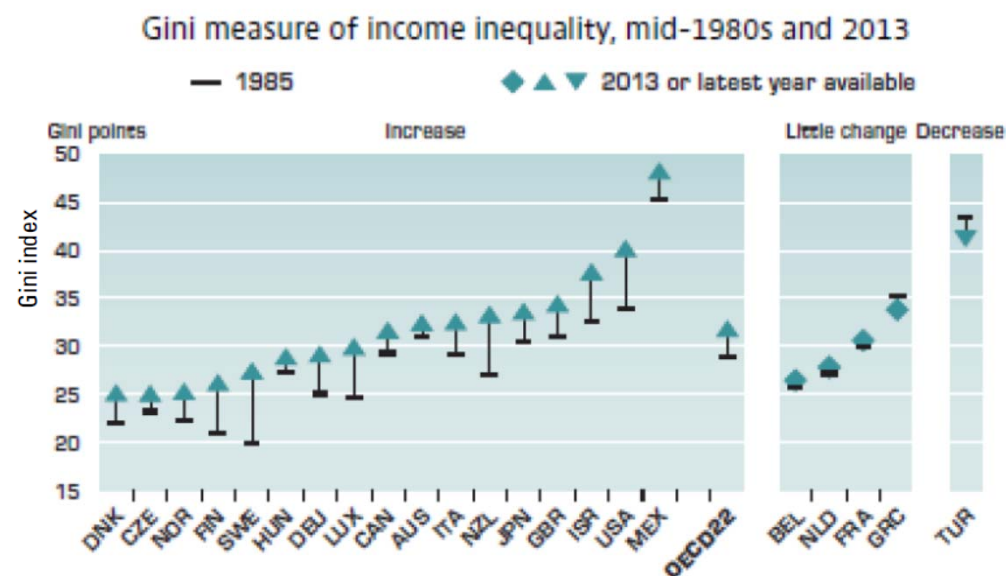


# Globalist vs. national perspective on inequality

**FIGURE 4.5 Global Inequality, 1988–2013**



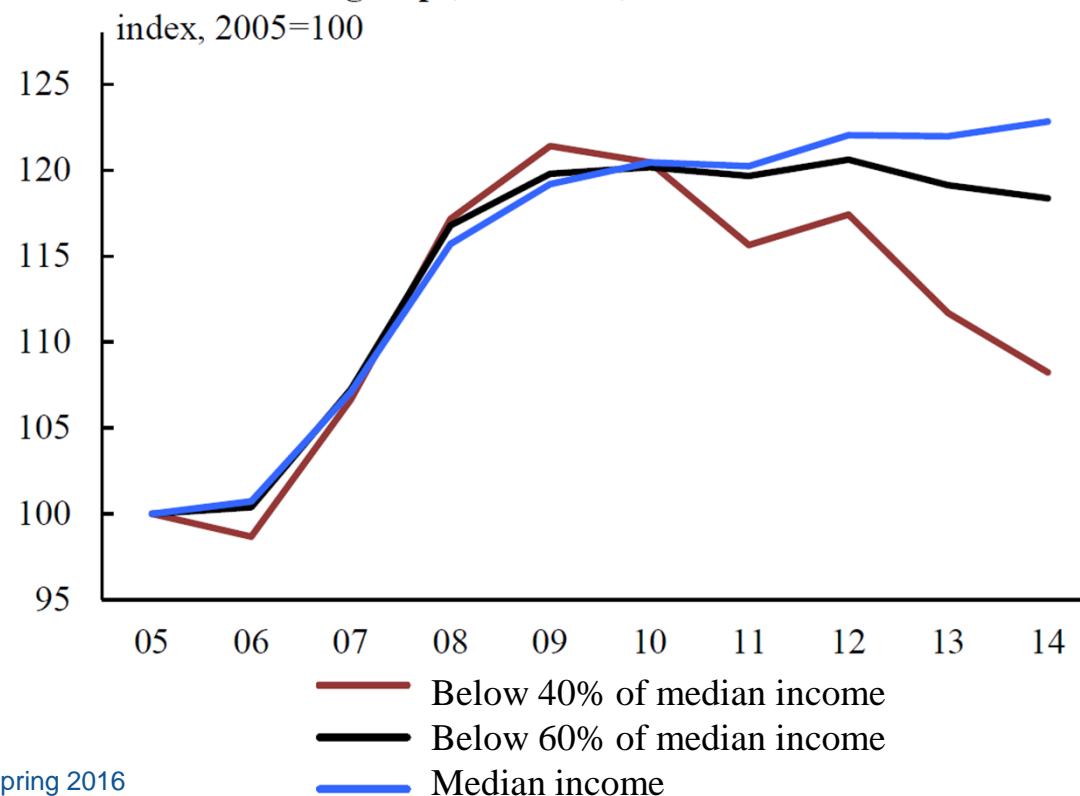
Sources: Lakner and Milanović 2016a; Milanović 2016; calculations based on PovcalNet (online analysis tool), World Bank, Washington, DC, <http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/>.



