

TILBURG UNIVERSITY – UNIVERSITY OF TRENTO

Master thesis

June 2018

**How does the European left-wing populism manage the immigration issue?
The case of Podemos**

Candidate:

Davide Rocchetti

Supervisors:

Tim Reeskens

Katia Pilati

Abstract

In Western Europe, in recent years we have witnessed a significant growth of the so-called “populist parties”. In particular, right-wing populist parties, leveraging on a xenophobic and racist rhetoric, have gained great successes in recent political elections. Despite right populist parties are more studied and more discussed in the public debate, also some left populist parties gained great popularity in recent years. Even if they have some common traits, the right and the left populism are far apart on several themes. In this thesis, I focus on how the immigration issue, which is a key theme of right populist parties, often used as an element of a spread racist and xenophobic rhetoric, is managed by the left populism. In particular, I focus on the case Podemos, a Spanish left-wing populist party which had an unexpected rise since its born in 2014. Nowadays Podemos is recognized as a new left-leaning populist party similar to other left populist parties, such as Syriza in Greece. This thesis examines the position of Podemos regarding the immigration issue, analysing with qualitative methods how this issue is managed by a left populist party, looking to electoral program, press interviews and four personal interviews to Podemos politicians. As results show, Podemos proposes an inclusive view of the society, where immigrants are part of them and so they have to be supported, and strongly criticizes the Spanish government and the European Union for their management of the immigrants’ reception. The party tends use a populist communication style in its appeals to emotions of hope. Moreover, the rhetoric oscillates between a double identity, as a party of struggle and as a party of government.

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	4
<i>Theoretical framework</i>	5
Populism: looking for a definition	5
Left populism.....	9
Left populism in context: Podemos and the Spanish case.....	11
The context: Attitudes towards immigrants in Spain	15
<i>Proposing expectations</i>	16
Inclusiveness	16
Attacks to the national government and the European Union	17
Communication style	18
<i>Data and methods</i>	18
<i>Results</i>	21
“The people” for Podemos: la solución no es el último contra el penúltimo.....	21
Against the chauvinism	25
Political participation.....	26
In defence of immigrants’ rights	27
“The answer is the pedagogy”	27
Against Rajoy and the Spanish Government.....	29
Borders and the case of Southern Spain: against the Confinement Centre for Immigrants (CIE)...	32
“Europa Fortaleza”	34
A populist speech?	37
Against the logic of the fear.....	40
<i>Discussion</i>	40
<i>Conclusions: limitations and ideas for future researches</i>	44
<i>Bibliography</i>	46
<i>Appendix 1 – Press Interviews by year</i>	49
<i>Appendix 2 - Questionnaire</i>	52

Introduction

In recent years the equilibrium within the political system of Western European countries has changed significantly (Abts & Rummens, 2007; March, 2011; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). Europe have witnessed a widespread decrease in consensus among mainstream parties, both on the left and on the right sides of the political spectrum. This downturn is linked to a greater difficulty for the traditional parties to represent the needs of the voters, especially of the weakest socioeconomic groups (Kriesi et al., 2006). Simultaneously, Western European democracies witnessed an increase in consensus for the populist parties (Kriesi & Pappas, 2015). This phenomenon is the result of several factors. First of all, this is an effect of globalization and denationalization processes that lead to the formation of a new structural cleavage in Western European countries, opposing the “winners”, those who consider themselves to have benefitted from globalization, against the “losers”, as those who see their life chances reduced by the effects of this process are called (Kriesi et al., 2006). Another important key element in the recent growth of the populism is the Great Recession in 2008, which mainly hit the most vulnerable social groups and emphasized the difference between the “winners” and the “losers” (Teney et al., 2014). According to Kriesi et al (2006), this structural dichotomy led to a strong successes of populist parties, in particular of the right-wing ones. Moreover, the growth of right-wing populist parties in the last decades is accompanied by an increasing intolerance towards immigrants across Europe (Wadsworth et al., 2016; Rooduijn, 2017). In fact, considering the most popular xenophobic parties that rose since the 90s, such as Front National in France and Lega Nord in Italy, one of the linchpins of their rhetoric are the attacks against the immigrants (Mudde, 2007). This rhetoric, based on the fear of the others and on a nostalgic idea of the nation, had bring the right-wing populism to have positive strong impact on the electoral results (Ruzza & Fella, 2011; Moffit). Among several recent examples, there is for instance the case of “Brexit”, which is strictly connected to the spread of a xenophobic rhetoric. The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from European Union was decided by a popular referendum, on 23 June 2016 and the “Brexit” referendum’s result is linked to the increased popularity of the UKIP, a British populist right-wing party (Wadsworth et al., 2016). Even if a definition of populism is lacking in the literature, populist parties share some key elements: the defence of the common needs of the people, the attack to the elite and the will to represent the general will.

However, simultaneously, especially after the economic crisis started in 2008 and the policies of austerity promoted by the European Union, there is a growth of the left-wing populism. Even if populism seemed to be experience a kind of “marriage of convenience” with the radical right in

Europe (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013), recently new forms of left populism appeared also in this continent. This phenomenon is smaller, occurred in more isolated but still interesting cases. The left populism spirit is diametrically different from the right one but there are also several of common points, such as the anti-elitism rhetoric and the primarily role assigned to the people, as the main actor where the politics should consider in their acting (March, 2017).

The aim of my thesis is to investigate the attitude of the new wave of left populism towards one of the main key themes of radical right rhetoric: the immigration issue (Ruzza & Fella, 2011). In order to study this aspect, I consider the case of *Podemos*, a populist left-wing Spanish party that represents with the Greek party SYRIZA one of the two peaks of the new wave of left populism that has arisen in contemporary Europe. In the previous literature, there is not a case study about the approach of left populist parties on the immigration issues in the European context, indeed the immigration and the rhetoric around it has been considered only from the radical right point of view. The goal of my thesis is to go to fill this lack, going to investigate how *Podemos*, one of the most influential populist party of the European left (important for presence in the national parliament and for the number of votes obtained in the elections), manage the immigration issue.

Theoretical framework

Populism: looking for a definition

The rise of populist parties in liberal democracies dates back to the 1980s (Mudde, 2004). In recent years, we are witnessing a new wave of populism in European politics (Mudde, 2004; Rooduijn et al., 2014). On the right side of the political spectrum, parties such as the *Front national* in France or the *Lega* in Italy are experiencing a great success. On the left instead, the cases of *Podemos* in Spain and *Syriza* in Greece represent different examples of this phenomenon. Beyond populism on the fringes of the political spectrum, scholars also underline the increasing importance in Western Europe of a kind of ‘mainstream populism’, as well as a ‘centre-right populism’ or “centre-left populism”, considering for instance Silvio Berlusconi and Tony Blair as best examples in Europe of this category. Moreover, in wider terms, the populist discourse has become mainstream in the political arena of contemporary western democracies. For this reason, describing the rise of populism, Cas Mudde (2004) referred to it as a “populist zeitgeist”.

Despite the fact that academic attention to populism has sharply increased in recent years, it still today creates debates among scholars. Populism as a concept in social analysis has always been ambiguous and vague and the idea of populism is marked by high degree of contestability (Moffit &

Tormey, 2013). Many different definitions are used, and at the same time there are many ways of measuring it (Mudde, 2004). A commonly accepted definition is still lacking, with scholars disagreeing on categorization, labels, and boundaries between its different definitions. Indeed, the same word is used to describe several items: a style, a discourse, a strategy or an ideology (Moffit & Tormey, 2013). In addition, populism takes a different shape if it arises in liberal democracies or in other forms of government (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2011). For this reason, some scholars argue that there is an abuse of this term in the public discourse, in the academic world and in the mainstream debate, in particular on the media. Moreover, the complexity related to the definition of populism is that the same label has been used to describe many and very different historical phenomena, such as regimes, movements and parties, and often it has been used only in a pejorative tone, where populism is considered as a pathology produced by the corruption of democratic ideas (Canovan, 1999; Abts & Rummens, 2007). Moreover, due to its vagueness and its mainstream use, some scholars argue that the concept of populism lost its analytical value and has become a meaningless label (Moffit & Tormey, 2013).

In order to summarize the several definitions of populism present in the literature, there are four different dimensions that concerns it and are hereby presented: (i) the rhetoric, (ii) the ideology, (iii) the communication style and (iv) the organization (Caiani & Della Porta, 2011; Caiani & Graziano, 2016; Moffit & Tormey, 2014).

First, as a political rhetoric (i), populism tend to use an aggressive and unscrupulous propaganda, that abuse of a diffuse public sentiment of anxiety and dissatisfaction in the society. Populist rhetoric is based on an appeal to the power of the common people, against the corrupt oligarchy that oppress them (Abts & Rummens, 2007). Scholars consider the antagonistic relationship between the “silent majority” and the elites as crucial in the populist theory (Canovan, 1999, Mudde 2004; Rooduijn et al., 2014; March, 2017). This relationship is conceived mainly in Manichean terms: in fact, in the populist view, the world is divided into the “good” and the “evil”, where the “good” side is represented by the common people and the “evil” one by the elite. This is the reason why Mudde (2004) considers the populism as “moralistic” because it makes a judgment on a part of the society and it put this moral opinion as the chore of its rhetoric, where the concept of people is considered as a virtuous community and the elites as a pathological entity. So, populism discourse invokes a generic struggle against the established structure, against his privileges, his corruption, and above all it criticizes the indifference that the elite has towards “common people” and their real needs. The elite is accused by populists of using politics as an instrument to satisfy its desires, to perpetuate its socioeconomic superiority and to maintain the status quo. If scholars agree that the heart of populism lies in the antagonism between the “good people” and the “evil elite”, also the concept of the “elite”

is broad. Sometimes the accused is the cultural elite (so intellectuals and journalists), sometimes it is the economic one (the so called 1%), but more often it is the political elite (Rooduijn & Akkerman, 2017). There are several labels used by populists to define their enemy, as the elite, the establishment, the state or the system (Moffit & Tormey, 2013).

Moreover, populism can be defined as an ideology (ii). First, this way to define it has been strongly criticized, because of the populism vagueness (Canovan, 1999). However, in order to define populism in this way, the most widely-used and shared definition used by scholars has been conceived by Mudde (2004). He argues that populism is “an (thin centered) ideology that considers society ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, the pure people versus the corrupt elite, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people”. Mudde describes the populism as a thin or weak ideology, which tend to be a less solid than others such as socialism or liberalism. However, its “thinness” allows it to create alliance with other ideologies. For this reason, Taggart (2000) defines populism as a “chameleonic” ideology that needs to ally to other “stronger” ideologies, as socialism or nationalism. In fact, according to Ruzza and Fella (2011), a specific feature of this ideology is its ‘indeterminacy’ that ‘responds to its need to be adaptable’. Main elements of this ‘thin-centered ideology’ are the references to antagonistic relations between the people and the elite, the idea of restoring popular sovereignty, and a conception of the people as a homogeneous body. Considering the populist ideology as presented in the Mudde’s definition, the politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* of the people (Mudde, 2004). According to Abts and Rummens (2007), populists want to restore power to the people and re-establish a popular sovereignty, thinking that politics and its components must be direct responses to the needs of the people. So what Mudde (2004) call “*volonté générale*” must be the real indication to where political institutions must move. This idea of representing the general will is theoretically possible because populism tend to stigmatize the people as a homogeneous unit, with a monolithic vision that does not include complex and varied facets, but only a unity that expresses what are the common needs of the people (Abts and Rummens, 2007). That is the reason why Abts and Rummens (2007) made a modernization of the Mudde’s definition, defining the populism as “*a thin-centered ideology which advocates the sovereign rule of the people as a homogeneous body*”. Therefore, according to the authors populism gives a limited view also of the structure of power in society, which is completely condemned as corrupt and incompetent (Abts and Rummens, 2007).

Third, populism has been also defined as a model of organization (iii), characterized by the presence of a charismatic leadership (Taggart, 2000). In particular, the presence of a charismatic leader, such as Le Pen in France, Salvini in Italy, Tsipras in Greece or Wilders in the Netherlands,

adopting a certain style and rhetoric is seen as a crucial characteristic of populism (Caiani & Della Porta, 2011). This presence is considered fundamental for the electoral success of the movement, thanks to his rhetorical abilities to persuade the masses in favour of the populist ideas. The charismatic leader ('the saviour' as he has been called by Taggard) is the only one who embodies the will of the 'common people' and is able to speak on their behalf (Taggard, 2000). However, this point remains discussed by scholars. In fact, there are those who consider it as a characteristic that defines populism and who instead as an instrument that facilitates its success (Mudde, 2004). His presence is clearly part of the phenomenon, considering that the current success of populist actors it is always accompanied by the presence of a charismatic leader, able to speak to the people in an emotional and persuasive way.

