

Trump and Europe, a turning point leading to a new era?

Podemos, French National Front, and Finns Party, can three European political parties apparently opposed have a lot in common with Trump's policy?

The election of Donald Trump as President of the USA, the most powerful country in the world, raised many questions about politics all around the world. Ideas, methods, campaigns... Are we at a turning point today? After the crisis of 2008 and all the recent events such as terrorist attacks, many countries have questioned the existing political norms. The election of Trump, a nonconformist candidate, has been the perfect illustration of this re-assessment. Even if Donald Trump seems to be an alien among the political world, and is the very first elected President seen as an extreme politician, the world - and more particularly Europe seems to follow the same path.

For several reasons, American and European politics are not that easy to compare. Mostly because of the great value of religion in America and its impact on American politics - which is almost not voiced in Europe. But the ascension of the Front National in France, and of the Finns Party in Finland or the creation of Podemos in Spain also prove the desire of change that come from the population. This echoes with the election of Donald Trump in the USA, and the changes the country will be facing.

Most of the time we think in terms of left-right axis when we compare political parties. But political issues are far more complicated than that. Some parties although technically opposed have more in common than what we could believe. The election of Trump may have started a new area for European countries.



<http://www.leblogfinance.com/>

PODEMOS

First of all, in Spain there is a party with left ideology which has shaken up the politics of the country. Podemos was founded in 2014 and its leader is Pablo Iglesias. Now, this party is the second most popular in Spain and it works with the opposition. Iglesias has expressed on several occasions his displeasure with Trump's election because there are a lot of differences between them. For example, Podemos argues that the solution to the Spanish crisis is more distribution of the wealth, so somehow, they are communist. Another big difference immigration policy. While Trump is hostile to immigrants and refugees, Iglesias thinks that Spain should take them in. But, they are so different as they look? There is more than one thing in common between them.

The first and the most prominent similarity is they represent the voice of discontented people. Both know what people want to hate. They define themselves, not by what they stand for, but what they stand against: for Trump the enemy is the establishment installed in Washington and for Iglesias it is what he calls "la casta".



http://www.elespanol.com/espana/20160201/98990410_0.html

Something related with this is that most of political leaders, not only Trump or Iglesias but also Marine Le Pen or Jeremy Corbyn, attack their external enemies accusing them of being the wrong which afflicts the citizens. They defend the economic protectionism. In fact, Trump and Iglesias have a common enemy, China. In his program, Pablo Iglesias said: "I will order the Treasury secretary to report China as a monetary manipulator" and there are many people who think that Trump's attitude towards China could start a trade war.

The second similarity is their capacity to use the media to their advantage. They have a clever use of social networks and television. When they appear on television, they are categorical, not always factually accurate but hugely effective.



<http://blogs.lainformacion.com/telediaria/page/162/>

A big thing they have in common is their key proposal. They expect to spend a lot of money in public work projects, although they do not explain how they would pay for them.

Another similarity is they are against trade agreement. Trump wants to renegotiate the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and to leave the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) while Iglesias is against to the TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) with EEUU, the TISA (Trade in Services Agreement) and the CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) with Canada.

They also boast that they have financed their political campaign without borrowing money. Trump said he has financed his own campaign while Iglesias has funded his party by using collaboration quotas, crowdfunding and microcredit.

The last and the most surprising similarity concerns defence and the use of the weapons. This is not surprising about Trump because he has publicly said he does not want limits on weapons, but it is much more surprising about Pablo Iglesias. In 2012, Iglesias proclaimed on a Spanish TV show his sympathy with the American laws in that respect, saying that the right to bear arms is one of the foundations of democracy.



Unlike Podemos, the Front National in France is a right-wing populist party, led by Marine Le Pen, whose ideologies are quite close to Trump's. The Front National has been for a long time not very popular in France, it became more popular at the beginning of the 2000's with the leader Jean Marie Le Pen. He reached the second tour in 2002. However, he was overly radical, and he has been put away from the Nation Front by his daughter, Marine Le Pen. When his daughter, Marine Le Pen, took the head of the party, she tried to restore the party's image, by getting away from her father's ideology. He denies the



<https://www.dreuz.info/2016/11/12/>

implication of Pétain in the horror of the Second World War and claim that the gas chamber was a "detail of history". For many French people, Jean Marie Le Pen was going too far. Although still extreme, Marine Le Pen is much more moderate than her father.