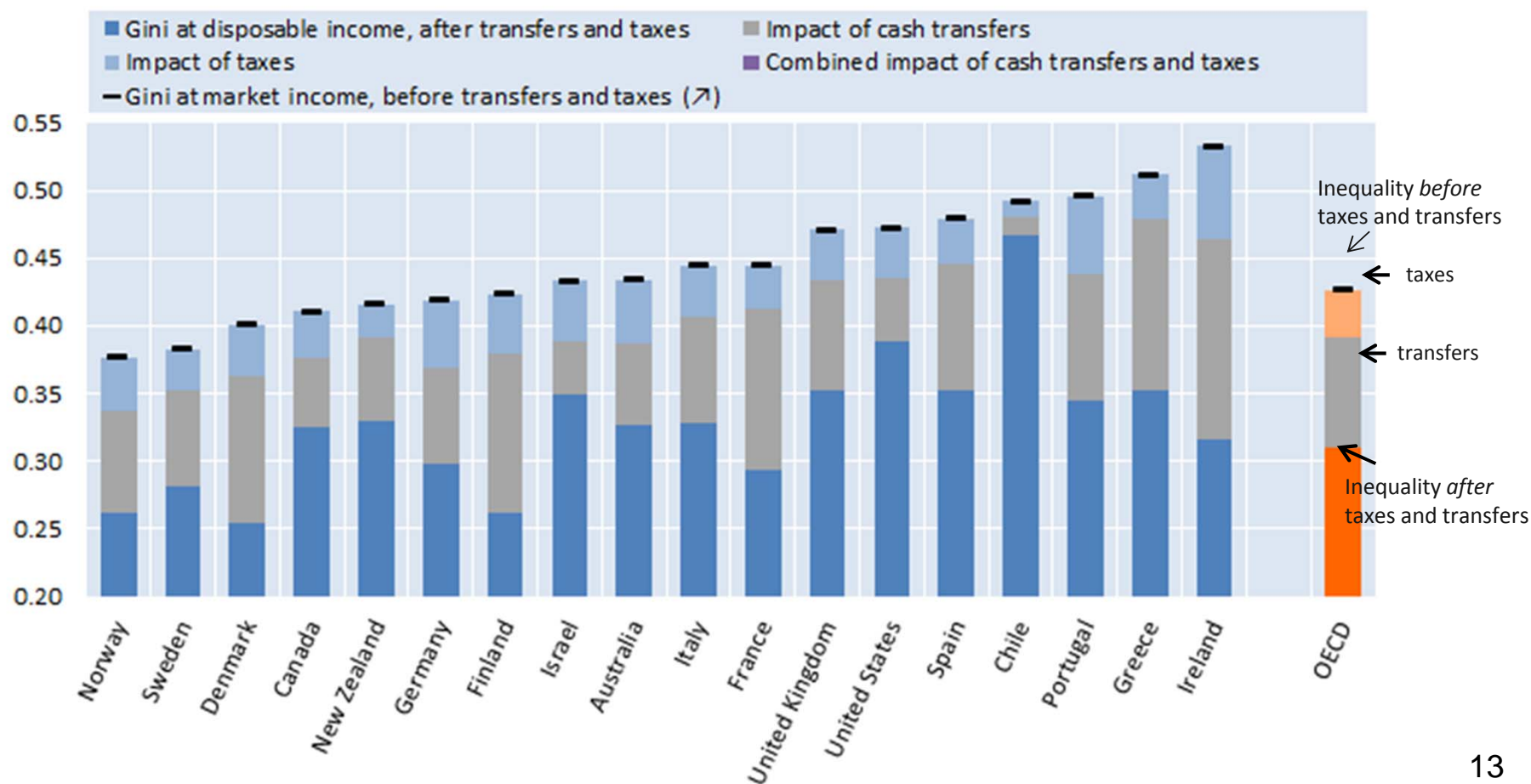
Source: OECD (2015), *In It Together: Why Less Inequality Benefits All*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933207711>.