Finally, populism has been considered as a special style of communication (iv) (Caiani & Della Porta, 2011; Moffit & Tormey, 2013). Populists are successful due to their role as 'taboo breakers and fighters against political correctness' (Mudde, 2004). They usually appeal to emotions of fear and enthusiasm, by employing highly emotional, slogan-based, tabloid-style language. They tend to adopt a demagogic style, and refer to resentment, offering easy solutions for complex problems, and combining 'verbal radicalism and symbolic politics with the tools of contemporary political marketing to disseminate their ideas among the electorate' (Caiani and Della Porta, 2011). Moreover, populist parties tend to use generic terms such as "the people," "democracy," or "sovereignty" without considering them in their complexity. Scholars, however, converge in seeing as a core nature of populism its focus on 'the people'. Populist movements systematically attempt to create a direct connection between the people and the political power, bypassing the electoral process. They often consider the people's aspirations to be betrayed by corrupt political elites (politicians both from the government and the opposition) and suspect that a conspiracy against the people is taking place (Taggart, 2000). Moreover, in their communication style there is always the presence of the concept of crisis (Moffit & Tormey, 2013). In fact, populism gets its impetus from the perception of a crisis, or a threat. The imminence of a fact leads to the demand to act decisively and immediately. Crises in the populist communication style are often related to the breakdown between citizens and their representatives, but can also be related to immigration, economic difficulties, perceived injustice, military threat, social change or several other issues (Moffit & Tormey, 2013). Moreover, according to Laclau (2005), "*the discursive logic of populism consists in taking advantage of a context of crisis to draw a divisive line between "us" (the people) and "them" (the elite)*".

However, the definition of the 'people' remains ambiguous in the use of populists, and competing interpretations try to clarify who 'the people' actually are. Some scholars have given a class interpretation to it, arguing that populists mean not all the people but only a certain class segment

(Mudde, 2004) . Some scholars argue that the appeal to the people is just a rhetorical device, useful for obtaining consent, but which in reality does not refer to any existing group of people (Mudde, 2004). For example, in order to define this issue, Taggart (2000) introduced the idea of “the heartland”. In fact, refusing the view of the populist concept of the people in terms of class or ethnicity, Taggart refer to ‘the heartland’, as a place where ‘in the populist imagination, a virtuous and unified population resides” (Taggart, 2000). The notion of the heartland helps to emphasize that the people in the populist propaganda are not real and inclusive but are a mythical and constructed sub-set of the whole population. In other words, the people of the populist are an “imagined community”, linked to the idea of nation presented by nationalists (Laclau, 2005). In this sense, Laclau argues that, *“whether nationalism, for instance, is going to become a central signifier in the constitution of popular identities depends on a contingent history impossible to determine through a priori means. The sense of nationalism is tenuous at best and could easily be displaced by other forms of collective allegiance. [...] The idea of a nation’s existence – and one’s belonging to it – are concept that shift constantly”* (Laclau, 2005). At the same time, the notion of the heartland underlines the main weakness of the populist idea of the people: its vagueness. It is an imaginary concept that has consequently been used differently from populist to populist, even within one country (Taggart, 2000).

Finally, in the previous literature, there are several studies that have observed the notion of populism in his relationship with democracy (Canovan, 1999; Abts & Rummens, 2007). In general, there are two different and opposite views of the populism phenomenon in the democratic system: there are those who see it as a pure and genuine produced by the democracy itself and who, on the other hand, consider it as a degeneration, as the democracy in its worst form (Abts & Rummens, 2007). However, the relationship between democracy and populism remains ambiguous and discussed.

Left populism

The relationship between populism and the left has been less studied than the one regarding the right-side, but it exists since the 19th century (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018). Socialism, since it was born, had a strong populist approach, in its attacks against the elites and its consideration of the people as a monolithic block (mainly considering the people as the proletariat). Similarly, the European radical left in the sixties and seventies used a populist rhetoric, presenting the society struggle as a conflict between the rich elites and the lower social classes (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018). Nowadays, a left-wing populism is explicitly claimed from a theoretical point of view. The “new goal” is to revitalize the democracy from the conflict that would oppose the “civic and conscious people” to neoliberal policies

and to re-establish popular sovereignty based on equality. This populism is at the same time critical of representative democracy, and therefore illiberal, and fervent promoter of direct democracy. A conceptual propensity of this kind has no counterparts to the right (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018).

The history of the recent left-wing populism starts from Latin America, from the experiences of that continent, with Venezuela as a model and Hugo Chávez as a leading figure. In the last twenty years, several studies and books around the left populism have been very successful in the intellectual circles of the left (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018). In Europe, in recent decades populist formations emerged from the extreme left, and in some cases have also achieved considerable successes: *Die Linke* (The Left) in Germany, *Parti de gauche* (Left Party) in France, which in 2016 has been transformed into *France insoumise*, *Podemos* in Spain or even SYRIZA in Greece, which won the national election and made a government with Alexis Tsipras. These parties are not identical to each other and they have different features, even if they share a value background. An important common aspect is their complex relationship with the traditional radical left and with the traditional political spectrum. In fact, parties as *France insoumise*, SYRIZA and *Podemos* oscillate between loyalty to their left-wing origins, and they tend to show that they are the “real left”, opposing themselves to the traditional left-wing parties, and their propensity to overcome the left-right division to address other voters and citizens (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018). Recently a left-wing populism has emerged, that is a populism that preserves elements from the ideological background of the left, trying at the same time to emancipate itself from the left traditional matrix. The new left-wing populism wants to be the expression of the “vox populi” and not only of the proletarian “vanguard” anymore (Diamanti & Lazar, 2018). According to March (2017), this new wave of left-wing populism cannot be quantified solely as a return of communism, or as neo-communism, as the media tend to do often. However, the attempt to overcome the vision of the politic as a class struggle is not always working out: March, studying the British case, have showed how some left populist parties tend to refer to the people still as the “the working-class majority”.

Among the others, Syriza is the party that has had the most striking electoral successes (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014). Syriza is a Greek party founded in 2004 as a coalition of radical left parties. At 2012 national elections, it became the second party for number of votes (climbing from 4.60% to 26.89% of the vote) and so the main party leading the opposition to Samaras’ government, which was strongly accusing of corruption (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014). In 2015 Syriza won the national elections two times, first in January and later in new elections in September, becoming the first party of the Greek parliament and so creating a government, where Syriza is the largest party in the Hellenic Parliament and its leader is Alexis Tsipras is the current Prime Minister of Greece.

Although some authors have argued that right and left populisms are very similar (they share some common points as the anti-elitism, the distrust of liberal democracy and an emphasis on plebiscitarianism), there are strong differences between the two types of populism (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). Considering the idea that the two populisms are similar, there is the “theory of extremes”, that argue that the two fringes of the political spectrum share some common points of the populist rhetoric. This theory has been strongly sustained especially after that SYRIZA decided to ally with the ANEL, a right-wing populist party, in order to have a political majority in the parliament (March, 2017). However, several scholars argue that left and right populism have different nature (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013; March, 2017). If the right-wing populism is fundamentally exclusionary (for instance, with their ethnocentrism and nationalism), the left-wing populism is primarily inclusionary, focused on policies of economic, cultural and political incorporation (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). Moreover, the inclusiveness of the left-wing populist parties is often based on the “particularism”, focusing their attention to specific subgroups in the society (as women, unemployed people, homosexuals and immigrants). In addition, the relationship with the “host ideology” to populism varies between the two types: in fact, populism is less ideologically important to the right than the left, who are populists first and socialists second (March, 2017). In fact, according to the author, the main difference between the two kinds of populism is the underlying ideology: on one side there is the right’s nativism that is based on the exclusionism and an identitarian approach, on the other side, the left populism relies on socio-economic inclusivity (March, 2017). Moreover, the two types of populism differ in their attack to the “enemies of the people”: the left attack is dyadic, focused against the leading elite, while the right attack is triadic, against the elite and the out-groups (as, for instance, immigrants). Finally, the left-wing populism tend to be Eurosceptic, but in a different way in confront of the right one: in fact, it tends to support the idea of Europe as egalitarian project, but it is critic against how the European Union is moving, with the austerity policies and its submission to the economic oligarchy (March, 2017).

Therefore, March (2017) defines the left-populism as “relatively civilized” because it emphasizes formal social and political egalitarianism and inclusively rather than the openly exclusivist anti-immigrant or anti-foreigner concerns of the populist right, but if it becomes truly populist the exaltation of the demands of the people as the highest value is implicitly exclusivist, becoming the “tyranny of the majority”. Finally, according to March (2017), the challenge for the left is to become populist in style, but not populist in substance.

Left populism in context: Podemos and the Spanish case

Podemos is a left-wing party founded in 2014 in Spain. The party was born as a direct consequence of the so-called “15-M movement”, a square movement protesting against austerity policies and the political corruption (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). Podemos had a striking increase of popularity, since its born. In fact, at its first public appearance, in the 2014 European Parliament elections, Podemos received 7.98% of the total preferences, then, at the elections for the national parliament on December 2015, Podemos received 21% of the vote and became the third largest party in the parliament (Casero-Ripòlles et al., 2016). Moreover, today Podemos is the second largest political party in Spain by number of members after the Partido Popular (PP) (Kiouпкиolis & Pérez, 2018). Podemos has been defined by scholars as an element of upheaval in the Spanish political landscape, due to its exceptional impact that goes beyond any surprising election results (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). On the one hand, it has introduced new frames, issues and an innovative communication style into the Spanish political life, forcing all political actors to respond, in one way or another, to its criticism and proposals. On the other hand, its uniqueness in the left world have been a source of inspiration for many progressive people across Western Europe (Sola & Rendueles, 2017).

The context where Podemos born is related to the specific situation that Spain was living in that period. Starting from the 2009, Spain witnessed a severe crisis of the liberal-democratic consensus, the system that had been predominant in the previous two decades in the country (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). In fact, until the 1978, Spain was under the military dictatorship of Francisco Franco and after the fall of the regime, the new form of government that was put in place has undergone a “post-democratic” shift, based on a two-party political system. The change from dictatorship to liberal democracy in Spain was a transition, where old institutions remain alive also in the new settlement (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). This shift to a liberal democracy was consolidated in 1981, when coup d’état was averted. After that, mainstream parties of the center-left (the PSOE, *Partido Socialista Obrero Español*) and center-right (the PP, *Partido Popular*) led executives supported by parliamentary majorities in the two subsequent decades. However, this regime was based on foundations that revealed their fragility after the Great Recession in 2008 (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). The recent ‘post-democratic’ crisis, as it is presented by Podemos, consists in the convergence of the center-left and the center-right parties on neoliberalism positions, the increasing unresponsiveness of political elites in confront of increasing social demands, a widespread corruption and a consequent growing discontent of citizens with the Spanish representative democracy (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). In 2011, the proportion of votes going to the two majority parties had lost 11 percentage points. In the next year more than 80% of the Spanish population had a negative opinion about the current political parties, a striking result if we consider that in the 1980s these same parties had around 60% of the electorate (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). In this context, there was clearly an opportunity to “test

a populist hypothesis”, and as in the case of Greece and SYRIZA, the economic crisis was the crucial moment for a populist turn (Sola & Rendueles, 2017).

As mentioned, the birth of Podemos is due to the phenomenon of the 15M movement, in which immediately emerge that needs which will lead to the foundation of the party. Within the movement also start to emerge some charismatic speakers, who will later have important roles within Podemos. The movement stems from the popular discontent derived by the precarious political and economic situation presented above. 15M movement was born in May 2011, when assemblies of Spanish citizens decided to meet in city squares and to discuss how to solve the problems that were destroying the Spanish democracy. In that context, the movement was able to voice the widespread sentiment of asphyxiation and collective discontent spread in the Spanish society (Kiouпкиolis, 2016). At the beginning the main points of their program were two: first, the criticism to the political system (with attacks on corruption and requests for transparency) and second, the criticism to the economic system (with attacks to the economic inequality and to neoliberal policies). The “*indignados*”, as the demonstrators of the movement were called, were claiming for a new popular sovereignty, accusing the politicians in charge of corruption and also being guilty of the economic crisis that was affecting the country at the time. And they were able to put these issues at the center of the public debate. The slogans that run in those squares were strongly aggressive, publicly attacking the oligarchy that reigned in the Spanish buildings of power and calling them to respond to their faults (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). According to Sola e Rendueles (2017), the form with which these points were proposed recall the populisms of Latin America, where there is a vision of the “we” inclusive against “their” corrupt.

Starting from the lesson of recent populist experiences in Latin America and the maturity acquired during the 15M protests, Podemos designed its own populist strategy in 2014. First, Podemos’ rhetoric drew an imaginary line dividing two opposing parts of the society: the people versus the elite. The concept of the ‘*casta*’ used by the party is broad, it includes politicians, bankers, and any other privileged group; a group of enemies to which the people can express their indignation against. Although Podemos’ rhetoric tends to use other dichotomies (for instance, the new politic against the old one), this is the most successful one, to the extent that the term ‘*casta*’ entered in the everyday language (Ramiro & Gomez, 2016). Through this dichotomous division, Podemos tried to articulate the broadest possible political bloc out of the spread social discontent provoked by the economic and political crisis. In order to do so, it resorted to a discourse far from the classical repertoire of the left. For instance, the class identity had an important decline: in the new rhetoric “the people” is an all-inclusive concept.

