

Review

# Impact of populism and economic policy on state growth: A systematic literature review

**Aleixandre Brian Duche-Pérez\***, **Obed Vargas-Salas**, **Yigliola Glenda Arias-Huiza**, **Gerardo Zegarra-Florez**

Universidad Católica de Santa María, Arequipa 04001, Peru

\* **Corresponding author:** Aleixandre Brian Duche-Pérez, [aduche@ucsm.edu.pe](mailto:aduche@ucsm.edu.pe)

## CITATION

Duche-Pérez AB, Vargas-Salas O, Arias-Huiza YG, Zegarra-Florez G. (2024). Impact of populism and economic policy on state growth: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development*. 8(13): 8302. <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd8302>

## ARTICLE INFO

Received: 31 July 2024

Accepted: 22 August 2024

Available online: 12 November 2024

## COPYRIGHT



Copyright © 2024 by author(s).

*Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development* is published by EnPress Publisher, LLC. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

**Abstract:** This research systematically reviews the relationship between populism and economic policies, analyzing their impact on state development and growth. It is the first study to comprehensively examine the interaction between these two concepts through a systematic literature review. The review process adhered to the PRISMA protocol, utilizing the Scopus, EBSCO, and Web of Science databases, covering the period from 2012 to 2024. The findings reveal a deep interconnection between populism and economic policies, with significant implications for governance and socioeconomic well-being. The review identifies that neoliberal populism combines pro-corporate elements with populist rhetoric, favoring economic elites while presenting itself as beneficial for the “people.” Additionally, it underscores that neoliberal globalization has facilitated market liberalization but also increased inequality and undermined national sovereignty. The review concludes that while populism may offer quick fixes to immediate economic issues, its simplistic and polarizing approaches can be counterproductive in the long term. Thus, there is a critical need to reevaluate and reformulate economic and governance policies to balance global economic integration with the protection of citizens’ rights and well-being.

**Keywords:** populism; economic policies; neoliberalism; globalization; governance

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, the political environment has shown a significant correlation between the implementation of populist policies and the subsequent economic crises they may provoke. Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022) highlight that this connection is not only evident but also essential for understanding the current dynamics of global economies. Despite the expected political polarization due to diverse parliamentary representation, there is a paradoxical consensus among legislators who approve measures perceived as simplistic but effective solutions (Phumma and Vechnuruck, 2022). This phenomenon indicates a disconnect between the intended goals of these policies and their practical outcomes, as observed across various political and economic contexts worldwide.

The existing literature on populism often conflates it with other concepts, leading to a blurred understanding of the term. Hunger et al. (2022) argue that this conflation, particularly with concepts like nativism, obscures the distinct implications of each, with nativism potentially having more severe consequences than populism itself. This conceptual confusion not only impedes a clear interpretation of populism but also contributes to its mischaracterization as inherently detrimental to democratic principles. Oleg (2024) also emphasizes how exacerbated nativism can undermine democratic values.

Other scholars focus on the relationship between populism and economic policy. Guardino (2018) contends that this association often results in inadequate measures that negatively impact critical sectors such as health, the environment, and other basic services essential for social welfare. These measures, frequently implemented, reflect poor planning and a lack of deep understanding of the population's actual needs, underscoring the need for more rigorous and critical analysis of economic policies within the populist context.

The political environment demonstrates a significant correlation between populist policy implementation and the economic crises that may ensue. Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022) argue that this connection is vital for comprehending the current dynamics of global economies. Despite evident political polarization, there is a paradoxical consensus among lawmakers who endorse measures perceived as quick and effective, even though they are often simplistic and poorly conceived (Phumma and Vechsuruck, 2022). This phenomenon highlights a disconnect between policy intentions and their practical outcomes, particularly in infrastructure development.

Populism, with its emphasis on immediate and often polarizing solutions, influences economic policy in ways that affect both 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure. 'Hard' infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and energy systems, often becomes the focus of populist projects prioritizing short-term visible results over long-term sustainability (Li et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2024). In contrast, 'soft' infrastructure, including education, health, and governance systems, suffers from a lack of strategic investment, undermining the state's comprehensive and sustainable development (Jayasuriya et al., 2024).

This systematic review examines how populism and related economic policies impact the development of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure. Through a comprehensive analysis of existing literature, this review explores how populist strategies, while offering immediate and seemingly effective solutions, may be counterproductive in the long term, weakening both physical infrastructure and social systems vital for sustainable state growth. The goal is to determine whether populist measures genuinely promote equitable development or, conversely, create imbalances that hinder long-term progress.

## **2. Materials and methods**

In alignment with the research objectives, a systematic review was designed and conducted following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) protocol, as proposed by Urrútia and Bonfill (2010). Additionally, the evaluation criteria for systematic literature reviews, developed by the Joanna Briggs Institute, were applied to ensure quality, transparency, and, where applicable, generalizability of the results (Lockwood et al., 2015).

It is important to note that a search for prior literature reviews was conducted in specialized databases; however, no relevant documents were found on the subject. Thus, this document represents the first systematic review on this topic.

### **2.1. Search strategy**

The databases used in this review were Scopus, EBSCO, and Web of Science.

The selected articles cover a period from 2012 to 2024 and were published in international scientific journals.

The research question that guided the review was: What is the literary evidence on the impact of populist economic policies on state growth?

Regarding descriptors, the UNESCO Thesauri, which are aligned with the ISO 25964 standard, were used. The following terms were detailed: “economic,” “economies,” “economy,” “policy,” “policies,” “politics,” and “populism.” Based on these descriptors, the following search equation was formulated: *populis\* AND (polic\* AND econom\*)*. The inclusion and exclusion criteria used for the review are shown below in **Table 1**.

## 2.2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

**Table 1.** Criteria framework.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Empirical texts.	Studies or research on populism associated with areas other than economic policy or economy.
Studies with populism associated with economic policy.	Studies and research without full text access.
From a period prior to the year 2012.	Texts duplicated in search engines.
Studies written in English and Spanish.	Forms of research other than scientific articles.

## 2.3. Document selection procedure

For the preparation of this manuscript, primary articles were rigorously selected through a multi-stage evaluation process. In the first stage, the database search yielded a total of 44 articles. In the second stage, criteria such as availability, publication date, and duplication were applied, reducing the number to 20 articles. Finally, in the third stage, the content of the articles was assessed for alignment with the review’s theme, resulting in the selection of 13 articles. These articles met the inclusion criteria and were chosen for the systematic literature review.

## 2.4. Data analysis

Given the need for more specific information in this review, a comparative table was created. This table includes the year of publication, research source, theoretical framework, type of study, instruments used, perspective adopted, population studied, objectives, conclusions, and the language of publication for the texts under review.