This party advocates the exit of France from the European Union, it also recommends a protectionist policy just like Donald Trump who does not want Trade treaty with other countries. They are also both conservative in the sense that they wish to return to « traditional values ». Apart from sharing similar ideas, Trump and Marine Le Pen also use some of the same methods, like scapegoating, putting themselves as victims, provocation.

Since the beginning of the 2000's, the world has been threatened by terrorism. The events of 9/11 have marked not only the United States but the entire world. The most recent events in



<http://www.lexpress.fr/>

Europe (France, Belgium, Germany,) have plunged the world into a climate of fear. The need to fight terrorism is serious and it's an important stake for politicians. Both Donald Trump and Marine Le Pen use the method of scapegoating. They blame the country's problems on foreigners. Le Pen and

Trump want to stop immigration because according to them immigrants cause problems. They take "our" jobs, they are violent, dangerous, so we must not host them.

Provocation has always been a way to make people talk, and the aim of every politician is to be the focus of much of the attention. Trump and Le Pen use both provocation, they want people and media to talk about them. Marine Le Pen compared for example prayers in street and the Nazi occupation. This reference to a horrible part of history is a big provocation. Trump also uses provocation and some of his words are still in our minds. "I could shoot somebody and not lose voters". These words are very tough all the more when we know the debate about arms in the USA and it stay in people's mind. That's exactly what the politician wants.

They also both present themselves as outsiders. A lot of media criticize them and their ideas and they use this situation

to reinforce their campaign. The two politicians accuse the media of lynching, just because they have ideas that do not please them. They almost put themselves in the position of victims; victim of the media. This creates a feeling of sympathy. They both support ideas radically different from what we are used to. They make sure they are distinguishable from other parties and they play with this characteristic. People take an interest in them because they position themselves as offering an "alternative solution". [RS5] A radical one, certainly, but a solution that no one had the courage to offer before. People see in them a solution that nobody, before them, had proposed. The citizens want change because we are in a crisis and until now nobody has found a solution. Being radical, could it be the solution? For now, nobody has the answer.



<https://www.dreuz.info/2016/11/12/le-trump-bashing-va-faire-elire-marine-le-pen/>

Therefore, Trump and Marine Le Pen use same techniques to gain citizen's vote. They both want to change radically their country. Trump has gained the election but will the National Front will become the first party in France in May? We don't know the answer yet but Le Pen is following the same path as Trump.



<https://www.perussuomalaiset.fi/>

In northern Europe, and more precisely in Finland, the Finns Party - Perussuomalaiset in Finnish (PS) - is a centre-right political party led by Timo Soini since 1997.

Formerly called the "True Finns", the party is nowadays the Fifth biggest party of the country.

It is a very complex political party, because on the one hand, some parts of the program are derived from right-wing ideals, while others come from the left.

Indeed, the party is about the social issues with conservative social values and socio-cultural nationalism. It has a social democratic economy which can be compared to the French Socialist Party, whereas they are socially conservative such as the American Republican Party. It is said as a "centre-based populist party" or the "most left-wing of the non-socialist

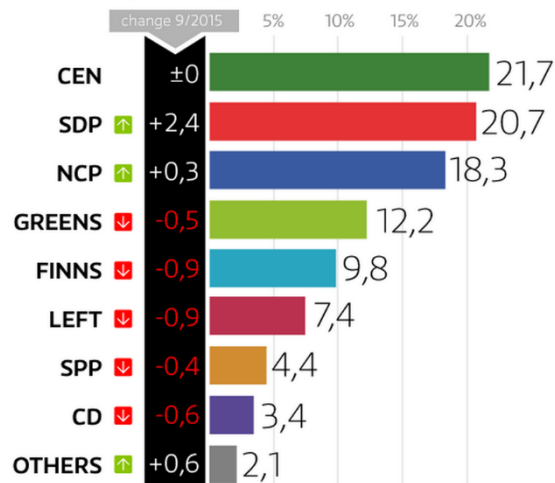


"Finns Party leader Timo Soini addresses delegates at the annual congress in Turku."
Image: Jussi Nukari / Lehtikuv. Source : <http://yle.fi>

There is no far right political party in Finland, and for two main reasons: on the one hand, they are not facing the same issues as other Western countries, or at least not at the same level. And on the other hand: they are a small country that never stop fighting to keep their national identity alive against Sweden, Russia during the Winter war in 1940 and against Germany with the Lapland war in 1944-1945.