At the ideological level, the populism of Podemos is considered a European version of ‘left-wing’ populism. Not only many of its leaders come from activism and the radical left, but also most of its electoral program is linked to that of the traditional alternative left: restructuring of foreign debt, tax reform, progressive state intervention in the economy, women’s and immigrants’ rights. However, one of the key elements in Podemos has been the avoidance of presenting itself as a left-wing alternative. According to its leaders, the traditional left-right axis was inadequate to represent the voice of all the people. In fact, within the Spanish political landscape, Podemos accuses the PSOE and the traditional left in general of lack of social sensitivity (Medina & Correa, 2016).

Moreover, the increasing political power granted had led to an inevitable transition to a more institutionalized shape, also looking on the electoral programs (Kiouпкиolis, 2016). From a rhetoric based only on the challenge to the political system, Podemos started to be more propositive, also in order to avoid accusations of demagogy (Sola & Rendueles, 2017). The criticism of the *casta* has tended to disappear, and specific policies have gained prominence. In this evolution, some of them, such as debt default or universal basic income, have been tempered. In this sense, Podemos needed to reconcile its image of political outsider with the negotiation of pacts to support left-wing governments at the local level (Sola & Rendueles, 2017).

During its electoral campaigns, Podemos opts for a clear, direct message that connected with the critical mass that was identified with 15-M. The communicative ability is crucial, presenting complex political diagnoses into simple and straightforward concepts. This strategy includes using emotions as mobilization mechanisms, especially trying to translate the discontent in hope. Starting from the name of the party, “*Podemos*” (“We can”) or to their main slogan “*Si se puede*” (“Yes, it is possible”), it is clear the attempt to appeal to the emotions of the people. In the 2014 European elections, the Podemos’ slogan was “*When was the last time you felt excited about voting?*”, which show clearly the idea of using emotional slogans in order to target people feeling dissatisfied with traditional political parties in a complex political context. The party also used an emotional discourse on its social network channels. According to Casero-Ripòlles et al. (2016), around two-third of the posts published on social networks included emotional contents, mainly positive emotions, such as hope or enthusiasm.

As I have already said, Podemos has been compared to other similar experiences across the Europe. One of these is SYRIZA (Kiouпкиolis, 2016). In addition, several times in the past the party has been also compared to the Five Star Movement, an Italian populist party. Some evident similarities are undeniable: the fight against *caste*, the use of online tools for a more efficient “direct democracy”, the declared distance from the so-called traditional politics (Ramswell, 2017). Moreover, Podemos and M5S started more or less in the same period (the first in 2014 and the second in 2009, both after

the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008), or at least they have had a peak of success in recent years, in two countries that from an economic and cultural point of view they are rather similar. Both countries, Spain and Italy, have been profoundly affected by the crisis, both have a fascist past behind them and in both of these last years there has been a profound crisis in the mainstream parties. However, as well highlighted several times by members of Podemos, the difference in opinion on the migratory question makes good the emergence of the ideological distance between the two movements. If the Five Star Movement does not seem to have a precise position on the migratory question, or when it expresses it, it appears (in the current political mirror) near right-wing position (Ramswell, 2017). Podemos, on the other hand, has a clear left-wing position, even though this party itself declares itself beyond the old conception of the left. In fact, according to Ramswell (2017), Podemos have an inclusive view of the weakest groups of the society: it fights for homosexual rights, for gender equality and it proposes an inclusive immigration policy.

The context: Attitudes towards immigrants in Spain

Finally, in order to support my expectations around the position of Podemos on the immigration issue, is important to present the electoral context. According to Rooduijn et al. (2017), an overview of the demand side is crucial in order to understand why a party decide to take a certain position on a specific issue, as, in this case, the immigration one.

As a consequence of the arrival of immigrants from different parts of the world, most Western European countries have seen the emergence since the mid-1980s of new grievances mobilised by radical right parties (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014). During the 1980s, in Spain these grievances were not relevant, also because of the low numbers of immigrants in the country. In fact, only at the end of the 1990s the social structure of Spanish society started to change because of impact of the immigration. Moreover, in the last twenty years the number of foreign legal residents increased considerably, as the number of illegal immigrants in Spain (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014). For instance, between the 1996 and 2009, coinciding with the boom of foreigners coming into the country, there is a significant growth of anti-immigrant attitudes in Spain. Besides, according to Alonso & Kaltwasser (2014). this peak coincides with a period of high TV news coverage. However, the saliency of immigration as a main problem started to decrease with the shock of the economic crisis in 2008 (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014). Although legal immigration continued to grow, the number of illegal immigrants decreased between 2010 and 2013, probably as a result of the Great Recession. In 2011 the number of Spaniards who thought that immigration was the main problem in Spain had fallen below 10 per cent, a drop of nearly 40 points since 2006. Moreover, at the same time, the number of Spanish people who considered the unemployment as the country's main problem was

around the 82 per cent (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014). In 2012, when illegal immigration had started to drop, only five per cent of Spaniards identified immigration as the main problem in Spain. In summary, Spaniards' anti-immigration sentiments were at their peak during the period of economic boom (the 2000s), but with the economic crisis, immigration was no longer considered a major problem and attitudes towards immigration softened (Alonso & Kaltwasser, 2014). Also considering the perception of immigrants in Spain in comparison of the rest of Europe, we can say that the anti-immigrant attitudes nowadays are lower than the European average (Eurobarometer, 2017). In particular, they remain low compared to the average of Southern Europe. In fact, according to the Eurobarometer analysis of 2017, in Spain the immigration issue is less felt than in the rest of Europe. Answering to the question "*What do you think are the two most important issues facing our country at the moment?*" the immigration for Spanish respondent is the number 10 on 13 issues. Looking to the European average answers, immigration is the second "important issue" on 13. Still considering the report made by Eurobarometer in 2017, the two issues considered as most important for Spanish respondents are both regarding the economic issue: the unemployment and the economic situation. This data confirm that the immigration issue is not perceived as a primary problem of the Spanish society by voters (Eurobarometer, 2017).

Proposing expectations

Inclusiveness

First, I want to investigate the inclusiveness of Podemos on the immigration issue. In the manichean dichotomy between the elites and the people proposed by the populist propaganda, the notion of "people" is central, but it is often vague and broad (Mudde, 2004). Here I want to analyse how this concept is defined by Podemos, how much it is flexible and inclusive. As we have seen, left-wing populism tends to propose policies in order to have an inclusive society, to help the weakest social groups, as immigrants, women, unemployed and homosexuals (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). I expect that Podemos presents a comprehensive concept of "the people", which refers also to a subgroup of the society as the immigrants are. Moreover, I suppose that its inspiration to the Latin America left populist experiences will influence its inclusiveness. In this sense, Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013) presented how in Venezuela and Bolivia the left-wing populist governments were inclusive on the three dimensions considered by authors: symbolic, political and material dimension. Inclusion on the material dimension refers to the distribution of state resources, both monetary and non-monetary, to specific groups in society. In particular, in the inclusive approach of Maduro and

Moralez, some groups were specifically targeted to receive more state resources, in order to overcome long-established patterns of discrimination against these groups (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). Regarding the material inclusion, I expect that Podemos proposes policies in order to help immigrants on a material point of view, with specific proposals referred to this part of the society. So, I suppose that the party avoid any form of chauvinism in the distribution of state resources. In political terms, inclusion refers essentially to the political participation. Political inclusion specifically aims to increase the political participation of some groups. In the cases of Latin America, the groups considered were already part of the electorate, but they were ignored and marginalized by the political establishment (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). In my analysis I will refer more to the right to vote and the grant of the citizenship to foreign people, looking how the party try to include immigrants in the political life. Also, in this case, I expect that Podemos has an inclusive approach, promoting the facilitation of the right to vote for foreign people and also of the grant of the citizenship. Finally, there is the symbolic dimension. According to Mudde and Kaltwasser (2013), this is the least tangible one, but not the least important. With regard to populism, it essentially alludes to setting the boundaries of “the people” and “the elite (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). In this dimension I decided to analyse how the party presents its concept of “the people” and if immigrants are considered as a part of this community. Moreover, I also decided to describe how Podemos inserts immigrants in their anti-casta rhetoric. Finally, I decided to consider appeals to respect human rights of immigrants in this dimension, as a component of the symbolic defence of who they consider as a part of the people. In this last dimension, I suppose that Podemos has an open and flexible concept of the people, where the immigrants and refugees are part of it. In this sense, I expect that the party advocates a respect of immigrants’ rights. Finally, I suppose that this symbolic inclusion of immigrants is also supported by the idea that, as we have seen in the theoretical part, the voters are more worried about the political and economic situation, rather than the immigration flow. So, I expect that Podemos feels coherent in its aim of representing the needs of the people, even supporting the immigrants’ integration.

Attacks to the national government and the European Union

Second, I want to analyse if Podemos tends to blame the European Union and the Spanish government on the mismanagement of the emergency. As we have seen in the theoretical part, Podemos has aggressive positions towards both the Spanish government and the European Union, accusing them of having undertaken wrong policies in recent years (Kioupkiolis, 2016; Ramiro & Gomez, 2016). In their anti-elitist view, the European Union is accused of imposing wrong policies of austerity, which aggravate the already precarious condition of the weaker socioeconomic groups (Ramiro & Gomez, 2016). A similar rhetoric is used against the National government and the Popular

Party, which is accused of not representing the real needs of the common people (Kioupkiolis, 2016; Sola and Rendueles, 2017). Here I want to see if Podemos attacks both these institutions on their management of the immigration issue. Moreover, I want to analyse what are main accusations move to them. In this second part of the analysis, I am expecting that the party criticizes strongly both of the institution considered. Regarding the European Union, I expect that the party accuses it for the absence of a comprehensive policy on this issue, especially around the reception of immigrants. On the other hand, I expect that Podemos criticize the Popular Party and the national government for its scarce interest regarding this issue and especially regarding rights of immigrants.

Communication style

Finally, I want to investigate how Podemos tend to present this issue, both in electoral programs and through the media. According to Mudde (2004), a typical characteristic of populist rhetoric is to present simple solutions to complex problems, using highly emotional and simplistic discourse. In this sense, I want to analyse the Podemos' politicians communication style, looking if they use mechanisms of simplification, using slogan-based, tabloid-style language, and if they appeal to emotions of fear and enthusiasm or resentment (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014; Caiani & Graziano, 2016; Bracciale & Martella, 2017). So, as suggested by Moffitt & Tormey (2014), mainly two aspects are going to be considered in order to describe the Podemos' communication style: the "emotionalization", which means the attempt to appeal to emotions of the voters, and the "simplification", which refers to the oversimplification of issues and solutions. As we have seen in the theoretical part, scholars have identified both these characteristics in the discourse of Podemos. In particular, regarding the emotionalization, Casero-Ripòlles et al. (2016) argue that the party tend to promote emotional contents, referring mainly to positive emotions, such as hope or enthusiasm. So, on the emotionalization dimension, I suppose that Podemos attempt to appeal to the hope than to the fear. Finally, regarding the simplification, I am expecting that Podemos tend to use a sloganesque discourse, in some cases oversimplifying a complex issue as the immigratory one.

Data and methods

The analysis is based on three different sources of data: the electoral program, press interviews and personal interviews made by myself to four Podemos' politicians.

First of all, I have taken in consideration the electoral program presented for the general elections of 20th December 2015. This is the latest program presented by the party and it is the one available

on the official website of the party. From the electoral program, which is composed by 394 points, I have previously selected 20 proposals regarding the immigration issue.

Moreover, I have taken into account 41 press interviews. The selection of the interviews has been committed in two ways: first, I have manually searched online press interviews, exploring newspaper websites, Podemos website and social network profiles of Podemos' members. Secondly, several interviews have been suggested directly by the Podemos politicians that I have interviewed. In general, two key-elements have been taken into account in order to select press interviews: the language (I have considered only interviews written in English, Spanish and Italian) and the relevance (I have selected the interviews that are more inherent to those issues that I have decided to analyse). As I said, 41 press interviews have been taken into account, from January 2014 to May 2018. Moreover, not only interviews published by "official newspapers" have been considered: given the strong popularity of Podemos in the left circles in the rest of Europe, the interviews given to independent online blogs and articles written for websites not belonging to "official newspapers", have also been considered. The list of press interviews has been placed in the Appendix 1.