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1. Identification of publications found

In accordance with the search strategy, **Table 2** provides detailed information on the databases used and the results found:

**Table 2.** Search results according to search equation and database.

Search Equation	WoS	Scopus	Ebsco	Sub-Total
populis* AND (polic* AND econom*)	17	17	10	44
Total	17	17	10	44

Then, the established inclusion-exclusion criteria were applied, resulting in the following:

**Table 3.** Number of articles selected according to inclusion-exclusion criteria.

Criteria	WoS	Scopus
Inclusion Criteria	44	24
Exclusion Criteria	24	13

As shown in **Table 3**, after verifying the data obtained according to the proposed methodology, a sample of thirteen articles was obtained.

Subsequently, **Table 4** shows a summary of the 13 articles, considering the following items: author, year, focus, and place of research:

**Table 4.** Synthesis of the selected articles.

N	Author	Purpose of the Instrument	Instrument
01	Lawson (2022)	Qualitative—Longitudinal	Canada
02	Binder (2023)	Qualitative-Longitudinal—Correlational	Germany
03	Monteiro and Fonseca (2012)	Qualitative—Correlational	Brazil
04	Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020)	Quantitative—Longitudinal	Ukraine
05	Röth et al. (2018)	Mixed	Western Europe
06	Guardino (2018)	Qualitative	USA
07	Rewizorski (2021)	Quantitative—Correlational	Global
08	Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022)	Mixed	Global
09	Arès and Bernard (2021)	Quantitative—Explanatory	United States
10	Ausserladscheider (2024)	Qualitative—Explanatory	Austria
11	Feldmann and Popa (2022)	Quantitative—Exploratory	Hungary, Poland, and Romania
12	McDonald (2018)	Qualitative—Descriptive	Australia
13	Panigrahi (2021)	Mixed—Correlational	India

### 3.2. Description of the included publications

After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, only seventeen publications were included in the review. Both the Scopus and Web of Science databases yielded the same number of articles (13 each), while a smaller number (10) were found in the EBSCO database. Regarding language, sixteen articles were published in English, with one article by Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020) published in Russian.

As for the geographic focus of the research, studies were conducted in Ukraine (1), Western Europe (1), the United States (2), Austria (1), globally (2), and one study each in Canada, Germany, Brazil, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Australia, and India.

Concerning the publication years, the studies were conducted in 2022 (3), 2021 (3), 2018 (3), and one study each in 2012, 2020, 2023, and 2024.

From the analysis of these thirteen articles, three main types of objectives were identified:

a) Evolution and historical development of populism: Ausserladscheider (2024), Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022), Lawson (2022), MacDonald (2018), Rewizorski (2021), Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020) agree that populism generally lacks a strong, coherent ideology and sometimes even promotes a misleading one. This ideology typically divides society into two sectors: the corrupt elites and the people. The elites, represented by political movements, claim to protect society from the elite class, while the populace tends to accept these measures in the short term, often with little concern for future consequences. These patterns of populism have been observed in various political contexts, including those in America and Europe.

b) Social, economic, and fiscal policies associated with Populism: Ausserladscheider (2024), Feldmann and Popa (2022), Lawson (2022), Panigrahi (2021), Röth et al. (2018), and Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020) argue that populism often prioritizes political presence over scientific reasoning, leading to economic manipulation and resulting in uncertainty and instability, frequently associated with corruption. However, these authors also note that populism, in a non-pejorative sense, aims to include certain socio-economic segments and calls for a reevaluation of economic liberalism to improve decision-making processes.

c) Individual and psychological factors associated with populism: A research focus has emerged on the personal characteristics and traits that populations associate with populism. Arès (2021) and Binder (2023) link these traits to political discourse, while Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022) connect them to political decision-making.

Regarding the methodological approach, nine studies were qualitative, three employed a mixed approach, and one was quantitative.

In terms of research instruments, the selected studies utilized observation forms, surveys, and case studies. Although not explicitly stated in the articles, these methods have been inferred. **Table 5** provides a summary of these instruments:

**Table 5.** Research instruments.

<b>N</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Purpose of the Instrument</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
01	Lawson (2022)	Synthesize interpretively historical patterns	General Population Social Science Survey (Allbus, 2018)
02	Binder (2023)	Understand populist attitudes and their connection with specific political content	Observation Form
03	Monteiro and Fonseca (2012)	Explain the conduct of economic policy	Observation Form
04	Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020)	Systematize the political and economic foundations of populism, as well as its manifestation in the context of economic and fiscal policy	Observation Form
05	Röth et al. (2018)	Analyze the impact of PRRP on redistributive and (de) regulatory economic policies	Statistical analysis with case study evidence
06	Guardino (2018)	Examine the psychological and physiological manifestations associated with mindfulness and adjustment	Observation Form

**Table 5.** (Continued).

<b>N</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Purpose of the Instrument</b>	<b>Instrument</b>
07	Rewizorski (2021)	Examine the fundamental problem of a solution to the populist challenge related to sovereignty	Observation Form
08	Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022)	Explore the drivers of populism and shed light on the mechanisms through which individual decision-making is influenced by psychological factors	Family Environment Scale (FES) (Moos and Moos, 1976), Coping with Emotions, Student Adjustment to College Questionnaire
09	Arès and Bernard (2021)	Evaluate populist rhetoric criticizing globalization and promoting nationalism	Observation Form
10	Ausserladscheider (2024)	Analyze how and to what extent far-right populist leaders affect the national implementation of neoliberal policies	Case Study
11	Feldmann and Popa (2022)	Analyze the effects of economic policies	Survey
12	McDonald (2018)	Reveal through documentation the paradox of populism	Observation Form
13	Panigrahi (2021)	Analyze how fertilizer subsidies and government pricing policies affect crop profitability, farmers' welfare, and their relationships with other macroeconomic aspects of the economy	Observation Form

### 3.3. Neoliberalism: Definition and varieties

Neoliberalism is a multifaceted and often controversial concept encompassing various phenomena related to economic policy and social organization. Guardino (2018) defines neoliberalism as a political-economic project aimed at reconfiguring the relationship between the state and the market. This project is characterized by policies that both stem from and reinforce corporate power, primarily advancing the interests of high-income individuals and the ultra-rich. A central feature of neoliberalism in the American context includes significant, regressive tax cuts, which have contributed to levels of economic inequality not seen since the 1920s. Lawson (2022) further explains how neoliberal policies have promoted corporate prerogatives and economic inequality, reinforcing capitalist class power. These policies have involved both the reduction of the state's role in certain areas and its empowerment in others, always justified through the discursive framework of neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism manifests in several forms. Classical neoliberalism refers to the initial phase of the neoliberal project, which focused on “rolling back” the state's role as a market regulator and provider of social services. This phase, marked by deregulation and economic liberalization, was particularly prominent during the 1980s under the Ronald Reagan administration (McDonald, 2018). Since the 1990s, “rolled-out” neoliberalism has seen the state take a more explicit and active role in enforcing business imperatives. While the neoliberal project in the United States has never been defined by a simple withdrawal of the state, this shift marked a change in the emphasis and extent of state intervention in support of market prerogatives (Rewizorski, 2021).