Therefore, keeping the Finnish national identity alive is not seen as extreme as in France where multiculturalism is almost an official policy, or in the USA which were built by immigrants from all over the world. And mostly due to all the changes like mass immigration and unemployment, this trend shared by Trump is growing over the years, which makes the Finns party becoming more and more popular.

Party Support



Yle Uutiset/Taloustutkimus, 12.10.-3.11.2015, sample 2933, margin of error ±1-1,5% -yks.

Image : Yle Uutisgrafiikk.Source : <http://yle.fi>

The national priority and Public Health Care

According to the Finns Party, Finland's welfare services should be first for Finnish people. Their aim is also to prevent immigrants moving to Finland in order to take advantage of the free social and health care. In the United States, Donald Trump criticizes the well-known Obamacare (the Patient Protection and Affordable Care) – which permitted a lot of Americans to have the right to social security regardless of their pre-existing conditions.

“It's destroying our country, it's destroying our business. Obamacare is a fraud and doesn't work”, Donald Trump.

But the President still wants to keep the same kind of health care system by repealing and replacing it because he wants to “reform healthcare in general in the country”. He promised to create a completely new system which would be cheaper and more efficient. But Trump also promised to go further with health care reforms, first of all, and unlike Finland, the system is not stable and equal for all Americans. Moreover, according to Trump the reason why medicines are so much expensive is because the pharmaceutical companies were covered by the politics. He said he will negotiate the prices of medicines and therefore will be able to increase the price of public health care. Furthermore, he wants the pharmaceutical companies to relocate most of their production processes, which leads us to another major theme: The national priority and the relocation of the economic activity.



Timo Soini. Source : <https://crossingthebaltic.com>

The national priority and the relocation of the economic activity.

A national and economic protectionism is highly desired by the Finns Party and Trump. Stopping free trade and trying to minimize importation as much as possible – which would mean to be almost like an autocracy, would be an effective action against unemployment and then lead to a shrink of the public debt.

The idea of Euroscepticism

The international media has often compared the Finnish party to the other Nordic populist movements in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, but also to other identical nationalist and right-wing populist parties all over Europe that share the rejection of European Union and globalization. This point of view is shared by all types of political parties. Trump, FN, PS and Podemos are all from completely different left-right axis but nevertheless all are quite strongly Eurosceptic.

Anti-immigration rhetoric

Immigration is one of the main themes of Trump and the Finns Party campaigns. Both want immigration to be controlled,

and should only be allowed if the country can take economic advantage from it. For them, the major rule for immigrants should be "when in Rome, do as the Romans do."

"Finland needs to abandon the last 25 years of thought that immigration and multiculturalism are intrinsically necessary and desirable concepts. A generous welfare state and open borders are not compatible. High taxes do not attract high talent but tax financed public services do attract migrants seeking high standards of living. The structure of present immigration is only weakening the level of services and the financial well-being of the welfare state itself.", Finn Party manifesto.

Besides, the Party is against the idea of the "burden sharing" which is the idea of "sharing" equally the number of immigrants across Europe. They feel that this would increase the Finnish unemployment rate and would, in the end, not even be an efficient solution to the international crisis which will only get worse as the population of Africa is estimated to reach about 4 billion inhabitants before the end of the 21st century.

The party wants the refugees to be settled in places that are quite near to the troubled areas with the aim to help these people to return home as soon as the war ends. This whole mindset is shared by Donald Trump who mostly based his campaign on this topic. According to both of them, the best solution would be “result-responsibility’ and strict “condition-based aid.”



https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timo_Soini

The rise of several new kinds of political parties like Podemos, the Finns Party and the National Front, as much as the election of Donald Trump, and the Brexit, but also the growth of the Freedom Party in Austria, expresses the current temper all over Western countries nowadays. Populist parties associating far right wing nationalism with old-time left-wing welfarism have also made regular progress in the Netherlands and in Sweden for instance, and similar parties are already strong in Italy, Denmark, Austria, and France. There are general and geopolitical changes all over the world which lead people to vote for new kinds of political parties, and Trump is one of the most representative of this new era.

At first sight, Podemos, National Front and Finns party are seen as completely opposed in their programs and ideals. But politics are way more complex than that. And their comparisons need to be smart and detailed considering that each countries have a different geopolitical and historical context which obviously lead to complex and unique political parties.

Yet, there are still some similarities among the political programs and ideologies in Europe as in the USA, and most of the time, the major ones are about Euroscepticism, immigration issues, unemployment, the public health deficit and of course the public debt.

Amandine BRESSAC

Carmen COBO DE GUINDOS

Gwenaelle PUZENAT