Finally, as regards the personal interviews, I have interviewed four Podemos politicians, one of them is a member of the Spanish parliament (Txema Guizarro Garcia), one is a Podemos Member of the Secretariat of European Affairs (Amelia Martinez Lobo), one is a member of the Basque Autonomous Parliament (Julen Bollain Urbieto) and the last one is a Podemos' member of the Madrid City Council (Jaime Pastor). Moreover, three of the interviews were conducted by telephone and one by email, according to the availability of interviewees. The questionnaire used for interviews has been placed in the Appendix 2.

In order to analyse the Podemos' position on the immigration issue, a qualitative analysis based on text has been done. In particular, the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been conducted on the collected data, in order to make a descriptive analysis of the texts considered. To identify the main points of a political text is a difficult but crucial task and discourse analysis technique is one of the most popular method to analyse texts (Johnston, 2002). The CDA propose a critical approach to texts, paying attention to different levels and dimensions of the issue studied, as the communication style, the rhetoric, the pragmatic strategies (van Dijk, 1993). Moreover, the CDA proposes to consider also the context where the texts are produced, making both a semantic and frame analysis (Van Dijk, 1993). CDA has been mainly used to analysis the exclusive and xenophobic rhetoric, looking to the underlying ideologies present in discourses: here, I want to use this method considering how the same issue is managed on the opposite position.

Looking to the first research question, the analysis of the Podemos inclusiveness is conducted considering three dimensions of inclusion: material, political and symbolic (Mudde & Kaltwasser,

2013). In the analysis I used eleven codes in order to study this topic (Tab. 1). The three main code are “*Symbolic inclusion*”, “*Political inclusion*” and “*Material inclusion*”, which refer to the three dimensions presented above. Moreover, in order to deepen the symbolic dimension, other six codes have been created. “The people” refers to the populist view of Podemos of this broad concept. Linked to this topic, “*Spanish people*” and “*Nationalism*” indicate statements regarding the Spanish people or the concept of nationalism. “*Enemies*” has been created in order to highlight how Podemos depicts its rivals, and “*Priorities*” in order to highlights what are the main important issues for the party, or what policies are considered as more compelling. “*Human rights*”, “*Right to vote*” and “*Citizenship*” refer to these three topics.

In the second part of the analysis, I have used five codes to examine in depth the position of Podemos towards the Spanish government and the European Union on the immigration issue (Tab. 1). “*Vs National Government*” and “*Vs European union*” have been created to highlight critiques to these two institutions. Moreover, regarding attacks towards the Spanish government I have used three more codes: “*Vs PP*”, which refers to conflicts with the Popular Party and the prime minister Rajoy, “*Southern border*” and “*CIE*”, which highlight two specific topics around the migratory flow to Spain.

Finally, considering the communication style five codes has been created (Tab.1). “*Appel to the hope*” and “*Vs appeal to the fear*” refer both to dimension of the emotionalization. Linked to this, the code “*Vs Radical Right*” indicate the attacks of Podemos towards the xenophobic rhetoric used by the radical right. Finally, the code “*Slogan*” has been created to highlight the sloganesque discourse used by the party and the code “*Latin America*” has been used to underline references to the Latin America left-wing populism.

As a software to manage quotations and excerpts Atlas.ti has been used.

List of codes

Inclusiveness

Symbolic inclusion

The people

Spanish people

Nationalism

Enemies

Priorities

Human rights

Political inclusion

Right to vote

Citizenship

Material inclusion

Attacks to the National Government and the European Union

Vs National Government

Vs PP

Southern border

CIE

Vs European Union

Populistic rhetoric

Slogan

Latin America

Appeal to the hope

Vs appeal to the fear

Vs Radical Right

Tab.1 – List of codes used with Atlas.ti

Results

“The people” for Podemos: la solución no es el último contra el penúltimo

First of all, in order to understand the inclusiveness of Podemos, it is important to analyse its idea of “the people”. As we have seen in the theoretical part, the concept of the people is crucial in the populist discourse. In general, Podemos presents an inclusive view of “*el pueblo*”, referring to it as to “everyone who do not have the power”. In this sense, immigrants are considered as part of the people. However, analysing the press interviews, it emerges how the party do not evaluate immigration as a primary issue of its political agenda, also because, as we have seen, Spaniards do not consider it as the one of main problems of their country. In the Podemos’ rhetoric, the main points are related to the economic and political dimension: the fight against the corrupted casta and the fight against the bankers that led Spain to its critical economic situation.

“I think we've started as a movement due to emphasizing those issues that concern much more to Spanish population. I mean, we're saying that there are people in Spain that cannot reach to the end of the month with the salary, we've said that those in Spain cannot find a job, that people cannot eat, they have in... in [...]. I mean, in this analysis of the movement, people do not concern so much about immigration.”

(J. Bollain Urbieta, Phone interview, 29th May 2018)

In this excerpt, the interviewed explains that the reasons why the 15M movement arise are related to specific needs of the people in that context, so to the critical economic situation of the country and the corruption of the political system. In this sense, Podemos born with the aim of representing other issues rather than the immigration one. However, the immigration nowadays is an important issue in all the European context and a party has to deal with.

“That's why I think in the beginning we were not thinking so much about the immigration issue, about immigration policies. Due to the fact that we have institutionalized, we had to speak about those issues. Because immigration issue of course in our political agenda you have to have a position about it.”

(J. Bollain Urbieta, Phone interview, 29th May 2018)

Here, it is clear how the process of institutionalization, from a movement to a party, requires to amplifying the political agenda, introducing new themes that were previously left aside. So, the position of Podemos on immigrants arise with the time, but, as we will see, it is in a way in line with its original spirit. Considering the idea of immigrants and their role in the Spanish society, it emerges that Podemos politicians have generally a positive opinion towards them and their impact.

“So, lot of immigrants have come in last years and I think personally that, well... People... it's a good think people coming to Spain, last statistics show that, because lot people say that immigrants stole our money and so on, but last statistics show that they are giving more money [...] than what they are taking in average.”

(J. Bollain Urbieta, Phone interview, 29th May 2018)

In this excerpt, the interviewed argue that immigrants are very important for the guest society, especially for an economic point of view. This is a spread opinion across Podemos politicians, who consider immigrants as an important economic resource. However, one crucial question is if Podemos feel to represent needs of Spaniards also on this issue, or if there is a discrepancy between their inclusive approach and the feelings the people that they aim to represent. Analysing this relationship between natives and foreigners, Podemos politicians often argue that the Spanish people do not feel threatened by their arrival and, in this sense, Podemos feel coherent in its inclusive rhetoric. Besides, reflecting why there is not a spread xenophobic inclination in Spain, politicians presents several reasons. First, there is the concept of the “historical memory”.

“I would say maybe because Spain has always been an emigrant country for the past five centuries we have emigrated, as very much the Italian society, we have migrated to America, the United States and South America, for centuries and centuries. And so, I think we have some kind of historical memory, that's a.... that's a kind of empathy.”

(T. Guijarro, Phone interview, 24th May 2018)

Here, the interviewed explains that one of the reason why Spaniards are not generally xenophobic is for their long history as emigrants: their emigration “for the past five centuries” led them to have “a kind of empathy” towards to immigrants in their country. According to Guijarro, even in that places where the immigration issue is protagonist, as the Southern border, the local population demonstrates to be tolerant.

“In Gibraltar, in Tarifa, in the South, which is, as you know, is problematic. We have had violence, dead people and very sad episodes, we are kind of happy that our people have not developed a xenophobic narrative.”

(T. Guijarro, Phone interview, 24th May 2018)

As the interviewed says, Spain has a critical situation in the Southern border, where immigrants try to enter in the country from Morocco. However, according to the politician interviewed the Spanish people do not “developed a xenophobic narrative”, even if several episodes of violence and “sad episodes”.

Another reason why the integration of immigrants in Spain is successful is still related to the history. In fact, there is an important migratory flow from South America to Spain, due to its colonial history.

“As I said that is not the main problem. You must think first of all, a lot of our immigrants are from Latin America that means that the culture, the language that helps very much to integrate...”

(T. Guijarro, Phone interview, 24th May 2018)

According to the interviewed, the process of integration of immigrants from Latin America has been facilitated by the common language and the cultural affinity.

Moreover, a spread method to see how a populist party defines the people is to see how they build the opposing between it and the elite. So, even looking to its populist rhetoric of the Manichean dichotomy between the people and the elite, Podemos have a very inclusive idea of the people, where all the sub-groups voiceless have to be represented. In this sense, they elaborated the idea that the fight against the “casta” has to be done by all the “*pueblo*”: there is not space for fights among the losers, they have to join forces against who is suppressing them.

“You cannot treat people who are looking for a better life as if they are cattle. The problem in our country is not among that people, (the problem) is that people leave. In the last year 400,000 people emigrated. What is superfluous is not the people who come to work, but the “casta”.”¹

(P. Iglesias, Press interview, 5th June 2014)

According to the leader of Podemos, the problem is not who come to Spain to work, the problem is the “casta” and the political system, which is causing the departure of thousands of Spaniards. Since it was only a social movement, the spirit of Podemos was clear: the group of “losers” is composed by all who are voiceless, and their enemies are others, the bankers and the politicians. Immigrants are not the target of their struggle, on the contrary they have to be considered as a part of the community that the protest of Podemos aims to represent.

¹ “No se puede tratar a personas que buscan una vida mejor como si fueran ganado. El problema de nuestro país no es que entre gente, es que la gente se va. El pasado año se fueron 400.000 personas. No sobra la gente que viene a trabajar, sobra la casta”

“Look, if we think about casta, which can be translated, I don't know, like establishment, right? It is absolutely part of the same narrative. We always say here: what is absolutely wrong is when certain politicians try to confront the second to last with the last of society. [...] We always say: la solución no es el penúltimo contra el último. [...] It is part of the “casta” narrative. The problem is the “casta”, it is not the fact that you have some people underneath you. Those people underneath are your allies, should be your allies. Because we are also underneath of the powerful.”

(T. Guijarro, Phone interview, 24th May 2018)

This excerpt shows clearly the position of Podemos on this issue. The immigrants are not perceived as a threat for the host society but, on the contrary, they are considered as actors that have to fight together with the other losers against the casta. In the Podemos' view, the dichotomy is not between the last and the second to last: they have to be allied. Besides, here the interviewed outline also another important issue: there are other parties that are confronting the losers among them. This is a key element of the right populism, for the left this approach is perceived as inconceivable.

Against the chauvinism

As we have seen in the theoretical framework, the inclusion on the material dimension refers to the distribution of state resources, both monetary and non-monetary, to specific groups in society. In this sense, Podemos proposes several inclusive policies in its electoral program, which are not exclusive for immigrants, but they are generally for the weakest groups of the society. Even if immigrants are not the only groups that grant benefit from these policies, it is crucial to understand that Podemos include them in their comprehensive project, far for any chauvinism approach. For example, they propose a universal free nursery education from 0 to 6 years (Point 148). In this plan, Podemos argues that they want to support all those families that are in vulnerable social situations with preventative measures of social intervention. Another example is the aim to guarantee access to basic income.

“The basic income would represent the actualization of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which provides that the whole world has the right to live in a decent house, to benefit from a

*health and education system, to clothes, to the food, to the personal safety ... and all these rights require minimal material conditions.*²

(P. Iglesias, Press Interview, 5th June 2014)

Moreover, the party propose a social services centre for every twenty thousand residents, in order to guarantee to every member of society has access to public social services (Point 170). In this point, the party aim to give a universal free access to a social services centre consisting of a social worker, a social educator and a psychologist. Besides, they propose also an increase of the public health care budget, in order to have a universal health coverage (Point 115, Point 304). More specific to the immigrants' social group there is the motion of creating a “national fund for universal accessibility” (Point 174). According to their program, this fund aims to finance projects and activities nationwide concerning universal accessibility with the aim that everyone with a functional diversity, communicative or cognitive limitation or in a situation of dependency of any kind can be independent and fully participate in every aspect of life. These are only some examples of several measures proposed to help and give resources to the weakest group of the society, including also immigrants. In fact, there is not any reference to a chauvinist priority for Spanish people in confront of foreigner citizens.

Political participation

Looking to the political dimension, Podemos tends to support a broad political inclusion for the foreign population living in Spain. First, the party proposes the extension of the right to vote; in fact, in the electoral program Podemos aims to reform the law regarding the right to vote, the “Statutory Law of the General Electoral System”, in order to recognize the right to vote of all foreign residents and not only those from the European Union (Point 309). Moreover, it proposes to reduce the residency periods required to access those rights. In addition, it proposes to suppress the prohibition for foreign people to create political parties, changing the current Statutory Law 6/2002 on Political Parties. Podemos' political inclusion passes also through a change in the acquisition of the citizenship. In order to do this, in the point 310 of their program they propose to remove the Spanish nationality test, which is currently a mandatory requirement to obtain the nationality. Moreover, Podemos aims to reduce the time required to acquire the nationality by residence: “five years general term, three

² “La renta básica representaría el desarrollo de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos, que implica que todo el mundo debe tener derecho a vivir en una vivienda digna, a disfrutar de un sistema de salud y un sistema educativo, al vestido, a la alimentación, a la seguridad personal... y todos esos derechos requieren de unas condiciones materiales mínimas.”

years for refugees, and one year for the original population of specific countries with a good historical relationship with Spain” (Point 310). Besides, it proposes to remove bureaucratic obstacles in the procedure. They also propose to remove the general requirement of renunciation of origin nationality to countries without multiple nationality treaties, at least in certain cases as, for example, the refugee population. Finally, in its electoral program, Podemos argues that will give “greater importance to the principle of jus soli in the attribution of the national origin” (Point 310).