# Median income has stagnated also in Europe since the Great Recession

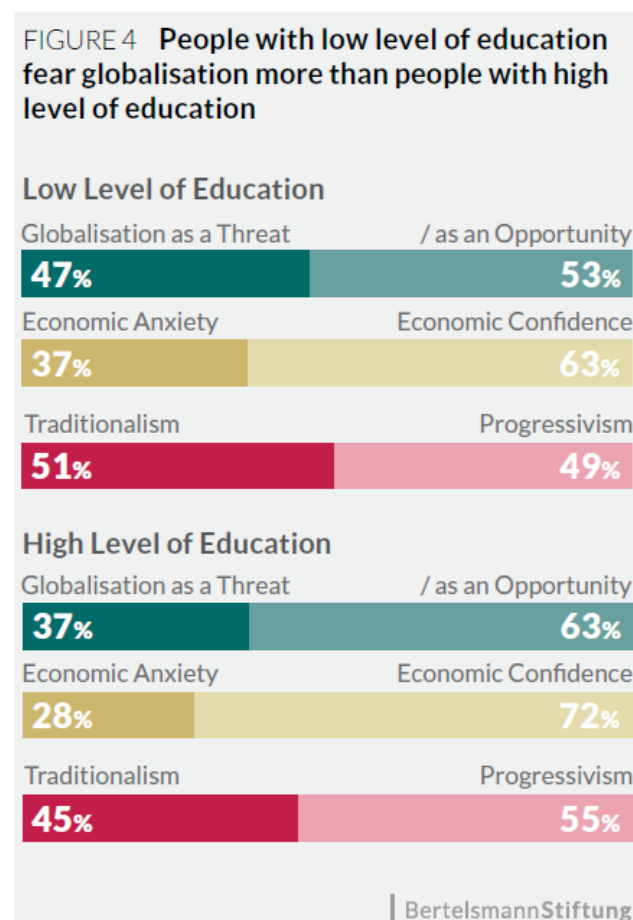
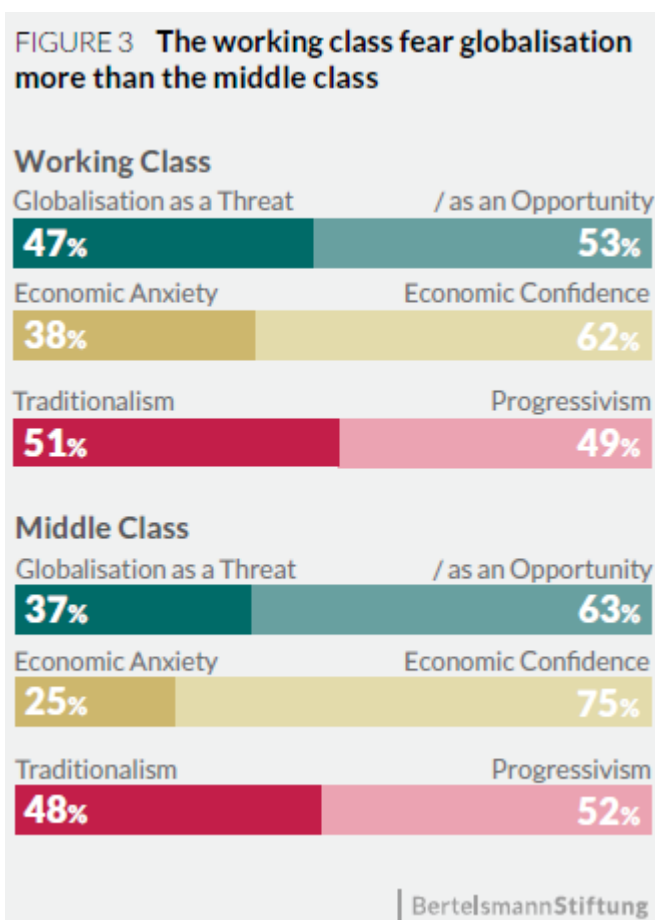
*Graph I.9: Median net income in selected income groups, euro area, 2005-2014*