Guardino (2018) identifies a third variant of neoliberalism that merges neoliberal elements with populist discourse: Neoliberal populism. This discourse promotes pro-corporate and upwardly redistributive policies, linking the priorities of the private market and individualistic identities with a populist construction of the interests and preferences of “ordinary Americans.” Neoliberal populism has been used to justify and legitimize neoliberal policies, portraying the “people” as rugged, hardworking

individuals who demand “free-market” solutions (Ausserladscheider, 2024). This perspective highlights how neoliberalism and neoliberal populism have provided a powerful and enduring foundation for debates on economic and social welfare policies in the United States. The fusion of these discourses has helped sustain the neoliberal project by cultivating public consent for a political agenda that disproportionately benefits economic elites (Arès and Bernard, 2021; Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022).

### **3.4. Globalization and neoliberalism: neoliberal globalization**

The relationship between globalization and neoliberalism has its origins in liberalism, a well-established school of thought by the 1970s. This connection has evolved over time, leading to distinct definitions of both concepts today.

Globalization began with the integration of markets and trade but has since expanded significantly. Today, globalization encompasses not only the integration of economies but also the dissemination of knowledge, facilitated by technological advances and the creation of global networks. It involves the participation of both public and private organizations, transcending geographical and territorial boundaries (Guardino, 2018; Lawson, 2022; Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012).

From a critical perspective, it is crucial to recognize how globalization has transformed economic and social dynamics worldwide. This process is not homogeneous, and its impacts vary depending on local contexts. Technology has played a pivotal role, enabling unprecedented communication and interconnection that challenge traditional barriers. Simultaneously, the involvement of diverse organizations, from multinationals to NGOs, has reshaped the economic and social landscape, promoting integration that, while beneficial in many respects, has also led to significant inequalities and challenges (Arès and Bernard, 2021; Ausserladscheider, 2024).

Driven by neoliberal principles, globalization has promoted market liberalization and the reduction of trade barriers, leading to increased competitiveness and the proliferation of capital and information flows globally. However, this process has also been criticized for concentrating wealth and power in the hands of a few, exacerbating socioeconomic inequalities, and undermining national sovereignty (Feldmann and Popa, 2022; McDonald, 2018; Rewizorski, 2021).

The evolution of globalization from its liberal roots to its contemporary, interconnected, and technological form reflects a complex and multifaceted process that has redefined global economic and social structures, presenting both significant opportunities and challenges.

The relationship between globalization and neoliberalism has given rise to what is known as neoliberal globalization, a phenomenon that has grown significantly and is now recognized for its impact in various regions of the world. This impact is evident in the development of processes and technologies in areas such as electronic communication, informatization, transnational governance, and production. These elements are often presented as political promises that favor the market at the expense of the state (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022; Guardino, 2018; Röth et al., 2018).

Critically, neoliberal globalization has profoundly transformed the global political and economic structure, promoting a system in which emerging technologies

and processes align with market interests, often reducing the state's role in regulation and governance. While this approach has facilitated the expansion of global markets, it has also deepened inequalities and limited the state's capacity to address social welfare issues (Binder, 2023; Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy, 2020).

Currently, neoliberal globalization faces new challenges and realities, such as the consequences of the pandemic, climate change, mass migrations, droughts, wildfires, and so-called "storms of the century." These continuous and converging disruptions increasingly seem to exceed the capacity of neoliberal techniques to provide effective solutions. Neoliberalism has consistently rejected Keynesian technocratic solutions, preferring market-based approaches. Despite this, at its peak, neoliberal globalization offered a set of tools that, though controversial, managed to address real problems, such as climate change, through market policies like carbon pricing (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022; McDonald, 2018; Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy, 2020).

However, the rise of right-wing populism, which opposes the "deep state," defends a so-called silent majority against climate solutions and other expert-driven initiatives. This stance has led to a rejection of the problems themselves, rather than just the proposed solutions, suggesting that experts are inventing or exaggerating these issues (Arès and Bernard, 2021; Lawson, 2022). This dynamic reveals significant flaws in contemporary right-wing politics. While in the 1980s, right-wing parties viewed themselves as realists and defenders of ideas, today, much of right-wing populism rebels against "men of ideas," including neoliberals, now seen as part of the despised elite rather than their adversaries (Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012; Panigrahi, 2021; Rewizorski, 2021).

This situation has led to intense internal disputes and external challenges within right-wing parties, as seen in the ruling UCP government in Canada, which faces issues related to COVID-19 and climate change without offering coherent neoliberal solutions or, alternatively, opting for inaction.

In sum, neoliberal globalization has been a significant driver of change in the contemporary world but has also revealed its limitations and contradictions in the face of new global challenges. Addressing these challenges requires a critical reevaluation of current tools and approaches, potentially necessitating a reconfiguration of the roles of the state and the market in global governance.

### **3.5. Governability and governance**

This section critically explores contemporary challenges in global governability and governance, focusing on three key aspects: the crisis in democratic governability, fragmented governance, and governance as a polycentric system. The comprehensive analysis of these aspects highlights the complexities and contradictions inherent in the interaction between globalization and governance while offering perspectives on potential solutions to build a more resilient and equitable system.

#### **3.5.1. Crisis in the governability of democracies**

The crisis in democratic governability, as analyzed by Binder (2023), Ausserladscheider (2024), Lawson (2022), and Panigrahi (2021), has become increasingly prevalent in recent decades. Traditional public policies, political actors, fiscal policies, and the capitalist system itself have proven ineffective in mitigating



these crises. The origins of this crisis lie in the expansion of globalization, coupled with advancements in information and communication technologies. These developments have dismantled the national structure of the commercial sector, facilitating global interactions in the manufacturing workforce. This shift has enabled companies to exploit more favorable regulations in terms of taxes, wages, and labor benefits.

Prior to globalization, domestic markets already experienced failures, but new trade agreements compelled states to liberalize trade measures. This was done to ensure the free movement of capital, goods, and services, allowing countries to compete and attract greater foreign investment. While this process has led to greater global economic integration, it has also exacerbated inequalities and tensions within states.

From a critical perspective, it is evident that globalization is not merely an economic process but also an ideological current with a robust structure and institutional framework. The liberalization of trade and deregulation of markets have been driven by a neoliberal ideology that prioritizes the free market and minimizes the role of the state in the economy. This ideology has profoundly impacted democratic governability, limiting states' ability to implement policies that benefit their citizens in the face of global capital pressures. Fiscal and labor policies have been adjusted to attract foreign investment, often at the expense of social welfare and labor rights. Additionally, the denationalization of the commercial sector has increased national economies' dependence on international markets, heightening vulnerability to global economic crises and reducing governments' ability to regulate and control their own economies.

