

SOVEREIGNTIST PARTIES IN ROMANIA DURING THE 2024 ELECTIONS

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Abstract

Sovereignist claims are increasing in the USA, in Europe, and, implicitly, in Romania due to the rise of existential anxieties and ontological insecurities. The rise of illiberal democracies, the economic challenges, the war in Ukraine and Gaza, etc. have created a fertile ground for virulent reactions, leading to sovereignist claims of 'the people' to 'take back control'. In Romania, during the last three rounds of elections (European, local and national parliamentary elections) which took place in 2024, the main populist parties launched a self-proclaimed sovereignist movement, including three parties, The Alliance for the Union of Romanian, S.O.S Romania, and the Party of Young People, with a combined result of 33% of votes. To what extent the ideology of these parties is a rebranding of good-old-fashioned authoritarian populism, or Romanian sovereignist

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parties had built a new message, grounded in the trumpist ideology, having added ideological elements? What is the common fundament and particularities of the three parties in terms of political objectives, ideology and prospects? Sovereignty has been under-theorized by Romanian scholars dealing with populism, as the connection between the two addresses difficulties for comparative politics. The extensive use of the populist label, linked to disparate parties in the Romanian context after 1989, challenge the discourse over its connections with suvereygnism itself. The article presents an endeavour to examine the typology of the Romainian sovereigntist parties, establishing a framework for empirical analysis, particularly concerning traditional themes in comparative politics such as the political elites, the people, and the crisis of representative institutions.

Key-words: Sovereignism; populism; representative democracy; AUR; S.O.S. Romania; PYP

1. Introduction

President Trump's proclamation of "America First"¹ doctrine and the promise to transfer power to the American people in his first and the upcoming second mandate has reaffirmed the sentiments that the elites have taken the power of the people and that nation-state interests must come first. These sentiments are not exclusive to the US but are prevalent in countries around Europe, including France, Poland, Italy, Germany, Hungary, and recently Romania. In Poland, the Law and Justice party emphasizes the need to protect national identity, traditions, culture, and customs against transnational cultural interests. In Italy, Fratelli d'Italia calls for the stop of political elite selling of sovereignty. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán declares the end of multilateralism and the beginning of bilateral relations.²

The liberal project, which flourished in the Global North after 1945 has turned into its opposite. The emergence of populist opposition to the liberal political mainstream revealed the superficiality of the purported triumph of

¹ D. Trump, *Donald J. Trump Foreign Policy Speech*, April 27, 2016, [<https://www.donaldjtrump.com/press-releases/donald-j.-trump-foreign-policy-speech>], 22 October 2024

² S. De Spiegeleire et al. "Front Matter", *The Rise of Populist Sovereignism: What It Is, Where It Comes from, and What It Means for International Security and Defense*, Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, 2017.

liberalism, even in its strongholds in Europe. There has been a rise in nationalism, nativism, identity politics, antisemitism, critiques of globalisation and internationalism, and a growing emphasis on localised sovereignty.³ The prevailing worldview has shifted from globalism to nationalist-populism, as confidence in the inexorable progress of globalisation and internationalism has yielded to scepticism and adversarial 'zero-sum' alternatives. Populism has emerged as an increasingly powerful and attractive political tool and challenge liberal democracy and supranational structures like the EU. As a discourse, it is centred on an understanding of politics as an antagonistic relationship between 'the people' and 'the (illegitimate and unaccountable) elite'⁴. The contemporary populist challenge is closely coupled with a new form of sovereigntism that traverses conventional political divisions and extends beyond the critique of any particular sphere or institution. This complex phenomenon represents a significant amplification of the sovereigntist discourse that is both quantitative and qualitative.⁵ However, this understanding of sovereigntism may not be robust enough to overcome conventional divides between right and left, 'exclusive' (identitarian) and 'inclusive' (pluralist driven) populism. Critics contend that the phrase may be unsuitable for the exclusionary, hyper-nationalist, and potentially racist discourses originating from the radical right.⁶ To articulate what is genuinely new about the contemporary coupling of populism and sovereigntism, the focus should be less on the actual legal dimensions of sovereign power than on the location of the performance of sovereignty. Presenting displays of restored sovereign authority is a crucial element of the populist approach, aiming to contrast the enactments of an invigorated demos with the prospect of a severe systemic crisis endangering the security and well-being of the citizenry.

³ A. Kallis, "Populism, Sovereigntism, and the Unlikely Re-Emergence of the Territorial Nation-State", *Fudan J. Hum. Soc. Sci.* 11, 2018, pp. 285–302.

⁴ S. Miscoiu, A. G. Pantea, L. Petrila, "Who do We Trust? Blurry Perceptions on Authority of the Voters of the Romanian Radical Right-wing Populist Party Alliance for the Union of Romanians", *Civil Szemle*, 20, 2023, pp. 191-212.

