

ceytun Manifesto on Populism on the Rise



In many European countries, and especially in the middle and eastern regions of Europe, there is a certain crisis in democracy and traditional political parties appear to be weaker. This development is often associated with the rise of populism. Even centre-oriented parties use more and more populist tools in their communication.

During our 9th meeting from 13th to 15th October 2017 in Krakow, we, the members of the *central european young trade unionist network (ceytun)* addressed the question of what should be the approach of trade unions towards populism in Europe.

We focused on populism in political and trade union culture, analysed populist campaigns and speeches and attempted to define populism, its aspects, conditions and consequences. We discussed conflicts and collisions between values of trade unions and populist parties and developed possible ways how to establish strategies to keep the trade union values in the world of populism.

In our definition, populism is characterised by anti-establishment, anti-elite approaches. Populists propose easy solutions for complex issues, they claim to be speaking for the common people and they create artificial enemies. Right-wing populists are by definition illiberal and xenophobic.

To maintain trade union values in the world of rising populism, we propose:

1. To always act in line with our core values, such as freedom, equality, solidarity, justice, democracy, transparency and to never compromise about these values for any reason.
2. To invest in quality research for collecting reliable data to have a grounded base for discussions and positions and to be able to propose adequate solutions.
3. To educate and train members, including youth, about non-negotiable core trade union values.
4. To use effective and targeted ways of internal and external communication to better transmit and promote our values, solutions, positions and messages.

To face populism it is important to keep the values of trade unions and to act according to them to foster democracy (based on open discussions and collective bargaining). We feel committed to fight for a Europe where populism is not a tool to manipulate people and we support better involvement of citizens and trade union members into decision-making processes.

ceytun - central european young trade unionist network - is a platform of over fifty young trade unionists. With members from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Austria and Germany, they discuss and act on issues that concern Europe's youth. They want to create long-term relationships in order to advance cooperation among young trade unionists in Europe.