In defence of immigrants’ rights

Podemos in its electoral program presents several motions in order to help immigrants and refugees in their migratory process. In general, Podemos aims to change the national approach to this problematic issue, which is considered too rigid and severe in confront of immigrants. First of all, in order to promote a “new model of migration”, Podemos supports the creation of a Ministry of Migration Policy, which will coordinate the work made by different ministries on this issue (Point 311). Moreover, among proposals regarding the immigration issue, several of them are related to respect the rights of the immigrants. As specific policy regarding the migratory flow, Podemos propose a “*comprehensive law against Human Trafficking*”, in order to help the migrants which are depicted as “victims” of criminals (Point 190). In this motion, Podemos advocate to defend the rights of the refugees, forbidding the repatriation and guaranteeing them the right of asylum (Point 315). Besides, the party proposes to facilitate legal and safe ways of entry into Spain (Point 312). In this sense, Podemos advocates the closure of the Confinement Centre for Immigrants (CIE), which are considered as “a failure of democracy”. Moreover, Podemos aims to facilitate the family reunification process. In fact, it proposes the elimination of transit visa for people in that situation and to easing their process of reunification (Point 312, Point 315). Besides, Podemos also aims to offer them free legal aid to immigrants, in order to give the possibility of defence (Point 252). The legal aid is a strong instrument in order to help refugees to grant the asylum status.

“The answer is the pedagogy”

The promotion of the integration of immigrants is a pivotal of the Podemos’ approach to the immigration phenomenon. Beyond proposals regarding a material and political inclusion, Podemos believe that it is also important to work on a “cultural dimension”.

“I understand, but I would say that the only answer to that is pedagogy, right? In the sense that we need to explain to the people that precisely those who points the immigrants has been guilty of this issue, precisely those are the ones that are guilty for the impoverishment of our people, right?”

(T. Guijarro Garcia, Phone interview, 24th May 2015)

In this excerpt, the interviewee presents the “pedagogy” as an instrument to fight the racism, which is, according to his view, a result of ignorance. The “pedagogy solution” is based on the idea that the people have to understand that immigrants are not culpable of the critical economic situation that affects the Spanish people. In this sense, Podemos’ electoral program presents two proposals in order to facilitate the integration working also on a cultural dimension. The first one is the Point 313, where Podemos aim to adopt a new law, the “Law 14”, which will ensure the independence of the “Spanish Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia” and will make it more accessible.

Besides diagnostics and data collection, this observatory will prepare proposals, preventive functions and comprehensive assistance and protection to victims of all forms of discrimination. We will develop and put in place a comprehensive state plan for coexistence in which the highest priority will be community, educational and social measures to prevent racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination. Measures in the field of employment and training of public servants (especially the State Security Forces) shall also include, as well as broadcast and media support.

(Point 313, Political program 2015)

Here, it emerges the will of Podemos to prevent the racism through a cultural work, with educational measures and trough the work of a specific observatory devoted to operating in this context. According to this proposal, different actors, as media or public servants, have to collaborate in order to “put in place a comprehensive state plan for existence”. In addition, Podemos also project also an operational plan for the social inclusion in the cultural field (Point 222).

With the aim of making visible and valuing all cultural forms and practices, we will promote various cultural areas of migration, artistic expressions in childhood, youth and by the elderly and access, enjoyment and creativity for people with functional diversity or with different disabilities.

(Point 222, Political program 2015)

This point of the electoral program is specifically related to the promotion of different “cultural forms and practices”, included the migration “cultural area”. Moreover, in the Point 220 of its electoral program, Podemos points the pluralism as a cultural resource that has to be defended. The different languages and cultures coexisting in the country are considered as a “richness”. This approach shows a clear inclusive view also on the cultural side.

Against Rajoy and the Spanish Government

At the national level Podemos has been in opposition in the Spanish parliament since the beginning to the 2nd June of 2018. The data taken into consideration are therefore all at that time when Podemos was in opposition, and therefore the attacks on the national government, the ruling party (PP) and the prime minister Mariano Rajoy are not lacking.

“With the government of M. Rajoy we have seen that human rights are violated with immediate repatriations (the European Court of Human Rights has sanctioned Spain), on the Southern border, in the CIEs. In the PP they use a double yardstick, applying the law in Catalonia, but not in the case of migrants and refugees. Because the right-wing government has not fulfilled what it promised regarding refugees.”³

(D. Boussselham, Press interview, 12th November 2017)

As can be seen from this excerpt, the criticisms of the national government regarding the immigration issue are part of a broader scheme, concerning also the Catalan affair. In this case, the different attention paid to the Catalan controversy and to the issue of immigration is criticized. Rajoy is accused of not respecting human rights in the CIEs on the Southern border, even if he spent lot of effort to manage the Catalan issue. There are therefore several attacks towards the Ministry of the Interior for the management of the CIE, the militarization of borders and in general the lack of transparency in the reception phase.

“The matrix of the PP was the Francoism. We have seen it in statements of Fernández Díaz when he was Minister of the Interior, [...] when he said that with the refugees, jihadist terrorists could

³ “Con el gobierno de M. Rajoy hemos visto que se incumplen los derechos humanos con devoluciones en caliente (el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos nos ha sancionado a España), en la frontera sur, en los CIEs. En el PP tienen una doble vara de medir, aplicar la ley en Cataluña, pero no hacerlo en el caso de los migrantes y los refugiados. Porque el gobierno de la derecha no ha cumplido con lo que había prometido respecto a los refugiados.”

come. We've seen him with Zoido, with Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría when he said that the Spaniards deserve a priority.’⁴

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

In this excerpt it emerges the negative opinion of Podemos on the policies adopted by the Popular Party (PP), the movement of the prime minister Rajoy. The criticisms to the national government are around how its members depict the refugees, aiming for a priority for the Spanish people. Here the interviewee disapproves how Fernández Díaz, the previous Minister of the Interior, links the refugees' arrival to the possibility that among them there are “jihadist terrorists”. Moreover, a similar rhetoric is used by Juan Ignacio Zoido, who was the current prime minister at the time of the interview. In fact, he argues that the Spaniards have “the precedence”. This rhetoric is strongly criticized by the interviewee, who affirms that this approach shows the fascist matrix of the Popular Party.

“The background is that the PP government is positioned de facto with the most radical right in Europe. [...] we have seen signals that the PP has more to do with the Front National and with Orbán [...] than with Angela Merkel in many aspects.”⁵

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

These accusation to the governing party emerges clearly also in this excerpt, which is taken from the same press interview of the previous one. Here, the interviewee accuses the Popular Party to acting as a radical right party: in fact, its way of acting is compared to the one of Le Pen in France or Orbán in Hungary, who are leaders of radical right parties, than the one of Angela Merkel, who is instead the leader of a moderate right party, the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU).

Among several criticisms on how the PP is managing the immigration issue, Podemos focuses its attacks on the lacking respect of the human rights. First of all, it strongly attacks the “*Ley de Extranjería*” (“Immigration Law”), which is the Spanish norm that regulates the entry and stay of non-EU foreigners in Spanish territory, as well as rights and freedoms that are recognized to them. The law was approved in 2000 but it was modified three times (in 2000, in 2003 and in 2009), so

⁴ “La matriz del PP fue el franquismo. Lo hemos visto en declaraciones de Fernández Díaz cuando era ministro del Interior, hablando sobre el efecto llamada, o cuando afirmó que con los refugiados podían venir terroristas yihadistas. Lo hemos visto con Zoido, con Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría cuando hablaba de que primero debían ir los españoles.”

⁵ “El trans fondo es que el Gobierno del PP se posiciona de facto con la derecha más radical de Europa. [...] Llevamos viendo señales de que el PP tiene más que ver con el Frente Nacional y con Orbán [...] que con Angela Merkel en muchas cosas.”

before that Rajoy became prime minister. However, the attack from Podemos is twofold. On one side the party criticizes the law itself, on the other side it criticizes the current government for not having changed it.

“The ‘Ley de Extranjería’ is the cornerstone of the colonialist, centralist and oppressive regime that legitimizes structures of inequality. To change, the political will is needed.”⁶

(D. Bousselham, Press interview, 12th November 2017)

In this case, it arises this double critique: on one hand the immigration law is depicted as colonialist and oppressive, on the other hand the decision to not change it is criticized equally.

Moreover, analysing the rhetoric against the national government in relation with the immigration issue, a “local-national” contraposition arises. Specifically, the contrast lies on the issue of the “quotas”: in 2015 the European Union determined a “quota system” to distribute asylum seekers among all the European countries. The national government is accused by Podemos to “boycott” the agreement even if there was the willingness to receive refugees by several local community.

“There have been autonomous communities that have raised the possibility of reception and have met directly the Government: Navarra, the Basque Country, Catalonia, País Valenciá and even Andalusia have tried to sign agreements with the Ministry of the Interior for the reception of refugees. And this has been prevented and boycotted by the Government. The Executive has made an underground boycott to the quotas.”⁷

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

Here it emerges this dichotomy: Podemos support the “autonomous communities” that want to improve their reception system, in contrast with the central government, which according to the interviewed, refused to collaborate with local realities. So, the central government do not want to participate to the quotas system referring to technical problems, instead at the local level emerge an inclusive approach, even on the side of mobilization in solidarity with refugees.

⁶ La Ley de Extranjería es el centro del régimen colonialista, centralista y opresor que legitima las estructuras de desigualdad. Para cambiar hace falta voluntad política.

⁷ “Ha habido comunidades autónomas que han planteado la posibilidad de la acogida y se han reunido directamente con el Gobierno: Navarra, País Vasco, Catalunya, País Valenciá e incluso Andalucía han intentado firmar convenios con el Ministerio del Interior para la acogida de refugiados. Y eso se ha impedido y se ha boicoteado por parte del Gobierno. El Ejecutivo ha hecho un boicot soterrado a las cuotas.”

“The impact generally is important, because, you know, for examples the Colau or Carmena, is different... at the local yes, there is... and in Barcelona there was a big mobilization in solidarity with refugees from Syria, from Afghanistan but the problem is that the Spanish government didn't facilitate no? The admission of many people coming from Syria and Afghanistan for example.”

(J. Pastor, Phone interview, 25th May 2018)

In this excerpt, the interviewee refers to the mayors of the two biggest cities of Spain, Barcelona and Madrid. In fact, Colau and Carmena are respectively the mayor of Barcelona and of Madrid, and both of them are leading a political coalition which are supported by Podemos. Here, the interviewed refers to the mobilization in solidarity with refugees that has been in Barcelona the 19th February of 2017. But, according to him, despite the local willingness, the central government refuses to collaborate. This reasoning underlines the “local-national” contraposition presented above.

Borders and the case of Southern Spain: against the Confinement Centre for Immigrants (CIE)

Another argument frequently presents in the Podemos discourse is the Southern Borders' controversy, especially referring to Ceuta and Melilla, which are two Spanish cities in the African continent, close to the Strait of Gibraltar. This region is crucial in the migratory flow from Africa to Spain and at the border between the two country there is a barrier that limit the illegal access in Spain.

“What you have to do with the barriers of Ceuta and Melilla is to remove all the harmful elements you have, which are many. From our point of view, these are fences that are inflicting a lot of unnecessary pain on migrants. What we propose is to organize legal and secure access ways to our country. If you could, no one would risk their lives on routes that are increasingly dangerous. With this policy of closings of legal and safe ways that the PP is doing and that the PSOE has also done, the only thing that is achieved is to help the mafias. If people have to come illegally, they have to rely on mafias that are the ones that do it in an illegal way.”⁸

⁸ “Lo que hay que hacer con las vallas de Ceuta y Melilla es retirar todos los elementos lesivos que tiene, que son muchos. Desde nuestro punto de vista son unas vallas que están infligiendo muchísimo dolor innecesario a las personas migrantes. Lo que proponemos que se articulen vías legales y seguras de acceso a nuestro país. Si se pudiera, nadie arriesgaría su vida en rutas que son cada vez más peligrosas. Con esta política de cierres de vías legales y seguras que está haciendo el PP y que ha hecho también el PSOE lo único que se consigue es alimentar a las mafias. Si la gente tiene que venir de manera ilegal, tiene que apoyarse en mafias que es la que hace negocios ilegales.”