The crisis in democratic governability reflects the inherent tensions between neoliberal globalization and the ability of states to manage their economies and societies equitably and sustainably. Addressing this crisis requires rethinking and reformulating current policies and structures, seeking a balance between global economic integration and the protection of citizens' rights and welfare at the national level.

### **3.5.2. Fragmented governance**

Fragmented governance is a defining feature of the current phase of globalization, as noted by Rewizorski (2021). In this context, neoliberalism emerges as the dominant theoretical trend, proposing that human well-being is maximized by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade (Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012).

The neoliberal state does not merely passively accept market dominance; it actively facilitates it through various means, including providing a stable currency, security apparatuses to protect private property and markets, and the administrative capacity to create these markets when necessary. Neoliberals argue that the state is inherently incapable of identifying and prioritizing social needs better than markets and is vulnerable to "special interests" (Ausserladscheider, 2024; Guardino, 2018).

The "principal-agent" framework is used to explain failures in the implementation of neoliberal policies, attributing these failures to state intervention

and empire-building by state experts, such as Keynesian and welfare state technocrats. These experts, according to this perspective, impose particular policies to serve their own interests, representing a “deep state” that obstructs elected neoliberal “principals,” who supposedly serve a pro-market “silent majority.” Non-state, pro-market experts are presented as offering clearer and more effective solutions (Binder, 2023).

The rise of neoliberalism has led to increased contract-based competition and the outsourcing of public services, further fragmenting governance. This fragmentation disperses authority and responsibility among multiple non-state actors, complicating the coordination and implementation of coherent policies. The fragmentation of governance under neoliberalism has several implications. First, it weakens the state’s capacity to act as an effective regulator and protector of public interests, as the emphasis on free markets and competition often reduces the quality and accessibility of public services. Additionally, this fragmentation can exacerbate inequalities, as private actors tend to prioritize profits over social welfare (Feldmann and Popa, 2022; Panigrahi, 2021).

The neoliberal narrative portraying state intervention as inefficient and corrupt justifies further privatization and deregulation. However, this perspective overlooks the potential benefits of strong, well-designed state governance, which can act in the public interest rather than solely in the interest of private capital. Fragmented governance under neoliberalism has facilitated market dominance but at the cost of weakening the state’s role and increasing inequalities. This situation poses significant challenges for building more equitable and effective governance that can adequately respond to the needs and rights of all citizens.

### **3.5.3. Governance as a polycentric system**

In the context of the disordered multilateralism characteristic of recurrent crises and current uncertainty, the global governance framework is considered insufficient and unreliable. This situation leaves decision-makers vulnerable due to the lack of clarity regarding the direction, speed, intensity, and nature of changes (Guardino, 2018). The structure of global governance remains an unresolved issue, and the characterization of its institutions is confusing due to the absence of a common analytical perspective and a lack of consensus on the ontological nature and form of governance without government.

The prevailing perception in political science about global governance and its institutions (norms, regimes, and organizations) is that it is fragmented. Binder (2023) describes this fragmentation as a division among predominantly intergovernmental cooperation groups that exhibit contrasting behavior patterns and practices, such as cooperation versus competition, functionality versus dysfunctionality, and connectivity versus disconnection. This approach to global governance has its roots in regime theory, which focuses on the confluence of converging expectations and behavior or practice patterns.

On the other hand, some scholars advocate for a polycentric view of global governance. Lawson (2022) and Rewizorski (2021) characterize global governance as a polycentric or complex system. Proponents of polycentrism challenge the fragmented perspective of building integrated regimes and emphasize the value of

relatively decentralized systems. In contrast, supporters of the complex systems approach highlight the importance of autopoietic, self-reproducing, and self-sustaining systems composed of many coordinated and adaptive parts without a superior authority.

This perspective begins with the characterization of fragmented global economic governance, filled with inconsistencies and contrasting patterns of functionality and dysfunctionality. It explores the possibility of mitigating populist risks to global economic governance in the post-COVID-19 world by building resilient global economic governance from the bottom up (at the national level), thereby avoiding the conflicting fragmentation of global direction and promoting more internal, sovereignty-based solutions. Additionally, it highlights the arguments of the research community that supports the “global to national” approach, suggesting that it could be reasonable and beneficial for democracies affected by uncompensated adjustment costs and the redistributive effects of economic globalization (Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012). However, the analyzed examples of populist leaders who downplay the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic or implement anti-liberal legislation that hinders the coordinated action needed to address economic and financial crises may weaken this argument (Ausserladscheider, 2024).

### **3.6. Global economic governance**

Global economic governance (GEG) is a complex conceptual framework often perceived as imperfect due to various factors affecting its effectiveness. Arès and Bernard (2021, p. 4) highlight that chaotic multilateralism, fragmentation, uncertainty, and conflicting narratives between East and West, as well as between North and South, have shaped the evolution of GEG. Recurrent crises, the relative decline of established powers, the emergence of new economic centers, and inadequately addressed challenges contribute to this perception (Binder, 2023; Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022; Lawson, 2022).

The future of GEG and its structure seems to be shaped by the need to address a range of challenges, both old and new, including stalled Doha negotiations, the rise of populism, and public rejection of “unfair” macroeconomic policies. Additionally, new policies affecting global value chains (GVCs), digital trade, the global infrastructure gap, commodity price volatility, and disenchantment with Western development and aid models challenge many of the solutions established during the Washington Consensus era.

Three primary sources of fragility in GEG can be identified. The first is the diffusion of power. In the current phase of globalization, termed the “fourth industrial revolution” (4IR) by Schwab (2016), technological advancements (digitalization, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, robotics, 3D printing, and 5G/Internet of Things) coincide with ecological limitations, an increasingly multipolar international order, and growing inequality (Feldmann and Popa, 2022; Guardino, 2018; McDonald, 2018; Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012). This process also involves the transfer of power from developed countries to emerging economies and the expansion of non-state actors such as global corporations (Panigrahi, 2021), civil society, NGOs (Rewizorski, 2021), and credit rating agencies (Röth et al., 2018). This phenomenon raises concerns

about the proliferation of non-territorial entities that can increase barriers to international cooperation and raise the transaction costs of negotiated agreements.

The second source of discontent in GEG is the process of “intermestication,” described by Rosenau (1997), which blurs the boundaries between domestic and international affairs, revealing the consequences of decisions that seemingly follow internal logic. This mismatch is evident in numerous examples: the Turkish government’s decisions influence migration pressures in Europe and Europeans’ sense of security; agricultural subsidies in France significantly impact barley cultivation in Morocco; and U.S. restrictions on technology, trade, and investment from China disrupt the global trade regime, accelerating Beijing’s response with the “Made in China 2025” industrial policy (Rewizorski, 2021).