# Respective redistributive effects of direct taxes and cash transfers



# Working class and low-skilled experience globalisation as a threat

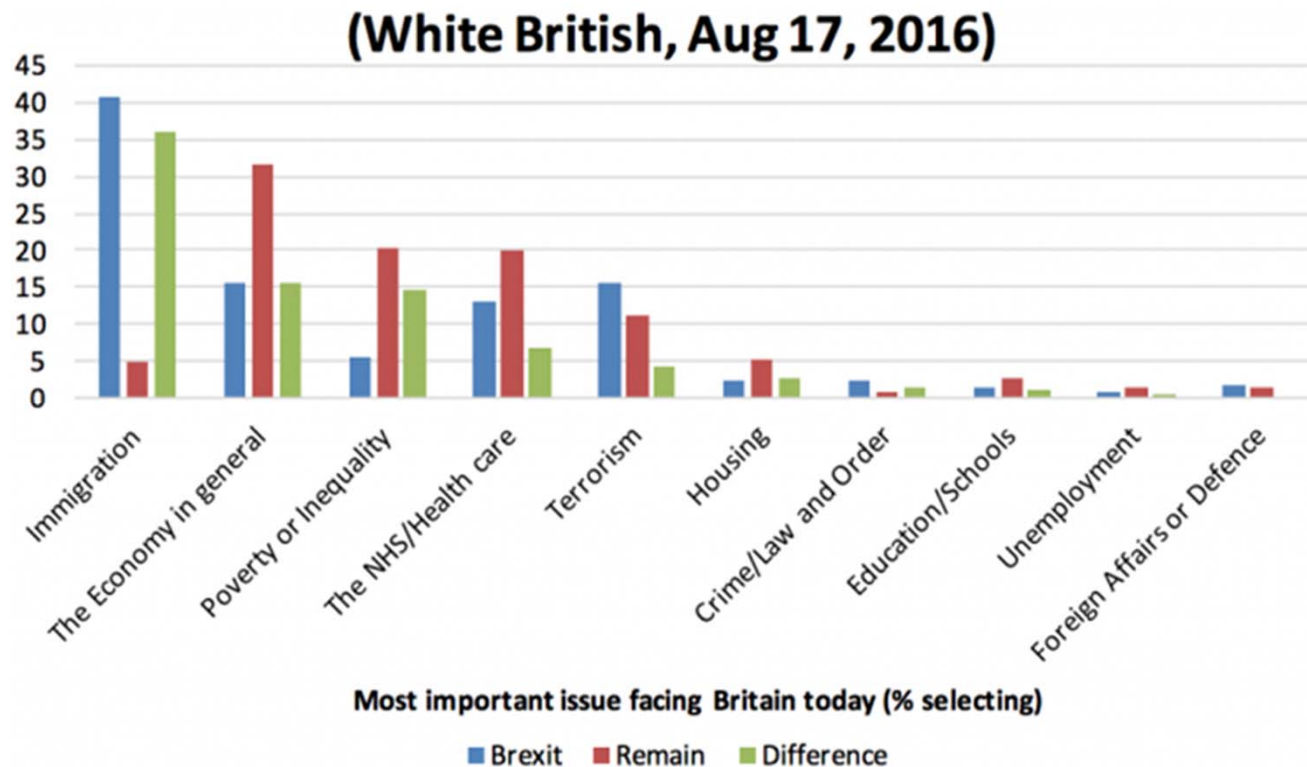




## **3.2 VALUES ROOTS: POPULISM AND IDENTITY**



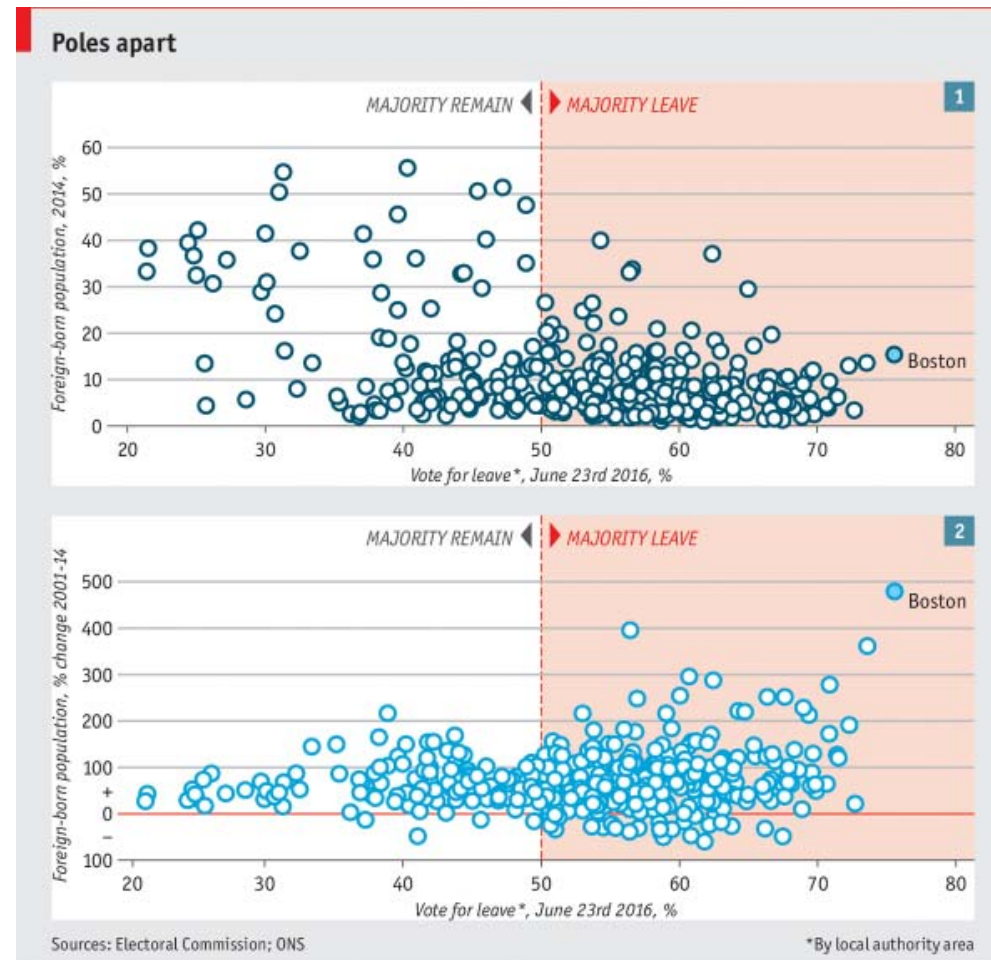
# Brexit support: It's immigration, not inequality