Here the interviewee first asks to delete the “harmful elements” on the barrier, after points the argument that, obstructing legal ways to access in Spain is only noxious to immigrants. In fact, they try anyway to enter in Spain, even if there is not the governmental collaboration. And, according to the interviewee, the “mafia” is the only actor benefitting by the absence of the state. Moreover, Podemos politicians debate frequently around the Confinement Centre for Immigrants (CIE), which are structure where irregular immigrants are examined to control their legal status positioned in the Spanish Southern border. The issue of the CIEs is another reason of the aggressive rhetoric against the methods used by the central government in order to manage the immigration flow. In fact, the party strongly opposes their existence, considering them as a “failure of democracy”.

“We will close CIEs, because they represent a failure of democracy.”

(Point 190, Political Program 2015)

In particular, Podemos disapprove the absence of adequate rights towards immigrants who live in these facilities. Looking to the press interviews, it emerges how Podemos’ politicians who deal with the immigration question, like Ione Belarra (Member of the National Parliament) and Miguel Urban (Member of the European Parliament), went to these centres several times. They denounce the national government of forbidding them the entrance to these centres.

“I could not enter the last visit I made in the CIE of Algeciras and Tarifa. This is a new strategy developed by the Popular Party to limit the parliamentary work. [...] The Interior Commission is chaired by a parliamentarian from the Popular Party who puts as many obstacles as possible to make a visit. Last week we made a visit to the Archidona prison, now converted to CIE, and that visit could be done because the media pressure was such that they had no choice”⁹

(Ione Belarra, Press interview, 12th December 2017)

This passage of the interview shows how the Podemos’ politicians that want to visit the CIEs accuse that they have to deal with the opposition of the Popular Party. Their aim is to visit the

⁹ “No he podido entrar al igual que no pude entrar en la última visita que hice en el CIE de Algeciras y de Tarifa. Esto es una nueva estrategia que ha desarrollado el Partido Popular para limitar el trabajo parlamentario. [...] La Comisión de Interior está presidida por un parlamentario del Partido Popular que pone todas las trabas posibles para realizar una visita. La semana pasada realizamos una visita a la cárcel de Archidona, ahora reconvertida en CIE, y esa visita se pudo hacer porque la presión mediática era tal que no les quedaba más remedio.”

centres in order to denounce the critical situation where refugees are forced. But, as emerge from the interview, the permission of visiting is not granted, unless there is a “media pressure”.

“From our group we directly request the closure of these centres, but not only that. Also, (we request) to end racist raids and collective deportation flights. What has been done with this issue is to criminalize people and generate great public insecurity. All this does not contribute at all to create an inclusive society. [...] There are people who have their family and their children here who end up being locked in the CIE.”¹⁰

(Ione Belarra, Press interview, 19th October 2016)

The aim of Podemos is to “create an inclusive society” and the system of CIEs struggle with this proposal. Podemos take position against this method, against the “racist raids and collective deportation flights”. Podemos argues that the approach used by the national government is only generating “public insecurity”, through a criminalization of the refugees.

“Europa Fortaleza”

In the interviews analyzed, it emerges that Podemos has a critical position towards the European Union, especially towards how it manages the incoming migratory flow. Podemos' criticisms of the European Union are part of a broader criticism towards the European institutions.

“For the moment, we have understood that the European Parliament decides less things than we thought because it is a real bureaucratic monster, more than we thought. It is built to make sure that any person who enters cannot get out of it. We are going to denounce this bureaucratic monster and what the European Union does, but not from a Eurosceptic point of view but from the point of view of the need for another Europe and more Europe. We recover a certain idea of an anti-fascist and partisan Europe. The Europe of peoples, in short, that it is necessary to recover to oppose the attack of neoliberalism.”¹¹

¹⁰ Desde nuestro grupo pedimos directamente el cierre de estos centros, pero no solo eso. También que se termine con las redadas racistas y los vuelos colectivos de deportación. Lo que se ha venido haciendo con este tema ha sido criminalizar a las personas y generar una gran inseguridad ciudadana. Todo esto no contribuye para nada a crear una sociedad inclusiva. [...] Hay gente que tiene su familia y sus hijos aquí que terminan siendo encerrados en los CIE.

¹¹ Per il momento abbiamo capito che il Parlamento europeo decide meno cose di quanto pensassimo perché è un vero e proprio mostro burocratico, più di quanto pensassimo. È costruito per fare in modo che qualsiasi persona che entri non riesca poi ad uscirne. Noi andiamo a denunciare questo mostro burocratico e quello che fa l'Unione europea ma non da un punto di vista eurosceptico ma da un punto di vista della necessità di un'altra Europa e di più Europa. Recuperiamo

(M. Urban, Press interview, 25th September 2018)

Here the interviewee is speaking about its experience at the European parliament. From this excerpt, the dichotomy of the Podemos discourse emerged, which is based on an oscillation between the struggle and the attempt to propose a solution. First, the interviewee criticizes the slow bureaucracy that limits the work of the European Parliament, depicting it as a “bureaucratic monster”. However, unlike the right-wing populist parties that are sceptic on the idea of Europe in favour of a nationalist spirit, Podemos aims to change the European Union without demolishing it but working for “another Europe”, capable of representing the values of anti-fascism and not subject to dictates of the neoliberalism. In this perspective of change, the theme of immigration is also included. In particular, Miguel Urban, a Podemos’ member of the European Parliament, has given several interviews on this topic. According to him, Europe is managing the migration crisis in a wrong way. First of all, Urban criticizes the absence of a clear policy shared by all members of the European Union. From this point of view, the issue of migrants' quotas that European countries is exemplifying. On this aspect, Urban criticizes both the European Union and some European countries.

“The quotas were born dead, because they were a political “make-up” of a exclusive Europe, a Europa Fortaleza a fortress Europe that had no interest in implementing the different international refugee reception agreements. I say that he was born dead and that it was a political “make-up” because he did not foresee any constraints. Without that, without any capacity for demand, and with the explicit veto of several countries such as Poland, Hungary or Slovakia, which have made the rejection of quotas as a kind of political flag during these two years. Other countries, reluctantly, like the Spanish government, had to accept the quotas, but Sáenz de Santamaría said that they did not want to.”¹²

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

una certa idea di una Europa antifascista e partigiana. L’Europa dei popoli, insomma, che è necessario recuperare per opporlo all’attacco del neoliberismo.

¹² “Las cuotas nacieron muertas, porque eran un maquillaje político de una Europa insolidaria, una Europa fortaleza que no tenía ningún interés en ejecutar los diferentes acuerdos internacionales de acogida de refugiados. Digo que nació muerto y que fue maquillaje político porque no tenía compromisos vinculantes.” Sin eso, sin ninguna capacidad de exigencia, y con el veto explícito de varios países como Polonia, Hungría o Eslovaquia, que han hecho del rechazo a las cuotas una especie de bandera política durante estos dos años. Otros, a regañadientes, como el Gobierno español, tuvieron que aceptar las cuotas, pero la propia Sáenz de Santamaría dijo que no querían.

In this excerpt, it arises a twofold attack. First, the interviewee accuses the European Union for its choice to not impose quotas with constraints, a method that, according to him, has discouraged countries from adapting to this legislation. For this reason, the failure of the project was expected before that it started. The quotas scheme is therefore called hypocritical and unsuccessful from the beginning. On the other hand, the interviewed criticize the lack of solidarity of some European countries, such as Hungary and Poland or even Spain itself.

Another point that Podemos strongly criticizes is the violation of human rights in the European system of reception. As we have already seen, a term that Miguel Urban often uses to describe the European Union on the theme of migrants is the one of "Europa Fortaleza" ("Fortress Europe"), depicting it as a military fortification, where it is difficult to access. This idea of the Europe as a fortress is generate by the fact that, according to Urban, it makes many investments to defend its borders and few to help those who arrive.

"This Europa Fortaleza has spent 1,800 million euros in the last five years in reinforcing borders and only 700 in helping refugees"¹³

(Miguel Urban, Press interview, 1st September 2015)

Here, the excerpt shows an example of this frequent critique moved by Podemos: the Europe is more worried about defending its borders than to help the refugees. As we have seen, the issue of human rights is crucial. Urban has released several interviews after visiting some key sites for the entry of migrants to Europe, such as Melilla in Spain, Lampedusa in Italy or Moria in Greece.

"Every time the transit is more difficult, the security measures of the "Europa Fortaleza" generate that every time it is more complicated to access. What happens with this? It is not that they stop coming, but that it is increasingly dangerous to reach our coasts "¹⁴

(M. Urban, Press interview, 18th May 2016)

As we have seen, the difficulty of access is another pivotal point of the discourse against the European Union. This excerpt shows a reasoning that we have already met previously, in the critique

¹³ "Esta Europa Fortaleza ha gastado en los últimos cinco años 1.800 millones de euros en blindar las fronteras y sólo 700 en ayudar a los refugiados"

¹⁴ "Cada vez el tránsito es más difícil, las propias medidas de seguridad de la 'Europa fortaleza' generan que cada vez sea más complicado acceder ¿Qué pasa con esto? No es que dejen de venir, sino que cada vez es más peligroso llegar a nuestras costas"

to the Spanish government: the attempt to obstruct arrivals do not prevent them, on the contrary it only endangers the lives of those who lies in the migratory flow. In parallel, Podemos also strongly criticizes the work of Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

“The message is "Do not come to Europe." A month ago, the director of Frontex said in an interview that some people have to die in the Mediterranean, so they do not come anymore. The mayor of Lampedusa also said it when he said that the fact that people died in the Mediterranean was a way of sending a very clear message to all those who wanted to reach Europe. Those people do not have to die.”¹⁵

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

Here the interviewee moves a very strong attack against Frontex and so against the European Union. He supports the idea that, reporting a statement argued by the director of the Frontex, the fact that there are many deaths in the Mediterranean Sea has been used as an opportunity to send the message “Do not come to Europe” rather than a motif for concern about lives of migrants.

It is not different from Donald Trump's America First. In fact, the only difference between the really existing European Union and Trump is that Trump is a buffoon and speaks and loses strength by the mouth. The EU talks about human rights, but really its immigration policy is much tougher than the one that Trump is carrying out.¹⁶

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

This latest excerpt shows how criticism of the European Union is based on its hypocrisy, for the policy of quotas or in its desire to defend human rights “in words” while they move very similar to the American president Donald Trump, one of the symbols of the right-wing populism.

A populist speech?

¹⁵ “El mensaje es "no vengáis a Europa". Hace un mes el director de Frontex dijo en una entrevista que alguna gente tiene que morir en el Mediterráneo para que no vengan más. También lo dijo la alcaldesa de Lampedusa, cuando afirmó que el hecho de que muriera gente en el Mediterráneo era una forma de mandar un mensaje muy claro a todos los que querían llegar a Europa. Esas personas no tendrían que morir.”

¹⁶ No es diferente al America First de Donald Trump. De hecho, la única diferencia entre la Unión Europea realmente existente y Trump es que Trump es un bufón y habla, y pierde la fuerza por la boca. La UE habla de derechos humanos, pero realmente su política migratoria es mucho más dura que la que está llevando a cabo Trump.

Analysing the discourse of Podemos, it emerges how there is an oscillation between their attacks to the current approach used by national and European institutions and the aim to propose solutions to solve the problem. In fact, as we have seen, on one side politicians interviewed are really critic towards the position of the National government: they criticize strongly its xenophobic policies and how they managed the critical situation of immigrants, especially in the South of Spain. Besides, as we have seen, Podemos attacks frequently also the European Union: the absence of a clear and homogeneous policy in confront of the refugees' flow, its hypocrisy of proposing as human rights defender without actually move in this sense. However, Podemos proposes several reforms in the political program.

“Podemos is now organized in terms of a strategy [...] that combines being a party of struggle and protest with being a party of government. And this involves dealing with the tension between these two elements.”

(B. Fernandez, Press interview, 20th May 2017)

This twofold strategy is clear looking the Podemos discourse around Spain and the migratory flow: as we have seen previously on one side they attack the Popular Party and the government, on the other side they support their mayors at the local level and they try to propose solutions to solve the problem. In this excerpt it emerges that they are conscious of this oscillation, and it is part of their political style.

Looking to the semantic field, Podemos politicians tends to demonize their enemies, and so, for instance, they call the European Union as the *“Europa Fortaleza”* or they attack the Spanish government as racist and colonialist. On the other side, they tend to present the idea of the refugee as “a victim” of the human trafficking or of the governmental discriminations. Besides, the politicians' discourse is often rich of slogan, sometimes even offering a simplistic view of the complex phenomenon.

“It is outrageous that a Government like Spain's should adduce technical problems so as not to attract 15,000 people when we receive 51 million tourists every year.”¹⁷

(M. Urban, Press interview, 29th September 2017)

¹⁷ “Es una barbaridad que un Gobierno como el de España aduzca problemas técnicos para no traer a 15.000 personas cuando recibimos cada año a 51 millones de turistas.”