The third source of confusion in GEG is the combination of high volatility in institutional patterns and fragmentation across many policy fields. This fragmentation manifests as a mosaic of international institutions that differ in constitution (organizations, regimes, norms), electorates (public and private), spatial scope (bilateral, regional, and global), and agenda (narrow to broad). Changes in these institutions’ operating conditions over time create mismatches between their resources and objectives, reducing their effectiveness. Crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit, or the 2008 sovereign debt crisis have weakened some institutions (like the European Union or the Group of 7) and led to the emergence of new ones (such as the Group of 20 and the BRICS group) better adapted to new conditions, though without guaranteed long-term utility (Binder, 2023; Guardino, 2018; Lawson, 2022).

The proliferation of diverse actors in GEG has brought both benefits and challenges. On one hand, increased competition among actors allows for more effective addressing of cross-border problems (Panigrahi, 2021). On the other hand, expanded regulatory mechanisms have led to a “race to the bottom,” with actors often duplicating efforts and wasting resources, thereby increasing the transaction costs of agreements (such as the CPTPP and RCEP, which overlap in content and membership).

The fragmentation of global economic governance is particularly evident in the global trade regime, described as a set of principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures in international trade (Arès and Bernard, 2021). Based on the fragmentation framework proposed by Rewizorski (2021), three main forms of fragmentation can be distinguished: synergistic, cooperative, and conflictive. These forms vary in the degree of institutional integration, the overlap of decision-making systems, the existence of normative conflicts, and the type of actor assemblage. Applying this framework globally, the global trade regime, with the WTO as its central institution, can be seen as an example of conflictive fragmentation (Ausserladscheider, 2024).

### **3.7. Populism**

Populism has been extensively studied and characterized in various ways in academic literature. Guardino (2018) describes populism as a “thin-centered ideology” or “thin ideology,” based on a vertical moral division of society, separating “the people” from “the power groups.” These power groups, though a minority, are highly

influential. Essentially, populism seeks to center its ideology on the people, positioning them in opposition to the influential elites.

From a political perspective, Binder (2023) and Ausserladscheider (2024) argue that populism has no clear right or left inclination but is characterized by its opportunistic adoption by political actors seeking to engage the governed—the people—in their discourse and actions. Lawson (2022) adds that populism often incorporates a sense of economic injustice, which undermines state institutions and damages the image of traditional political parties. This strategy of shifting blame allows populist parties to benefit by diverting responsibility for economic and social problems.

Critical analysis of populism also reveals its relationship with high unemployment rates, technological changes, and growing wage inequality. Favaretto and Masciandaro (2022), Monteiro and Fonseca (2012), and Feldmann and Popa (2022) agree that the economic blame shifted by populists is associated with these factors, exacerbating perceptions of injustice and discontent among the population.

It is important to note that, although populism presents itself as a defender of the people, its focus on creating divisions and demonizing elites can have negative consequences for social cohesion and political stability. Populist rhetoric can polarize society, creating a climate of constant confrontation that hinders the implementation of constructive and sustainable policies. Additionally, the promise of quick and simple solutions to complex problems can lead to political decisions that lack proper planning and a deep understanding of long-term implications.

On the other hand, populism can offer a voice to those who feel marginalized by traditional policies and structures, providing a channel to express their discontent and seek change. However, the long-term success of populist policies depends on their ability to balance rhetoric with effective actions that address the underlying causes of public dissatisfaction.

Populism is a multifaceted phenomenon that can significantly influence politics and governance. While it offers a platform for expressing popular concerns, it also poses significant challenges to social cohesion and political effectiveness. A critical analysis of populism must consider both its potential benefits and its risks, and how these can be managed to promote inclusive and equitable governance.

### **3.8. Populism and ideology: Approaches**

Populism, through its ideology, has generated two main approaches: economic and social. The economic approach is related to legislative issues, while the social approach focuses on redistribution. These approaches are intrinsically linked to domestic and foreign trade (Arès and Bernard, 2021). The goal of this combination is to make the people, as the primary recipients, concerned about their personal economy, feel that their rights are restricted, and perceive a climate of unequal opportunities. This leads to a tendency to support political parties offering populist measures, confirming trends described in the literature on populism.

When translated into regulations, populism shows a direct connection with the rejection of a liberal economy, state interventionism, and perceived unfair economic redistribution. These approaches have evolved into tools used to challenge established

power and traditional politics. Populist political actors emphasize real problems affecting the people—issues often neglected or slowly addressed by conventional politics (Feldmann and Popa, 2022).

Populist parties position themselves as the only entities capable of immediately meeting the people's demands, using accusatory rhetoric that creates a conflict between the people and the power elites. According to Lawson (2022), this strategy seeks to perpetuate antagonism between these groups. However, while the populace may feel their demands are being met, simplistic populist solutions often result in more complex long-term problems that cannot be adequately resolved with such approaches.

A critical analysis of these approaches reveals several important implications. On one hand, the populist strategy can provide a voice to those who feel marginalized by traditional politics, addressing real and urgent concerns. However, the solutions proposed by populist parties tend to be simplistic and short-term, lacking proper planning and a deep understanding of underlying complexities (Rewizorski, 2021).

The economic approach of populism, focused on legislation and state intervention, may lead to policies aimed at redistributing wealth more equitably. However, this redistribution often occurs without considering side effects and broader economic dynamics, potentially resulting in inefficiencies and economic imbalances (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022). Similarly, the social approach, which seeks to address inequality and the restriction of rights, can generate unrealistic expectations among the population, exacerbating disillusionment and discontent when populist promises are not fulfilled.

Additionally, populist rhetoric, by focusing on creating a common enemy in the elites, can further polarize society. This polarization can hinder political and social cooperation, obstructing the implementation of effective and sustainable policies. In the long run, populism can undermine democratic institutions and erode trust in the political system, creating a cycle of discontent and radicalization (Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012).

In summary, although populism may seem an attractive solution to immediate and real problems perceived by the population, its simplistic and often polarizing approach can lead to negative long-term consequences. It is essential for both policymakers and the electorate to be aware of these dynamics and to seek solutions that, while more complex and long-term, are sustainable and beneficial for society as a whole.

### **3.9. Populism, social policies, and economic policies**

In the previously discussed political and redistributive approaches, socioeconomic policies stand out for their redistributive nature, a characteristic often exploited by right-wing parties. Although qualitative data on this dynamic is limited, it is known that populist measures with a redistributive focus primarily aim to foster economic improvements in traditional markets. These measures also tend to promote greater financial liberalization and increased privatization of businesses and the labor market. However, this approach could lead to deregulation instead of effective regulation (Arès and Bernard, 2021; Binder, 2023).