⁵ B. Moffitt, "Transnational Populism? Representative Claims, Media and the Difficulty of Constructing a Transnational 'People'", *Javnost*, 24, 2017, pp. 409–425.

⁶ C. de la Torre, *The Promise and Perils of Populism: Global Perspectives*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2014.

Sovereignism, as a doctrine⁷, refers primacy to the national-level politics and the call to recover power that has slipped away to more distant governance layers; and has emerged as one of the primary ideological-political lines of contemporary politics. This perspective benefits from a multifaceted populist critique of globalisation and the demise of the premise of 'post-sovereignty'. It lies at the point of intersection between rival populist projects of re-defining and allegedly re-empowering the community of 'the people' against distant, detached, or unaccountable elites. It is also benefiting from a strong preference for reconceptualising sovereign power along defensive territorial lines, clawing back control behind recognisable frontiers of existing states on behalf of popular communities residing within the contours of established nation-states.⁸

As such, the sovereignist movement is the direct consequence of the populist agenda. Norris and Inglehart⁹ argue that authoritarian populism is defined as a set of values that prioritize collective safety at the expense of individual autonomy, with core components being security, conformity, and obedience. The rise of populism and implicitly sovereignism in Eastern and Western Europe is evident through the emergence of the social conservatism dimension, with individuals with lower education levels often exhibiting more socially conservative beliefs and possessing a less open-minded perspective.

Authority is a dynamic societal process that is based on a relationship, where the right to govern can change easily.¹⁰ It is not a one-way force exerted through a traditional "power" dynamic but rather a relationship that necessitates acknowledgement and continual renewal. This can result in uneven power dynamics that have unexpected and surprising outcomes, including the rise of populism. Authority is often contested and claimed by both state and non-state actors, resulting in complex and overlapping dynamics that require close observation.¹¹

⁷ A. Kallis, *loc. cit.*

⁸ W. Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017, pp. 17-25.

⁹ P. Norris and P. Inglehart, *Cultural backlash: Trump, Brexit, and the rise of authoritarian populism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 196-203.

¹⁰ L. Stankov and J. Lee, "Nastiness, Morality and Religiosity in 33 nations", *Personality and Individual Differences*, 99, 2016, pp. 56-66.

¹¹ T.B. Hansen and F. Stepputat, "Sovereignty revisited", *Ann. Rev. Anthropol.*, 35 (1), 2006, pp. 295-315.

When considering institutions and organizations involved in societal change, “authority” is not limited to traditional political parties and ideologies or formal programs. There is often a conflict over which actors or institutions have the authority to manage visions and values, and because of the importance of hierarchy and value systems in everyday life, societal values are also the context in which actors attempt to gain or strengthen their authority.¹² This argument can be replicated to the ethos of contemporary Romania, where AUR, SOS and PYP gain support as they require national sovereignty and political authority. These parties admire authoritarian figures to oppose the injustices they ubiquitously notice, highlighting the lack of authority at societal level.

Europe has been facing political transformation synonymous with the rise of populism for over twenty years. Euroscepticism remains a significant force in national and EU public policymaking, with different types of Euroscepticism in Europe. Countries affected by crises including Italy, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Sweden, France, Belgium, often face government hostility or revulsion towards pro-EU parties.

Romanian citizens have remained optimistic pro-Europeans over time, but trust in the European Union began to decline since 2018¹³. Political misleadership, economic pauperism and non-western mass media support¹⁴ are the main reasons for deepening distrust of Romanian citizens in the EU. The elections from 2024 have shown that citizens still support pro-European political forces and but don't sanction populist parties due to their anti-EU rhetoric and failure to fulfil electoral promises. Rebranded as sovereignist parties, these forces are more vocal than ever at national level.

¹² T. Sikor and C. Lund, “Access and property: a question of power and authority”, *Development and Change*, 40/1, 2009, pp. 1-22.

¹³ B. Drăghia, “Studiu privind percepția românilor față de Uniunea Europeană”, *RRSS*, 11, 2020, pp. 145.

¹⁴ See the presidential elections from 2024 and the involvement of external funding in the campaign of the candidate Calin Georgescu. Mihnea Lazar, “Dialog halucinant despre Putin, extraterestri și Soros între Călin Georgescu și un reporter britanic. „Ai văzut tu cum arată Covidul?”, *Digi 24*, 06.12.2024 [<https://www.digi24.ro/stiri/actualitate/dialog-halucinant-despre-putin-extraterestri-si-soros-intre-calin-georgescu-si-un-reporter-britanic-ai-vazut-tu-cum-arata-covidul-3035623>], 1st of December 2024.