<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/trump-and-brexit-why-its-again-not-the-economy-stupid/>



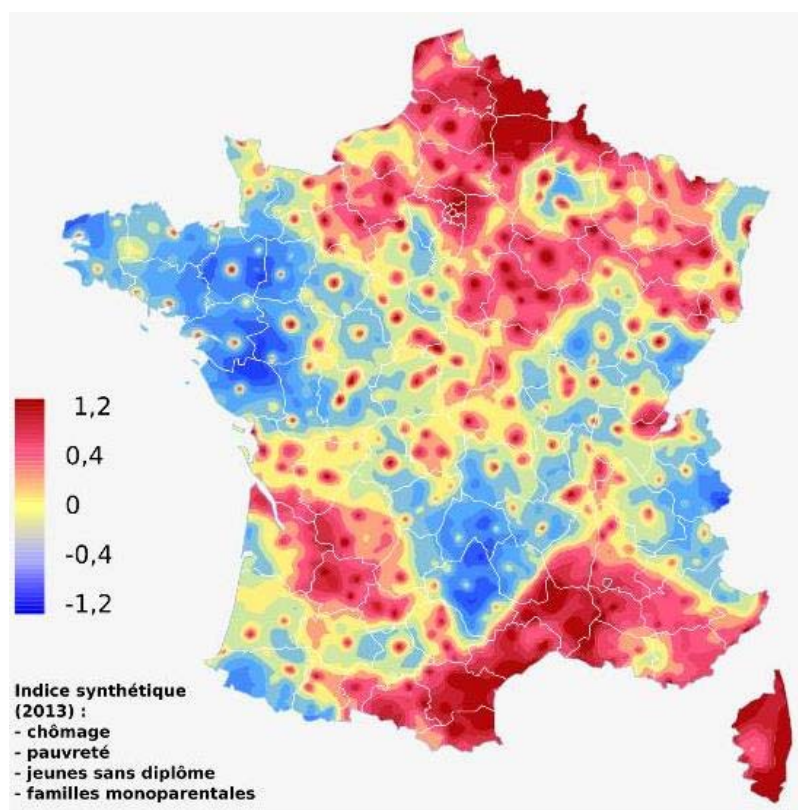
# Brexit and immigration: It's the delta.