A critical analysis reveals several layers of complexity. First, the apparent

paradox of redistributive policies favoring right-wing parties can be seen as a sophisticated political strategy. By centering their discourse on redistribution, these parties manage to capture the support of population segments that traditionally would not sympathize with right-wing policies, thereby creating a broader political coalition.

Regarding the goals of populist measures, it is important to consider the historical and economic context. The incentivization of economic improvements in traditional markets can be seen as an attempt to revitalize sectors marginalized by globalization and automation. However, financial liberalization and privatization, while potentially leading to short-term economic growth, can also increase economic vulnerability and inequality in the long term. Deregulation in this context can erode labor rights and social protections, increasing the risk of financial crises, as observed throughout recent economic history (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022; Lawson, 2022).

Finally, it is crucial to question who the real beneficiaries of these policies are. Although presented as measures for the “common good,” they often end up favoring economic elites and large corporations, exacerbating existing structural inequalities. This phenomenon underscores the need for a critical and multifaceted analysis of economic and social policies in the context of populism, considering not only the declared objectives but also the real impacts and underlying power dynamics (Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012; Röth et al., 2018)

### **3.10. Populism and financial crises**

Among the various definitions attributed to populism, the most compelling is that of a “thin-centered ideology,” introduced by Arès and Bernard (2021). This concept emphasizes the distinction between “the people” and “the power group,” creating the perception that populist measures seek to protect the population from elite dominance. However, these policies often respond to immediate demands without considering or evaluating the long-term consequences. This short-term focus is where the rhetoric of redistributive policy becomes a constant element within the economic field of populism (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022; Feldmann and Popa, 2022; Guardino, 2018; Lawson, 2022; McDonald, 2018).

The relationship between populism and financial crises is complex and multifaceted. Financial crises arising from populism often stem from the electorate’s preferences, highlighting the need to carefully analyze what the literature says about this sector. Studies by Rewizorski (2021), Panigrahi (2021), Monteiro and Fonseca (2012), and Sokolovska and Kotlyarevskyy (2020) agree that voters choose populist parties based on a psychological and economic cost-benefit assessment, evaluating these decisions individually and considering the economic power groups present in each state context. Notably, the perceived benefits and costs vary significantly among individuals from different socioeconomic strata.

For poorer individuals, a notable characteristic is that their vote is often driven by hatred and resentment. The greater this resentment, the more it tends to increase their preference for populist electoral options proportionally (Röth et al., 2018). This observation suggests that negative emotions and experiences of economic injustice play a crucial role in shaping political preferences in contexts of inequality.

From a critical perspective, it is essential to understand that populist measures,

although they may offer quick and attractive solutions to urgent socioeconomic problems, often lack sustainable long-term planning. This approach can lead to significant economic imbalances and, eventually, financial crises. The promise of protection against elites often becomes a rhetorical tool to mobilize voters without addressing the structural causes of inequality and poverty.

Finally, it is important to reflect on the role of the media and political narratives in shaping the electorate's perceptions. Polarization and the simplification of economic issues can reinforce social divisions and increase susceptibility to populist proposals, perpetuating a cycle of political and economic instability

### **3.11. Impact of populist policies on “hard” and “soft” infrastructure**

“Hard” infrastructure refers to the physical elements that support the economy and society's well-being, such as roads, bridges, power grids, and transportation systems (Alexandro and Basrowi, 2024). Populist policies often prioritize the construction and expansion of this infrastructure as a quick way to demonstrate tangible achievements to the electorate. However, these projects are frequently poorly planned, with little consideration for long-term sustainability and maintenance. For instance, Guardino (2018) highlights how populist economic policies can lead to overinvestment in high-profile infrastructure projects that fail to address the community's real needs or environmental impacts, resulting in underutilized or low-quality infrastructure.

Conversely, “soft” infrastructure, which includes education, health, and governance systems, is equally affected by populist policies. These infrastructures rely on the development and maintenance of human and social capital, aspects that can be compromised by the short-term focus of populist policies. According to Feldmann and Popa (2022), populist strategies can result in economic policies that neglect investment in education and health, sectors critical for long-term development. This neglect can weaken soft infrastructure, limiting the state's ability to effectively enhance social well-being (Shahriar et al., 2024).

A concrete example of how populist policies affect soft infrastructure is seen in financial subsidies aimed at gaining short-term popular support, as discussed in Panigrahi's (2021) work. While these measures may provide immediate relief, they are often unsustainable and divert resources from more strategic investments in education or health, eroding the quality and accessibility of these essential services.

Although populist policies may generate visible short-term results through the expansion of “hard” infrastructure, they often do so at the expense of long-term planning and sustainability (Arzo and Hong, 2024). Simultaneously, “soft” infrastructure can suffer significant deterioration due to a lack of strategic investment, compromising the state's comprehensive development. It is essential that economic policies consider both types of infrastructure in a balanced manner to ensure sustainable and equitable growth.

### **3.12. Gaps in research on populism and economic policy**

This systematic review has identified several significant gaps in the existing literature on the relationship between populism, economic policy, and infrastructure



development. These gaps highlight critical areas where further research is needed to fully understand the implications and challenges posed by these dynamics in various political and economic contexts.

One of the primary gaps is the lack of comparative studies between hard and soft infrastructure. While there is considerable research on the general impact of populism on the economy, few studies specifically explore how populist policies differentially affect hard infrastructure (such as roads, bridges, and energy systems) compared to soft infrastructure (such as health, education, and governance systems) (Anwar et al., 2024; Scott and Hislop, 2024). More detailed research in this area would provide a better understanding of how populist priorities influence different types of infrastructure, which is crucial for developing more balanced and sustainable public policies.

Another important gap is the lack of longitudinal studies analyzing the long-term effects of populist policies on infrastructure sustainability and maintenance (Dong et al., 2024). Most literature focuses on short-term impacts, leaving a void in knowledge about how these policies may compromise infrastructure viability and functionality over time.

Additionally, there is a notable lack of studies examining the interaction between populism, economic policies, and climate change in infrastructure. Despite growing global concern about climate change, current literature does not sufficiently address how populist policies account for—or ignore—the needs for climate adaptation and mitigation in infrastructure development (Erickson et al., 2024). Since infrastructure is fundamental to climate resilience, it is essential to investigate how populism may influence policies that either reinforce or weaken this resilience.

Another area requiring further exploration is how populism can exacerbate or mitigate regional inequalities through its infrastructure policies. Most reviewed studies do not adequately consider regional disparities within countries, leaving a significant gap in understanding how infrastructure developed under populist regimes may disproportionately affect certain geographic areas, contributing to regional inequality (Li et al., 2024; Usman et al., 2024).