In this excerpt, the exemplification of the problem is evident. In fact, here the interviewed accuses the national government for its excuses of not being able to welcome few refugees, comparing them to huge number of tourists that visit the country every year. In this case, it is clear the sloganesque discourse, comparing two issues completely different. However, in general, there is no discrepancy between their electoral program and the interviews considered, with some exceptions.

“The left should react with no ambiguous. Left should ask to open the borders. This should be our goal. No one has more right to eat and live with dignity for being white and was born in this part of the world.”

(A. Martinez Lobo, Mail interview, 20th May 2018)

This is another example of the sloganesque rhetoric used by Podemos’ politicians. The point of opening the border is not evidently present in their electoral program as it is here in this interview. In fact, in the program Podemos proposes to restore the legality of the checkpoints in the Southern border or to facilitate the access of immigrants, but it never declares to “open the borders”.

Looking to their ideological background, Podemos politician often refers to the Latin America experiences. As we have seen in the theoretical part, in Latin America there were previous experiences of left-wing populism that deal with the issue of the inclusiveness of society’ weakest sub-groups.

“Very reasonable measures have been taken in Latin America. For example, in Ecuador there was a debt audit that served to make a redistributive policy. I like the revocation referendum in Venezuela. [...] Social policies have also been made that extended public services to sectors of the population that did not know it.”¹⁸

(P. Iglesias, Press interview, 31th May 2014)

Here Errejón, one of the leader of the party, clearly refers to South America experiences as a model to follow, also considering their attempt to “make a redistributive policy” or to “extend public services” to the weakest sectors of the society.

¹⁸ In America Latina sono state prese misure molto ragionevoli. Per esempio, in Ecuador c’è stato un audit del debito che è servito per fare una politica redistributiva. Del Venezuela mi piacciono i referendum revocatori. [...] Sono anche state fatte politiche sociali che hanno esteso i servizi pubblici a settori della popolazione che non lo conoscevano.

Against the logic of the fear

Moreover, if the radical right populism the immigration issue is linked to a logic of fear, here there is more an “appeal to the hope”, that, as we have seen in the literature review is spread in the Podemos’ rhetoric.

“We could say that today Europe is in dispute. They want to trap us in a false dichotomy where we have to choose between a neoliberal EU or a xenophobic retreat into the nation. This choice is not only a trick, it is a mutually reinforcing one. We need a Plan B for Europe — and its problem is not its speed, but its direction. Let’s start to give form to a European project that recovers the roots of democracy in partisan antifascism, solidarity, peace, and social justice. A European project that neither excludes nor expels anyone, for it is a project no one would want to walk away from. That task has today become as urgent as it is indispensable.”

(M. Urban, Press interview, 4th February 2017)

The need of the Plan B for Europe is based in an optimistic view, in a new society based on solidarity, peace and social justice. A Europe able to do not exclude no one. Podemos opposes the logic of the fear, of the xenophobia and racism, which, according to Urban, is instead promoted by the current national and European institution.

“We are fighting the EU project not in order to reclaim a threatened national identity and sovereignty, in the mode of the radical right. We do so from a class point of view, in the name of a social solidarity under attack from Euroliberalism.”

(M. Urban, Press interview, 4th February 2017)

In this last excerpt, the interviewee attacks the logic of the fear promoted by the radical right: the project of Podemos is not based on the fear of losing the national identity, instead it is promoted in “name of a social solidarity”.

Discussion

In order to analyse the position of Podemos on the immigration issue, different aspects have been considered. First, I have analyzed its inclusiveness looking to three different dimensions, the symbolic, the political and the material one. Second, I have analyzed if and how Podemos accuses the Spanish government and the European Union for their methods of managing the immigration issue. Finally, I have considered how Podemos presents its position on this topic, considering two aspects of the populist communication style: the “emotionalization” and the “simplification”.

First, looking to the inclusiveness of Podemos, I expected that the party would propose a comprehensive view of the “people”. From the analysis my expectation has been confirmed: in the symbolic dimension, Podemos aims to represent needs of everyone who is voiceless and oppressed. Immigrants are thus included in this broad group. Moreover, politicians interviewed declare that immigrants have a positive impact on the Spanish society, both on an economic point of view and on a cultural one. The idea of the cultural richness provided by foreign cultures is also expressed in their electoral program, where Podemos aim to promote the migration culture. Related to the “cultural dimension”, introduced during the analysis, Podemos recognize the education as a crucial tool to fight the racism and the xenophobia.

As a populist party, Podemos offers a dichotomy view of the society, even in the depiction of immigrants. In fact, immigrants and refugees are presented as “victims” of the racist policies adopted by the National government and the European Union. On the contrary, these two institutions are depicted as enemy to fight: the European Union is called with the epithet of “Europa Fortaleza”, whose borders are defended in order to complicate the arrivals; the National government is accused of promoting a racist and xenophobic methods in its attempt to solve the migratory problem. Besides, in its will of representing the needs of the people, the politicians feel to be coherent in their rhetoric: their goal is to defend the “common people”, and immigrants are not perceived as a threat for them. In this sense, according to the Podemos’ populist rhetoric, immigrants and the Spanish people have to ally in order to fight the political and economic establishment. The slogan used by Podemos is that the losers do not have to fight among them, but they have to ally all together against the elite.

In addition, Podemos did not considered the immigration issue as an affair of a primary importance: when Podemos born from the 15M movement its two main goals where to change the corrupted political system and to help the poor Spanish people to react to the economic crisis. When Podemos became a party and decided to play in the “institutional field”, it amplified its political agenda and so it inserted also its position on the immigration issue.

Considering the material inclusion, in the political program Podemos proposes several policies in order to help the weakest segment of the society, without any chauvinist approach. In fact, Podemos proposes inclusive policies for the health care, for education or for the basic income for everyone

who needs it, without any racial difference. Moreover, especially for immigrants and refugees, Podemos proposes to introduce a “free legal aid” in order to help who arrive in Spain and have to deal with the bureaucratic machine.

On the political dimension, as I supposed, Podemos proposes policies in order to permit also to the foreign people to participate at the political life of the country where they live. First of all, Podemos aims to extend the right to vote, allowing it to all the foreign people that are residents in Spain. Moreover, the party wants to introduce a law that authorise also the foreign people living in Spain to create an own political party, action that is currently forbidden. Finally, Podemos aims to facilitate the grant of the citizenship. In this sense the party propose to remove the Spanish nationality test as mandatory to obtain the nationality, to reduce the time to obtain the citizenship by residence removing the bureaucratic obstacles in the procedure and to give greater importance to the principle of *jus soli* in the attribution of the national origin.

In the second part of the analysis, I have analyzed the rhetoric against the National government and the European Union. In my expectations, I suggested that Podemos, as a populist party with a critical approach towards the national and European institutions, blames them for their immigration policies. From the analysis it emerges that Podemos strongly criticizes the National government, the prime minister Rajoy and the Popular Party as the governmental party. Podemos accuses them to act as racist and fascist institution. Specifically, the Podemos’ politicians blame the national government for its methods in the management of the migratory flow. In fact, Rajoy and his colleagues are denounced of violating the human rights in the phase of the reception. Interviewees focus their critiques on the critical situation in the Southern border of Spain, where the proximity with the African continent led it to be a crucial area for the migratory flow. The national government and the minister of interior are accused to violate the human rights, especially in Confinement Centres for Immigrants (CIE). The opposition to these structures emerges clearly both in the political program than in the interviews. In the program, Podemos proposes the immediate closure of the CIEs. In the interviews, the politicians accuse the government for critical sanitarian conditions where the refugees are forced to stay. Moreover, politicians also attack the government because, according to their statements, it does not allow the access to CIEs: Podemos politicians, in fact, wants to visit the centres in order to report the situation where the immigrants are forced to live, but the ministry of the interior has forbidden them the access, in exception of when there was a public pression. Another significant aspect that is emerged from the analysis is the cleavage among some local institutions and the central government, which is a topic often reported by politicians of Podemos. According to the interviewees, this cleavage is caused by a different approach to the migratory issue: on one side the national government obstructs the flow, on the other some politicians with a governmental role at the local

have declare themselves willing to collaborate with the national government for a national plan of reception. This difference in the approach is evident in the issue of the refugee quotas defined by the European Union: Podemos accuses the national government of boycotting the quotas asserting excuses for technical difficulties in the reception, even if there is a spread willingness to collaborate by several autonomous communities.

Also concerning the European Union, Podemos is critical on several aspects. First of all, the party inserts its criticisms in a broad discourse against the European Union. This institution is accused of being a bureaucratic monster, that needs to be changed from inside. The aim of Podemos is to transform the Eu in a more egalitarian project, rejecting its neoliberal influences. Moreover, Podemos accuses the European Union for not being clear on the immigration issue. First of all, the issue of the refugees' quotas arises again. Podemos' politicians argue that the project is born dead: the choice of not including any constraints to those countries that do not respect the policy discourage the European national governments to respect it. At the same time, the criticism is pointed towards those countries that do not collaborate with this project and oppose it. According to the view of Podemos, European countries have to collaborate among them in order to solve the migratory problem. Moreover, Podemos strongly denounce the hypocrisy of the European Union in the management of the reception of the refugees. In fact, according to the interviewees, the European Union on one side declares solidarity for refugees, on the other it seems that it is trying to obstruct their access and to send the message that immigrants are not welcome in Europe.

Finally, I have analyzed is the approach of Podemos to this issue. This is the most aleatory aspect and in order to do it through qualitative methods, I have done a descriptive analysis of the Podemos rhetoric looking two specific approach: the simplification and the emotionalization. Concerning the first one, I have noticed that Podemos oscillate among an approach of struggle and an approach of government, as they also recognize in the interviews. They tend to oversimplify some issues, as the opening of borders, without giving a realistic alternative. At the same time, on other issues they offer several solutions, as we have seen in the cases of the political and material inclusion, with, for example, proposals regarding the citizenship, the right to vote or welfare policies. Moreover, Podemos tends to use a sloganesque rhetoric to support their thesis: in this sense, they often refer to idealistic sense of solidarity, or to attack their enemies with strong epithet, as the Europe defined as a military fortress, or the national government accused of being fascist, racist or even colonialist. Looking to the emotionalization side, Podemos tends to appeal to the hope, as I was expecting. The migratory flow is viewed as a positive process, from which the Spain can benefit, both on an economic and on a cultural point of view. Against the logic of fear endorsed by the European radical right,

Podemos offers a vision of “another Europe”, capable of welcoming and living under the flag of solidarity.

Conclusions: limitations and ideas for future researches

In conclusion, my research is affected by some relevant limitations. First of all, the methodological part: the absence of similar previous researches forced me to construct a new methodological scheme, that in some parts remains vague, especially where it is linked to the concept of populism which, as we have seen, has created numerous discussions among the scholars for its theoretical definition and therefore for its operationalization.

Another limitation of my study is the absence of a comparison, neither with a right-wing populist party nor with another left-wing one. Even if the comparison among parties has been often used as research design to study populist phenomena, here I decided to not adopt this method. Regarding a comparison with a right-wing populist party, my decision was moved by two reasons. First, because in the Spanish political spectrum there are not radical right populist party with a relevant electoral success. Moreover, I have also decided to not make a cross-national comparison because I think that the context, and so the demand-side, influence significantly the supply-side, especially in a controversial issue as the immigration one. For this reason, I think that compare Podemos with a foreign radical right party makes no sense. On the other hand, I have decided to do not compare Podemos with another left-wing populist party for a practical reason. In fact, as we have seen in the theoretical part, the other peak of the new left populist wave is SYRIZA, however I decided to not analyse it after that I have seen that most of the inherent data were in Greek, a language that I totally cannot work with.

Finally, other two limitations concern phone/mail interviews to politicians. In fact, despite Amelia Martinez Lobo, who deal with the immigration issue in the European Parliament, the other three are not experts as other politicians on this topic. However, I had to concern also with the availability of politicians and so I decided to interview also Podemos’ politicians that are not focused on the immigration issue. Moreover, still in order to concern with the availability of politicians, I had to construct a short questionnaire, which is another limitation of this study.

Looking to the future, the inclusiveness of the left-wing populism is an issue that has been little explored. In fact, there are several researches regarding the exclusive approach of the European radical right and its xenophobic rhetoric, but no one regarding the inclusiveness of the European left populism. A comparison between Podemos and SYRIZA, or other successful left-wing populist experiences would be interesting, in order to deepen how this controversial issue is managed by

similar movements in different contexts. Moreover, while I am going to conclude this thesis, Spain has witnessed the formation of a new government (in June 2nd, 2018), which, for the first time ever, is supported by Podemos. It would be interesting, in future analyses, if and how its inclusive rhetoric on the immigration issue has been changed. In fact, as we have seen, Podemos propaganda has been based on an aggressive critique to the national government and on an ambitious reform program. It would be interesting to compare the Podemos' discourse before and after the rise to the power.*

* Finally, a special thanks to my dear friend Sofia, who helped me to translate interviews form Spanish newspapers.