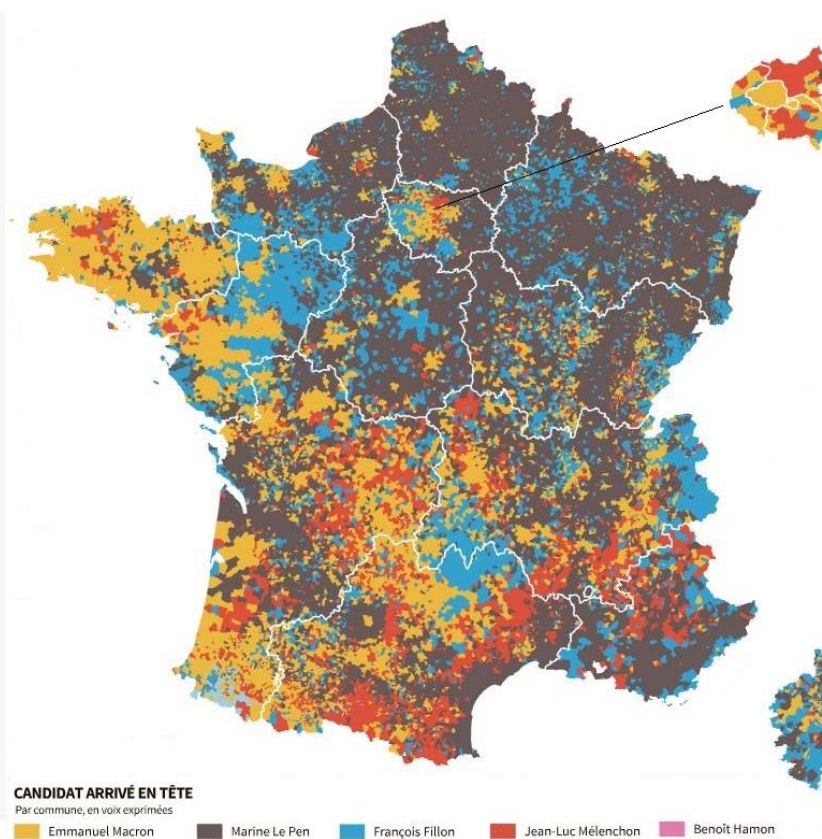
## 3.3. ... AND FRANCE?



# Social hardship counts

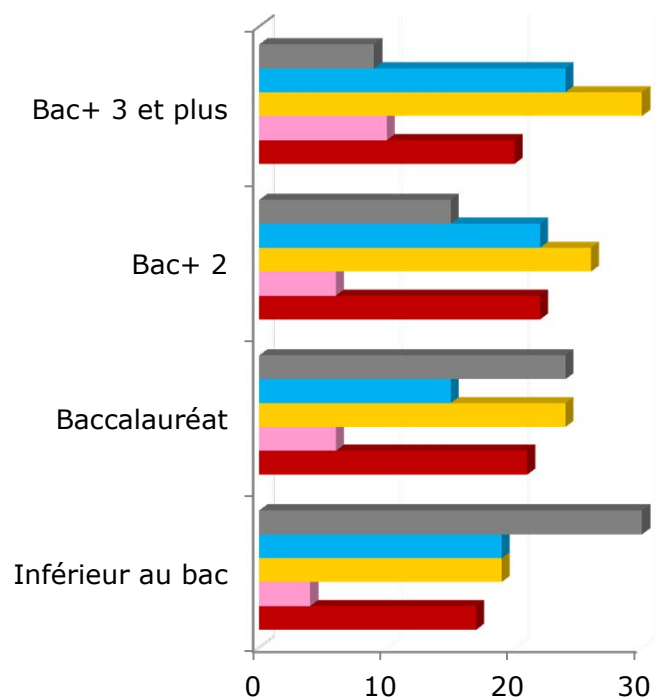


Source: Hervé Le Bras, "La France inégale : Qui vote FN ? Pas forcément ceux à qui l'on pense" (2017), <http://theconversation.com/la-france-inegale-qui-vote-fn-pas-forcement-ceux-a-qui-lon-pense-75977>