Finally, a detailed economic assessment of infrastructure promoted under populist policies is essential. Although some infrastructure projects may be popular and politically profitable in the short term, their long-term economic analysis—including maintenance costs and social and environmental impacts—is frequently insufficient in the existing literature.

Addressing these gaps through future research will not only enrich academic understanding of the subject but also provide crucial insights for formulating more informed and effective policies that balance infrastructure development with economic and social sustainability.

#### **4. Discussion**

This systematic review thoroughly examines the interactions between populism and economic policies, considering them as fundamental pillars for state development and growth. The literature review and critical analysis reveal several key findings that deepen our understanding of the implications of economic policy and populism,

allowing for an assessment of whether populist measures are truly beneficial or potentially counterproductive.

The analysis shows that neoliberalism, with its emphasis on deregulation and the reduction of the state's role, has significantly influenced economic policies in recent decades. However, a particular variant, neoliberal populism, combines neoliberal elements with populist rhetoric, justifying pro-corporate policies under the guise of benefiting the "people" (Guardino, 2018; Lawson, 2022). This approach has enabled the implementation of measures that favor economic elites while being framed as responses to popular demands, creating public consensus for a political agenda that ultimately increases economic inequality and concentrates power in the hands of a few (Favaretto and Masciandaro, 2022).

Globalization, driven by neoliberal principles, has facilitated market opening and reduced trade barriers, contributing to greater global competitiveness and the proliferation of capital and information flows (Harvey, 2005; Panigrahi, 2021; Rewizorski, 2021). However, this process has also been criticized for concentrating wealth and power, widening socioeconomic gaps, and undermining the sovereignty of nation-states. The review underscores that while globalization has brought significant benefits, it has also generated substantial inequalities and challenges that must be addressed to achieve more equitable and sustainable development (Binder, 2023; Monteiro and Fonseca, 2012).

The governance of democracies has been affected by globalization and neoliberal policies, which have dismantled national structures and reduced states' ability to implement effective policies that benefit their citizens (Ausserladscheider, 2024; McDonald, 2018). The fragmentation of governance, exacerbated by the outsourcing of public services and contract-based competition, has weakened the state's regulatory role, increased inequality, and complicated the implementation of coherent policies (Biermann et al., 2009; Harvey, 2005). Polycentric and fragmented governance poses significant challenges for policy coordination and effectiveness at the global level (Jordan et al., 2018; Orsini et al., 2019).

Populism presents itself as an ideology that promises quick and simple solutions to complex problems, exploiting popular discontent and perceptions of economic injustice (Arès and Bernard, 2021; Huber, 2023; Krause, 2017). However, these solutions often lack sustainable long-term planning, leading to significant economic imbalances and, eventually, financial crises (Acemoglu et al., 2013; Dornbusch and Edwards, 1991; Guiso et al., 2017; Röth et al., 2018; Smo, 2018; Sachs, 1989). Populist rhetoric polarizes society, creating divisions between "the people" and "the elites," which hinders the political and social cooperation necessary to implement effective and sustainable policies (Golder, 2016).

These dynamics have implications across several infrastructure sectors. In the transportation sector, populist policies may prioritize visible, high-impact infrastructure projects, such as building new roads or public transport networks, to gain short-term political benefits. However, these projects often lack long-term planning and consideration of their environmental and social impacts (Erickson et al., 2024), leading to sustainability issues such as inadequate maintenance that could compromise the transportation system's long-term efficiency and safety (Bernal et al., 2024).

In the energy sector, populist policies may drive large-scale energy generation projects promising energy independence and low costs for the population. However, the lack of proper integration with renewable energy sources and strategic planning can result in inefficient and environmentally harmful energy infrastructure (Zhang et al., 2024). This not only limits the state's ability to meet international climate change commitments but also risks the long-term sustainability of energy resources.

The expansion of digital infrastructure under populist policies can be used to promote access to information and digital inclusion. However, without a strategic approach, this may perpetuate the digital divide, benefiting only certain privileged sectors of society (Usman et al., 2024). Moreover, in populist contexts, digital governance could lean towards censorship and information control rather than fostering equitable and free access to technology, potentially limiting development opportunities in an increasingly digitalized global economy.

While populism can catalyze rapid infrastructure development, the associated policies often lack the planning and sustainability necessary to ensure these infrastructures benefit the population equitably and enduringly. The findings of this review suggest that without a comprehensive strategy that considers both short- and long-term impacts, infrastructure investments under populist regimes may prove counterproductive, exacerbating inequalities and compromising sustainable state development.

## **5. Conclusion**

This systematic review demonstrates that while populism may offer immediate responses to popular demands, its simplistic and polarizing approaches can be counterproductive in the long term, especially in infrastructure policy. The findings suggest that economic and governance policies related to infrastructure must be reevaluated and reformulated to ensure a balance between global economic integration and the protection of citizens' rights and well-being.

For policymakers, it is crucial to adopt sustainable and equitable approaches that address the underlying causes of public discontent while promoting inclusive and effective infrastructure development. This involves prioritizing long-term planning over immediate solutions, ensuring that infrastructure projects not only meet current needs but are also maintained and beneficial in the future.

A key practical recommendation is the implementation of rigorous evaluation and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that infrastructure projects align with sustainability and equity goals. Policymakers should encourage the participation of diverse stakeholders, including local communities, sustainability experts, and the private sector, in designing and executing infrastructure projects that truly reflect the population's needs and aspirations.

Additionally, policymakers must focus on the resilience of infrastructures, particularly in critical sectors such as transportation, energy, and digital infrastructures. This includes ensuring that projects are designed to withstand current economic demands and future challenges such as climate change and technological transformations.

To address the challenges posed by populism in economic policy, strengthening international cooperation and democratic institutions is recommended. This can help mitigate the risks associated with populist policies that often prioritize short-term results over long-term well-being. Through greater international collaboration, countries can share best practices and resources, promoting a more balanced and sustainable approach to infrastructure development.

In summary, for infrastructure policies to be truly beneficial for all segments of society, a strategic approach that combines long-term planning, sustainability, equity, and international cooperation is necessary. Only then can the challenges imposed by populism be effectively addressed, ensuring inclusive and sustainable development.

**Acknowledgments:** We would like to thank the School of Political Science and Government at the Catholic University of Santa María de Arequipa (Peru) for their support and facilitation in this matter.

