

Special Issue in *Political Studies Review*

Understanding Populism in East and Southeast Asia

Overview:

Populism has emerged as a critical force shaping political landscapes across East and Southeast Asia, yet its manifestations vary significantly across countries. Unlike Western cases, where populism often centers on anti-elite rhetoric and immigration, populism in East Asia is inextricably linked with the region's developmental legacies, state-driven economic policies, evolving gender dynamics, charismatic leadership with quasi-religious appeal, and shifting constructions of national identity. In South Korea, populist appeals frequently align with perceived gender conflict narratives and redistributive demands, while in Japan, populism tends to manifest as a form of chauvinistic nationalism, though it is frequently mediated and constrained by dominant-party politics. Taiwan presents a distinct case where populism intersects with cross-strait relations and identity politics, whereas in the Philippines and Thailand, charismatic leadership and mass mobilization play more prominent roles. This special issue seeks contributions that examine populism in East and Southeast Asia from a comparative perspective, exploring its drivers, forms, and consequences. We welcome both theoretical and empirical studies that interrogate the region's diverse populist experiences and their implications for democracy, governance, and identity politics.

Key Research Questions:

- How do developmental legacies and state-led economic strategies shape diverse forms of populism in East Asia?
- In what ways do evolving gender dynamics influence populist rhetoric and mobilization?
- How do institutional structures and dominant-party systems mediate or constrain populist movements?
- How does populism shape and influence public opinion and voting behaviour?
- Does populism contribute to the political radicalization of younger generations?
- How does populism interact with identity politics and shifting notions of national belonging?

- What roles do charismatic leadership and mass mobilization play in shaping the trajectories of populist politics?

Timeline:

- Opening of call for abstracts: 10 November 2025
- Deadline for submission of abstracts/short summaries: 10 January 2026
- Decision on selected proposals and invitation for full submissions: 10 February 2026
- Deadline for invited authors to submit their full papers: 10 August 2026

Submission Guidelines:

We welcome contributions from scholars globally, including from scholars working in underrepresented regions, with a focus on interdisciplinary dialogue and inclusivity. Submissions should be original research articles, theoretical papers, or comprehensive reviews. Interested authors should submit an abstract of up to 500 words, 3-5 keywords, and details of the author(s) (title, institutional affiliation) by email to Shang E. Ha (seha@sogang.ac.kr) by 10 January 2026. Please note, the abstract needs to be clearly aligned with the key themes of this Special Issue and the Aims and Scope of *Political Studies Review*.

Contact Information: For any inquiries regarding the Special Issue, please contact the Guest Editors: Shang E. Ha (Sogang University, seha@sogang.ac.kr) We look forward to your contributions to this important and timely Special Issue.