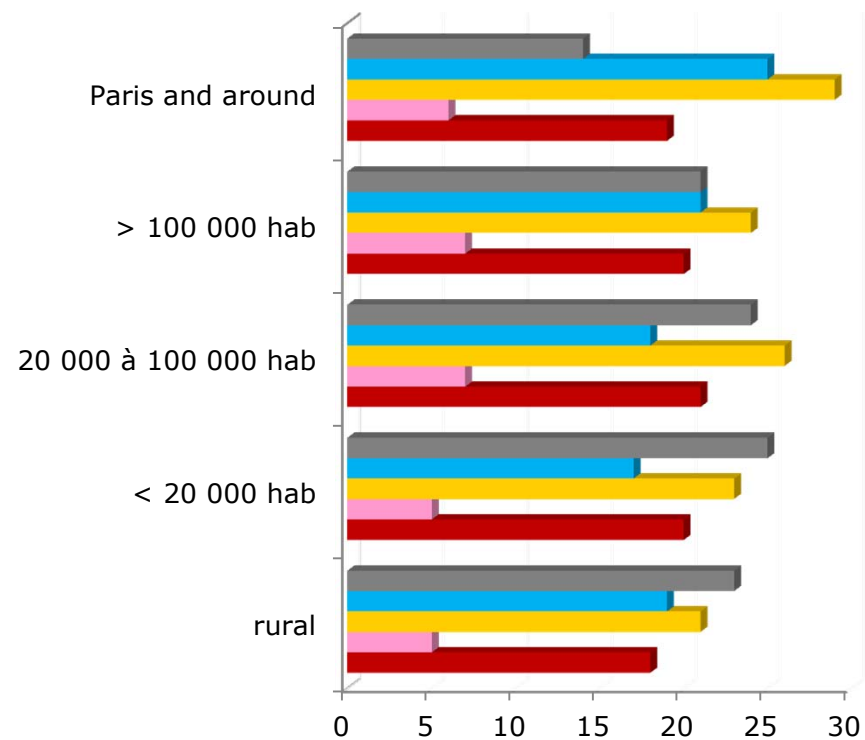


Source: France, Ministry of the Interior, 23 April 2017

# An educated center vs. periphery?



**Education levels**



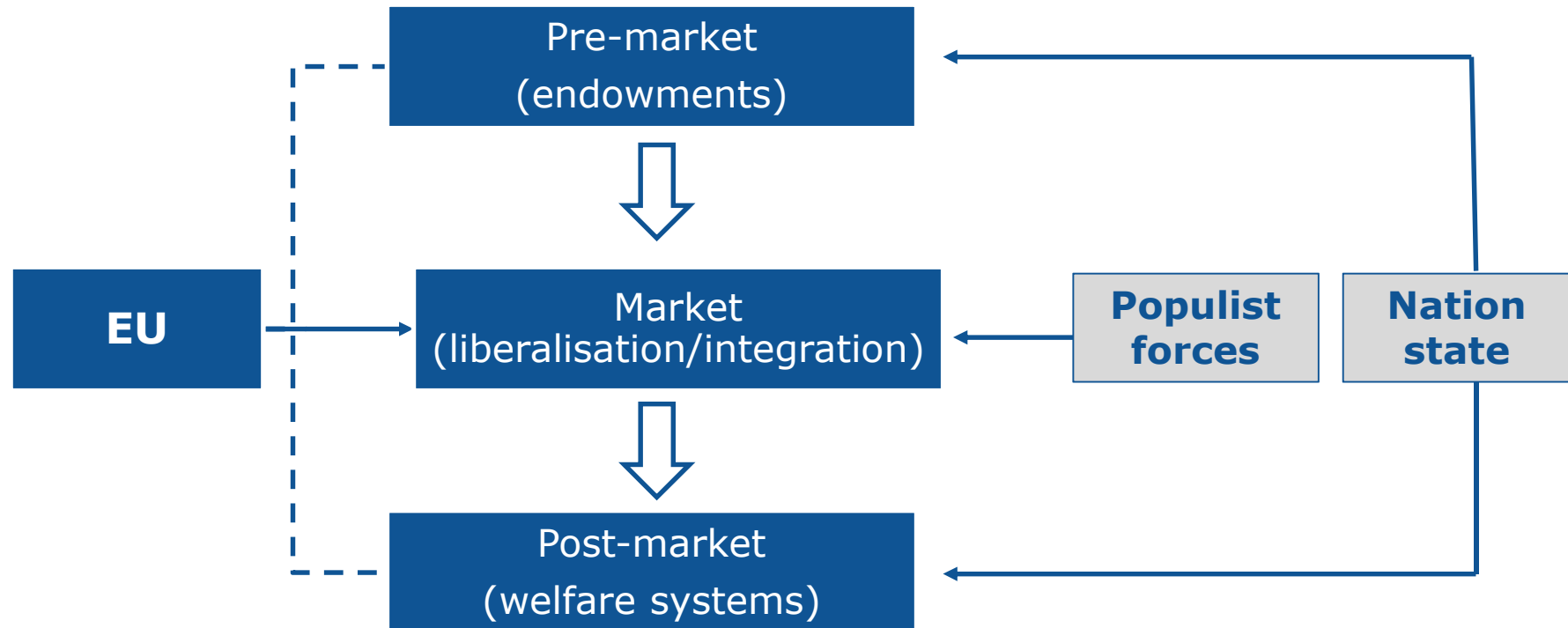
**Small vs. big cities**

## Summing up the empirical evidence

- Populism has been on the rise over the last decades in European democracies but has become particularly important **since the Great Recession**.
- The empirical evidence points towards two main roots of populism: **rising economic insecurity** and a **cultural-identitarian backlash**.
- The relative importance of the two factors **varies across countries**.
- **Young European** having lost hope, **low-waged** unskilled workers, long-term **unemployed**, households dependent on **shrinking social benefits** turn against neoliberal elites.
- **Elderly, less educated** and **right-wing authoritarians** react to erosion of their societal status due to the spread of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism.
- **Migration** relates to **both economic and cultural-identitarian** concerns.