**Conflict of interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## References

- Alexandro, R., & Basrowi. (2024). The influence of macroeconomic infrastructure on supply chain smoothness and national competitiveness and its implications on a country's economic growth: Evidence from BRICS countries. *Uncertain Supply Chain Management*, 12(1), 167-180. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.uscm.2023.10.007>
- Anwar, S. U., Yuan, P. Z., Wuyi, Z., et al. (2024). Nexus among the perceived infrastructural, social, economic, and environmental impact of CPEC: A case of Pakistan. *Heliyon*, 10(13), e33355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e33355>
- Arès, M., & Bernard C. (2021). From populist rhetoric to economic pragmatism President Trump's trade policy (French). *Etudes Internationales*. 52(1/2): 75–98. doi: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1086930ar>.
- Arzo, S., & Hong, M. (2024). Resilient green infrastructure: Navigating environmental resistance for sustainable development, social mobility in climate change policy. *Heliyon*, 10(13), e33524. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e33524>
- Ausserladscheider, V. (2024). Constructing a neoliberal exclusionary state: The role of far-right populism in economic policy change in post-war Austria. *Comparative European Politics*, 22(1), 128-152. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41295-022-00315-3>
- Bernal, D., Raheem, A. A., Inti, S., et al. (2024). Assessment of economic viability of direct current fast charging infrastructure investments for electric vehicles in the United States. *Sustainability*, 16(15), 6701. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16156701>
- Binder, N. (2023). Economic and social policy attitudes and populism: Vertical axes of conflict instead of ideological consistency. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, 65(3), 505–534. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11615-023-00513-y>
- Dong, G., Witlox, F., & Bie, Y. (2024). Decentralizing e-bus charging infrastructure deployment leads to economic and environmental benefits. *Communications in Transportation Research*, 4, 100139. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.commtr.2024.100139>
- Erickson, E. D., Tominac, P. A., Ma, J., et al. (2024). Evaluating the economic and environmental benefits of deploying a national-scale, thermo-chemical plastic waste upcycling infrastructure in the United States. *Computers and Chemical Engineering*, 189, 108800. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compchemeng.2024.108800>
- Favaretto, F., & Masciandaro, D. (2022). Populism, financial crises and banking policies: Economics and psychology. *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 69(4), 441–464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sjpe.12297>
- Feldmann, M., & Popa, M. (2022). Populism and economic policy: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe. 69(4), 441–464. <https://doi.org/10.1111/sjpe.12297>
- Guardino, M. (2018). Neoliberal populism as hegemony: a historical-ideological analysis of US economic policy discourse. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 15(5), 444–462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2018.1442361>
- Hunger, S., & Paxton, F. (2022). What's in a buzzword? A systematic review of the state of populism research in political science. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 10(3), 617–633. <https://doi.org/10.1017/psrm.2021.44>

- Jayasuriya, S., Zhang, G., & Yang, R. J. (2024). Towards successful economic infrastructure partnership project delivery through effective stakeholder management. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 26, 101173. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trip.2024.101173>
- Lawson, J. (2022). Mounting Turbulence in Neoliberal Globalization: Political Economy, Populist Discourse, and Policy in Alberta, Canada. *Social Sciences*, 11(5), 221. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11050221>
- Li, M., Wang, J., Dong, Y., et al. (2024). What combinations drive the urban green infrastructure development in China's Yangtze River Economic Belt?—An empirical study based on fs/QCA methodology. *Ecological Indicators*, 166, 112190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2024.112190>
- Li, X., He, P., Liao, H., et al. (2024). Does network infrastructure construction reduce urban—rural income inequality? Based on the “Broadband China” policy. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 205, 123486. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2024.123486>
- Lockwood, C., Munn, Z., & Porritt, K. (2015). Qualitative research synthesis. *International Journal of Evidence-Based Healthcare*, 13(3), 179–187. <https://doi.org/10.1097/xeb.0000000000000062>
- McDonald, I. M. (2018). Policy Forum: Economics and Populism. *Australian Economic Review*, 51(3), 396-398. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8462.12293>
- Monteiro, S. M. M., & Fonseca, P. C. D. (2012). Credibility and populism: the economic policy of the Goulart administrations in Brazil. *Estudos Econômicos (São Paulo)*, 42(3), 511–544. <https://doi.org/10.1590/s0101-41612012000300004>
- Oleg, T. (2024). Economic populism in colour—portraits from East-Central Europe (Hungarian). *Economic Review/Kozgazdasagi Szemle*, 71, 344–349. <https://doi.org/10.18414/KSZ.2024.3.344>
- Panigrahi, R. (2021). Economics of subsidies in a welfare state: Dynamics of populist policies and farm profitability. *Global Business Review*, 22(3), 705-717. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972150918816902>
- Phumma, N., & Vechsuruck, T. (2022). Economic Paradigm and Demand-Side Populist Policies in Thailand. *TRaNS: Trans - Regional and -National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 10(2), 161–172. <https://doi.org/10.1017/trn.2021.23>
- Rewizorski, M. (2021). Between hyperglobalization and national policy. Is there a way to mitigate populist risks for global economic governance in the post-Covid-19 world? *International Organisations Research Journal*, 16(2), 132–156. <https://doi.org/10.17323/1996-7845-2021-02-07>
- Rosenau, J. N. (1997). *Along the Domestic-Foreign Frontier: Exploring Governance in a Turbulent World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Röth, L., Afonso, A., & Spies, D. C. (2018). The impact of Populist Radical Right Parties on socio-economic policies. *European Political Science Review*, 10(3), 325–350. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1755773917000133>
- Schwab, K. (2016). *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.
- Scott, A., & Hislop, M. (2024). What does good green and blue infrastructure policy look like: A comparative assessment of UK national planning guidance. *Urban Forestry and Urban Greening*, 99, 128440. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2024.128440>
- Shahriar, M. F., Khanal, A., Khan, M. I., et al. (2024). Current status of underground hydrogen storage: Perspective from storage loss, infrastructure, economic aspects, and hydrogen economy targets. *Journal of Energy Storage*, 97, 112773. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.est.2024.112773>
- Sokolovska, A. M., & Kotlyarevsky, Ya. V. (2020). Scientific Discourse of Populism: Aspects of Economy and Tax Policy. *Science and Innovation*, 16(5), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.15407/scine16.05.036>
- Sun, J., Sun, S., Chen, B., et al. (2024). Charging change: Analysing the UK's electric vehicle infrastructure policies and market dynamics. *Energy Policy*, 191, 114178. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2024.114178>
- Urrútia, G., & Bonfill, X. (2010). PRISMA Statement: a proposal to improve the publication of systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Spanish). *Medicina Clínica*, 135(11), 507–511. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.medcli.2010.01.015>
- Usman, M., Khan, N., & Omri, A. (2024). Environmental policy stringency, ICT, and technological innovation for achieving sustainable development: Assessing the importance of governance and infrastructure. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 365, 121581. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2024.121581>
- Zhang, W., Burgis, C. R., Hayes, G. M., et al. (2024). Evaluation of maintenance efficiency for multiple green infrastructure designs based on water quality performance and economic costs. *Ecological Engineering*, 206, 107326. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoleng.2024.107326>