2. The Alliance for the Union of Romanians

The newly formed Europe of Sovereign Nations Group¹⁵ in the European Parliament in 2024 can be alarming for the EU, as it emphasizes the fracture lines within the European construction and prevent the completion of realistic and sustainable strategies. However, AUR, S.O.S. Romania and PYP have not been admitted in the group, nevertheless this fact shows an overlapping dimension of the authoritarian populism a sovereigntism, as well as the fractures within the movement as well. To understand

The birth of the AUR in Romanian political arena can be traced back to the general *zeitgeist* against societal change or economic inequality. After 1989, in Romania, various groups and political parties emerged, with some succeeding in crossing the electoral threshold and being part of the Romanian Parliament. The Greater Romania Party (PRM) was the first populist and extremist party, reaching the second round in the 2000 presidential elections with a third of the votes. Peoples' Party Dan Diaconescu (PPDD) also fell into this populist and self-declared anti-system typology. The PRM reached the second political force in the parliament in 2000 with approximately 20%, while the PPDD reached the third force in 2012 with 15%¹⁶.

The Alliance for the Unity of Romanians (AUR) is a nationalistic party with an ultra-conservative agenda, aiming to unite Romanians from all over the world. Its main mission is to unify Romania with the Republic of Moldova, and its success in the last legislative election was attributed to its unionist agenda. AUR draws from the historic-cultural unionist background of Great Romania, which aims to rebuild national faith, cultural imagination, and community imaginary. The party is open to religious gatherings co-organized with representatives of the Orthodox Church and organizes marches against sanitary restrictions through patriotic songs.

The party is already labelled as a far-right populist by several analysts, with the extreme right contesting key features of democracy while the radical right accepts democracy but rejects some key elements such as minority rights

¹⁵ J. Liboreiro and V. Genovese, "AfD and allies form new far-right group in Brussels called Europe of Sovereign Nations", *Euronews*, 01.07.2024, [<https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/07/10/afd-and-allies-form-new-far-right-group-in-brussels-called-europe-of-sovereign-nations>], 1st of December 2024.

¹⁶ S. Miscoiu and A.G. Pantea, "Family, faith and freedom" for whom? The reactions of the roma civil society to the 2020 re-emergence of the romanian far-right", *Civil Szemle*, Jan 1/19, 2022, pp. 147-64.

and the rule of law. The disappointment with the old political elite played an important role in the emergence of AUR, as Romania has been largely governed by the Social Democratic Party (PSD), the National Liberal Party (PNL), the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (UDMR), and several small formations with short-term or limited impact on political life since 1989.

In 2020 and 2024, Romanians have chosen to back anti-system groups, giving AUR enough votes to get into the parliament and, subsequently, to consolidate its position. The group's success can be attributed to the fact that many voters wanted to show their contempt for the old political class. AUR used the political atmosphere of disappointment and appetite for nationalism efficiently, along with the rise of religious conservatism. Additional factors contributing to AUR's success in the last legislative election include the pandemic crisis and the role played by social media in promoting the party.

AUR can be considered a nationalistic container of hate speech, providing a cultural and psychological preparation for xenophobic actions, including those against minority groups and implicitly against LGBTQ+ the Roma communities, which increases the moral permissibility of violence, similar to the "license" of neofascist ideology.¹⁷

The populist phenomenon in Romania is characterized by a messianic political vision, particularly the Alliance for the Union of Romanians (AUR) party led by charismatic and controversial leader George Simion. Claudiu Târziu, the second more influential leader of AUR, was the leader of the Coalition for the Family and organizer of the 2018 referendum for changing an article the constitution to redefine marriage as union between a man and a woman.

Sovereignist parties appear especially during times of crisis, in Romania and elsewhere, such as the PRM of Corneliu Vadim Tudor, the PPDD, and the Greater Romania Party. These parties always had built up a platform, Greater Romania Party communicating with the electorate through newspapers like *România Mare* or *Tricolor*, while Dan Diaconescu's People's Party has had its own OTV television. AUR, SOS and PYP use social media, especially TikTok and Facebook. AUR's success can be attributed to their ability to use anti-communism to promote ultra-conservative political values, gradually replacing communism with neo-Marxism in their speeches. AUR have been enforced

¹⁷ A. Pantea and S. Miscoiu, "Family, Faith and Freedom. For Whom? The reactions of the Roma civil society to the 2020 re-emergence of the Romanian far-right", *loc. cit.*

during the COVID crisis, believing that global corrupt forces want to destroy the dignity of honest citizens. As such, the party built their political discourse on four main pillars: family, nation, faith, and freedom, all of which have a serious religious charge. They aim to fight against persecution of Christianity, which may be a reaction to the secularization of the Western world. Despite lacking a clear ideology or viable political and economic programs, AUR managed to produce a surprise in the 2020 and a reconfirmation in the 2024 elections, where it obtained in both cases over 23% in the diaspora, and 9%, respectively 15% of votes.