# 4. POPULISM AND EUROPE: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## Economic populism: Why against the EU?



# Identitarian Populism: Why against the EU?

## European Union

Convergence aim

Protection of minorities

EU based on rules and institutions



## Populism

Homogeneity threat, perceived as erasing national identities

Rule of the "no longer silent majority"

Direct democracy, referenda, twitter policy-making, allergic to "filters"





# 5. WAY FORWARD



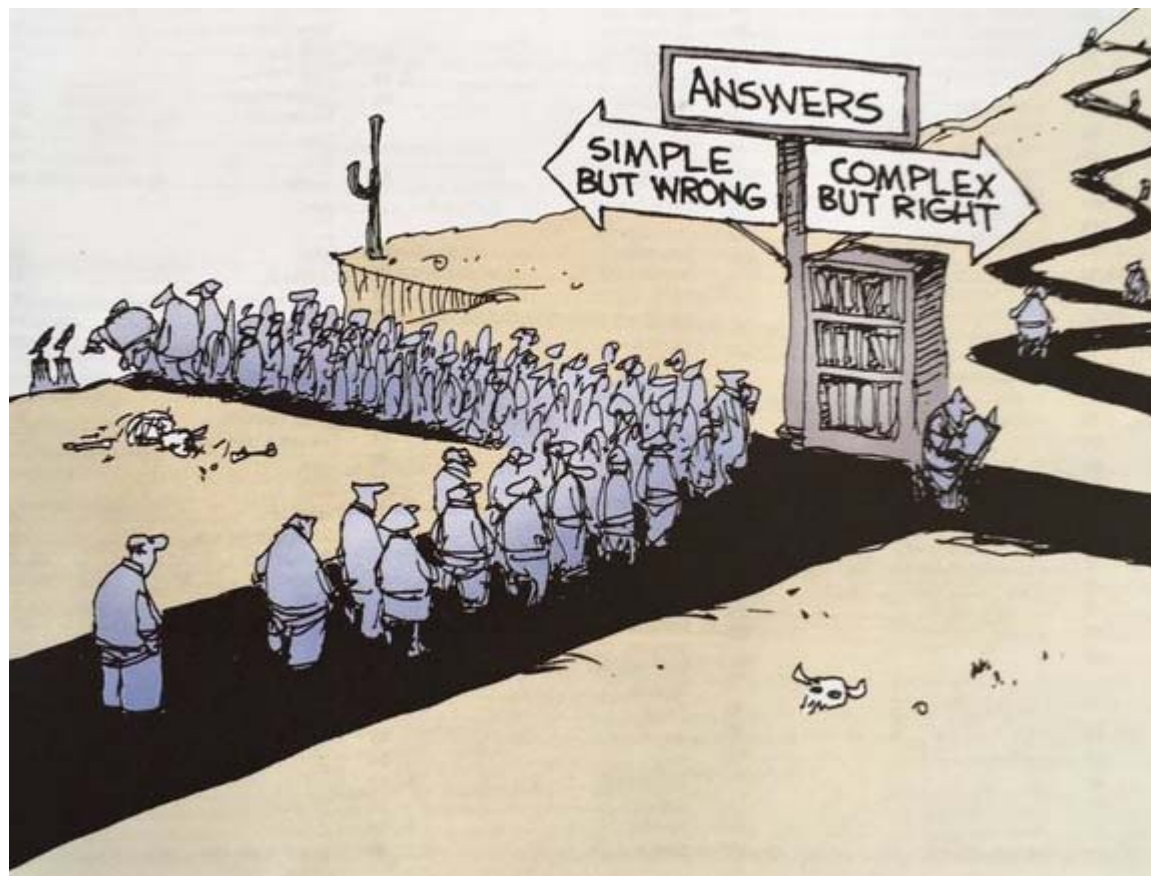


## **Five avenues for a European response**

- a) Focusing on delivering the common public goods with well-defined EU value-added**
- b) Re-establish the core values of the European social model as a joint response to globalisation**
- c) Mainstream distributional considerations into EU policies**
- d) Ensure vertical consistency between European and national actions and budgets**
- e) Ensure transparency and accountability over the course of decision-making**



European  
Commission





## In sum

- No replacement of **leadership**: national leaders have to protect the EU.
- Need to **revisit the current assignment of allocation** (for the EU), and stabilisation and redistribution (for the member states).
- It's the "what", but also the "how".
- But, the tide of populism may be turning ...