Bibliography

Abts, K., & Rummens, S. (2007). Populism versus Democracy. *Political Studies*, 55(2), 405-422.

Alonso, S., & Kaltwasser, C. b. R. (2014a). Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right? *South European Society and Politics*.

Bracciale, R. & Martella, A. (2017). Define the populist political communication style: the case of Italian political leaders on Twitter. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(9): 1310-1329.

Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy. *Political Studies*, 47(1), 2-16.

Eurobarometer (2017). Standard Eurobarometer 87. The key indicators. Spring 2017.

Gomez, R., Morales, L., and Ramiro, L. (2016). Varieties of Radicalism: Examining the Diversity of Radical Left Parties and Voters in Western Europe. *West European Politics*, 39(2), 351-379.

Johnston, H. (2002). Verification and Proof in Frame Analysis and Analysis. Methods of social movement research. *Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, editors*. 3(16), 62-83.

Kioupkiolis, A. (2016). Podemos: The Ambiguous Promises of Left-Wing Populism in Contemporary Spain. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 21(2), 99-120.

Kioupkiolis, A., & Pérez, F. S. (2018). Reflexive technopopulism: Poemos and the search for a new left-wing hegemony. *European Political Science*.

Kriesi, H. (1998). The transformation of cleavage politics: The 1997 Stein Rokkan lecture. *European journal of political research*, 33(2), 165-185.

Kriesi, H., Grande, E., Lachat, R., Dolezal, M., Bornschier, S., & Frey, T. (2006). Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45(6), 921-956.

- Kriesi, H., & Pappas, T. (2015). *European Populism in the Shadow of the Great Recession*. ECPR Press.
- Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason*. Verso.
- March, L. (2011). *Radical Left Parties in Europe*. New York: Routledge.
- March, L. (2017). Left and right populism compared: The British case. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 19(2), 282–303.
- Medina, I., & Correa, P. (2016). The 2015 Spanish election: the times they are a' changing. *Regional and Federal Studies*, 26(3), 407-417.
- Moffitt, B., & Tormey, S. (2014). Rethinking populism: Politics, mediatisation and political style. *Political Studies*, 62(2), 381-397.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition*, 39(4), 541-563.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2011). Voices of the peoples: populism in Europe and Latin America compared. *Kellogg Working Paper*.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2013). Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: Comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America. *Government and Opposition*, 48(02), 147-174
- Ramiro, L., & Gomez, P. (2016). Radical-Left Populism during the Great Recession: Podemos and Its Competition with the Established Radical Left. *Political Studies*, 65(1), 108-126.
- Ramswell, P. Q. (2017). *Euroscepticism and the Rising Threat from the Left and Right The Concept of Millennial Fascism*. Lexington Books.

Rooduijn, M. (2017). What unites the voter bases of populist parties? Comparing the electorates of 15 populist parties. *European Political Science Review*, 1-18.

Rooduijn, M., & Akkerman, T. (2017). Flank Attacks: Populism and Left-Right Radicalism in Western Europe. *Party Politics*, 23(3), 193-204.

Rooduijn, M., & Burgoon, B. (2017). The Paradox of Well-being: Do Unfavourable Socioeconomic and Sociocultural Contexts Deepen or Dampen Radical Left and Right Voting Among the Less Well-Off? *Comparative Political Studies*.

Rooduijn, M., Burgoon, B., van Elzas, E., & van de Werfhorst, H. (2017). Radical Distinction: Support for Radical Left and Radical Right Parties in Europe. *European Union Politics*.

Rooduijn, M., De Lange, S. L., & van der Brug, W. (2014). A Populist Zeitgeist? Programmatic Contagion by Populist Parties in Western Europe. *Party Politics*, 20(4), 563-575.

Ruzza, C., & Fella, S. (2011). Populism and the Italian right. *Acta Politica*, 46(2), 158-179.

Rydgren, J. (2007). The Sociology of Radical Right. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33, 241-262.

Sola, J., & Rendueles, C. (2017). Podemos, the upheaval of Spanish politics and the challenge of populism. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 26(1), 99-116.

Stavrakakis, Y., & Katsambekis, G. (2014). Left-Wing Populism in the European Periphery: The Case of SYRIZA. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19(2), 119-142.

Taggart, A. P. (2000). Populism. *Buckingham: Open University Press*.

Teney, C., Lacewell, O., & Wilde, P. D. (2014). Winners and losers of globalization in Europe: attitudes and ideologies. *European Political Science Review*, 6, 575-595.

van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Discourse and Society*, 4(2), 249-283.

Visser, M., Lubbers, M., Kraaykamp, G., & Jaspers, E. (2014). Support for Radical Left Ideologies in Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 53(3), 541-558.

Wadsworth, J., Dhingra, S., Ottaviano, G., & Reenen, J. V. (2016). Brexit and the Impact of Immigration on the UK. *Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics and Political Science*.

Zaslave, A. (2008). Here to stay? Populism as a new party type. *European Review* 16(03), 319-336.

Appendix 1 – Press Interviews by year

[Day Month – Name of the interviewee (Name of the newspaper/Blog): web link]

2014

31 January - Jorge Moruno (Hiredknives):
<https://hiredknives.wordpress.com/2014/01/31/podemos-interview-with-jorge-moruno/>

7 April - Errejon (InfoAut): <https://www.infoaut.org/approfondimenti/dal-15m-al-22m-intervista-con-inigo-errejon>

31 May - Iglesias (Il Manifesto): <https://ilmanifesto.it/a-sinistra-scoprono-podemos/>

5 June - Iglesias (20minutos): <https://www.20minutos.es/entrevistas/pablo-iglesias/521/>

5 July - Iglesias (The Guardian): <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/06/pablo-iglesias-indignado-podemos-spain>

17 July – Iglesias (The Press Project): <https://www.thepressproject.gr/article/65826/An-in-depth-interview-with-Pablo-Iglesias-leader-of-Podemos-the-new-party--that-is-shaking-up-Spanish-politics>

25 September - Miguel Urban (controlacrisi.org):
<http://www.controlacrisi.org/notizia/Politica/2014/9/25/42389-podemos-e-il-miracolo-per-una-europa-dei-popoli/>

20 November - Iglesias (il Manifesto): <https://ilmanifesto.it/siamo-il-voto-dellasperanza/>

27 Novembre - Lola Sanchez (La Presse): <http://www.lapresse.it/spagna-a-sei-mesi-dalle-europee-podemos-vola-nei-sondaggi-lola-sanchez-mai-alleati-del-psoe.html>

2015

6 March – Errejon (Repubblica): <http://temi.repubblica.it/micromega-online/%E2%80%9Cin-spagna-soffia-il-vento-del-cambiamento%E2%80%9D-intervista-a-inigo-errejon-segretario-politico-di-podemos/>

14 March- Miguel urban (El Periodico): <https://www.revistalabarraca.com.ar/entrevista-a-miguel-urban-eurodiputado-de-podemos/>

10 April - Jaime Pastor (Left East): <http://www.criticatac.ro/lefteast/podemos-between-populism-and-social-movements-interview-with-jaime-pastor/>

26 May – Iglesias (Repubblica):
http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2015/05/26/news/pablo_iglesias_podemos_e_una_vittoria_storica_basta_tagli_e_corrucior_pronti_a_guidare_il_paese_-115273579/

May - June - Iglesias (New Left Review): <https://newleftreview.org/II/93/pablo-iglesias-spain-on-edge>

1 September - Miguel urban (Publico):<http://www.publico.es/internacional/miguel-urban-europa-gastado-800.html>

15 December – Iglesias (Guardian): <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/dec/15/podemos-pablo-iglesias-jeremy-corbyn-spain-election-radicalism-labour>

16 December - Jorge Moruno (OpenDemocracy): <https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/carlos-delcl-s/our-situation-is-quixotic-and-machiavellian-interview-with-podemos>

2016

16 May - Pablo padilla (El Pais):
https://politica.elpais.com/politica/2016/05/15/actualidad/1463308534_578332.html

18 May - Miguel urban (EFE): https://www.eldiario.es/politica/Miguel-Urban-denuncia-inmigrantes-Lampedusa_0_517249082.html

14 June – Iglesias (El Pais):
https://elpais.com/elpais/2016/06/14/inenglish/1465897947_663542.html

14 June – Iglesias (Repubblica)
http://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2016/06/14/news/pablo_iglesias_noi_di_podemos_insieme_ai_socialisti_per_la_nuova_spagna_-142004478/

26 June - Jaime Pastor and Ernest Urtasun (Jacobin Mag):
<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/06/unidos-podemos-spain-brexit-election-catalonia/>

28 June - Juan Carlos Monedero (Espresso):
<http://espresso.repubblica.it/internazionale/2016/06/28/news/l-errore-di-podemos-non-aver-appreso-la-lezione-di-beppe-grillo-1.275235>

19 October – Ione Belarra (El Diario): https://www.eldiario.es/desalambre/Ione-Belarra-Unidos-Podemos-CIE_0_571143418.html

22 November - Errejon (HuggPost): https://www.huffingtonpost.es/2016/11/22/entrevista-inigo-errejon_n_13148184.html?ncid=engmodushpimg00000004

2017

3 February - Miguel Urban (Publico): <http://www.publico.es/politica/miguel-urban-cultura-politica-inauguraron.html>

9 February - Iglesias (El Pais): https://politica.elpais.com/politica/2017/02/08/actualidad/1486541954_438114.html

12 March - Miguel Urban (El Periodico): <https://www.elperiodico.com/es/politica/20170312/entrevista-miguel-urban-podemos-5874165>

24 Aprile - Errejon (Senso Comune): <https://www.senso-comune.it/rivista/in-teoria/loccidente-nel-suo-momento-populista/>

20 May - Fernandez and Pastor (Jacobin Mag): <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/05/podemos-psoe-popular-party-iglesias-populism-spain>

29 June - Ione Belarra (Melilla Hoy): <http://www.melillahoy.es/noticia/92217/politica/nos-parecen-insoportables-las-condiciones-en-las-que-estan-los-ninos-en-la-purisima.html>

7 August - Ione Belarra (El Mundo): <http://www.elmundo.es/espana/2017/08/07/598734a0ca4741d9138b45e5.html>

4 September – Rita Mestre (Le Vent Se Lève): <https://www.senso-comune.it/rivista/in-teoria/non-dobbiamo-sentirci-degli-invitati-nelle-istituzioni/>

19 September - Brais Fernandez & Jorge Moruno (Jacobin Mag): <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/12/podemos-under-pressure>

29September - Miguel urban (Publico): <http://www.publico.es/politica/miguel-urban-cuotas-pp-demostrado-ver-franco-democracia-cristiana.html>

30 September - Miguel Urban (Jacobin Mag): <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/09/only-the-beginning>

6 October - Iglesias (Corriere della Sera): <http://www.iniziativalaica.it/?p=37145>

12 November- Boussselham (Diario 16): <http://mediterraneo.diario16.com/boussselham-me-parece-clave-queramos-una-sociedad-sin-racismo/>

4 December - Errejon (Crisis): <https://www.senso-comune.it/rivista/in-teoria/errejon-la-patria-lordine/>

12 December - Ione Belarra (El Diario): https://www.eldiario.es/canariasahora/entrevistas/Ione-Belarra-Unidos-Podemos-CIE_0_716728630.html

20 December – Iglesias (Jacobin Mag): <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/12/pablo-iglesias-catalan-elections-podemos-spain>

2018

6 May - Mondero (Senso Comune): <https://www.senso-comune.it/rivista/in-teoria/quella-sinistra-infastidita-dai-poveri/>

12 May - Errejon (El Confidencial): https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2018-05-12/inigo-errejon-podemos-acuerdos-psoe-ciudadanos_1562550/

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire

The role of immigrants in Spain/European society

- What do you think about the impact of immigrants and refugees on the Spanish society?
- Do you think that Spanish people blames immigrants is also because poorly informed?
- How strong is the impact of the migration phenomenon on the recent political election (in Spain, in Europe and in the World)?
- Do you think that the Right is taking advantage of this “fear of the immigrants”? If yes, how the left has to react?

Media

- Do you think that the media (TV, social media etc.) are informing correctly about this issue?

The role of the politics

- What are the main mistakes (if there are) made by the politics in the past or still today regarding immigration? And what are the main policies to do now? In Europe and in Spain.

EU

- How the Eu should manage this phenomenon? Do you think that the EU role should be more/less invasive? Why?

Podemos

- Do you think that your party (in the program and in acting) is representing your position on this issue? Why?
- Is it the Podemos position changed across the years? / Is your personal position-vision changed across the years? If yes, why?
- What are the main differences between Podemos and the other Spanish parties (as PSOE or Ciudadanos)?
- To which parties in the European context do you feel to have more points in common on this issue?