3. S.O.S. Romania

The COVID pandemic has advanced the Party Alliance for the Union of Romanians, which also included candidates from the Party of the Romanian Nation (PNR). Diana Iovanovici-Șoșoacă was among the candidates nominated by the PNR and was able to secure a senator's mandate for the 2020-2024 legislative term¹⁸. In 2021, following her exclusion from the AUR, she assumed leadership of a new party, S.O.S. Romania, from which she had campaigned for the European Parliament elections and secure a Member of the European Parliament mandate. Diana Șoșoacă claims to speak on the behalf of the sovereign Romanian nation. As main doctrine, can be mentioned the following themes¹⁹:

Anti-vaccination during the pandemic was the major theme that Diana Șoșoacă launched together with AUR. Since the beginning of her mandate as senator, she has made over 20 political statements against the measures during the pandemic.²⁰ Diana Șoșoacă's anti-vaccination actions

¹⁸ S. Bocancea, „SOS Romania. Partidul unui singur om”, R. Carp and C. Matiuta (ed.), *Alegerile europene din România 2024*, Institutul European, 2024, pp. 86-96.

Clivaje, alianțe, consecințe

¹⁹ L. Gheorghe, "Premiere in Parlament: Diana Șoșoacă, sanctioned by the Senate for violating the dignity of the position", in 22, 26.04.2021, available at <https://revista22.ro/actualitate-interna/premiera-in-parlament-diana-osoaca-sanctionata-de-senat-pentru-incalcarea-demnitatii-functiei>. D. Stan, "Diana Șoșoacă, kicked out of the European Parliament. She screamed and put on a muzzle: 'You killed people!'", in *Ziare . com*, July 18, 2024, available at [<https://ziare.com/diana-osoaca/scandal-parlamentul-european-data-afara-1882756>].

²⁰ See https://www.senat.ro/legis/lista.aspx?nr_cls=L465&an_cls=2024], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

did not only occur only in the Romanian Parliament and the European Parliament, but also in the territory. On September 4, 2021, she stopped a vaccination caravan that arrived at the request of local authorities in the Răchiteni commune of Iași county – although the act is criminalized by law, it was not enforced²¹.

Admiration expressed towards Putin and his ideology is another component of Diana Șoșoacă's political activity. Ever since the invasion of Ukraine, she has wanted to appear with the former ambassador of the Russian Federation and support all his statements and was also present at the reception of the new Russian ambassador in Bucharest²².

In over 20 political statements she attacked Ukraine and the West. On February 8, 2023, she accused the West of causing the earthquake in Turkey: "Until when I lived saddle witness and the production of earthquakes on command? In fact, it is an attack on Turkey from the side may great the world, who were completely displeased by the fact that they were developed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the president of Turkey. Moreover, the position of neutrality and mediator in the war Ukrainian Russian disturbed deeply, especially because Turkey is the second largest power in terms of military in NATO. Subsequently her position was clearly to block the accession of Sweden to NATO²³.

On September 21, 2022, in the statement policy *Romania must avenged. The truth must saddle triumphs*, she stated: "I had courage saddle I go public and saddle blame involvement Romania in war on the side Ukrainian, in the conditions in which it holds territories broken from Romania: Northern Bukovina, Bugea, Snake Island and a number of islands on the Danube. If we don't obtain and we don't requests officially for this means that we are

²¹ D. Dudescu, "The Prosecutor General's Office opened a criminal case in the case of the incidents in Răchiteni, where Diana Șoșoacă was " in *Libertatea*, 10.09.2021, available at [<https://www.libertatea.ro/stiri/parchetul-general-dosar-penal-dupa-incidentele-de-la-rachiteni-diana-sosoaca-3728742>], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

²² C. Pantazi, " Diana Șoșoacă went to the Russian Embassy for an event organized by the new ambassador, three days after she was elected MEP", in *G4Media.ro*, 12.06.2024, available at [<https://www.g4media.ro/foto-diana-sosoaca-a-mers-la-ambasada-rusiei-la-un-eveniment-organizat-de-noul-ambasador.html>]. [accessed, 1st of December 2024]

²³ See [<https://www.senat.ro/PDFIntrebari/1578%20iovanovici%20sosoaca%20d.pdf>], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

fighting playing with Romanians who have shed their blood on the Romanian flag for independence, unity and sovereignty. I was called Putinist – what did Putin have to do with the territories? Romanian, especially since it also guest saddle we take them back, and not only us...“²⁴.

On March 20, 2023, she submitted a proposal legislation for modification of Law no. 129/1997 for ratification “Treaty on Goodwill Relations neighborhood and cooperation from Romania and Ukraine”, which demands the denunciation treaty in 2027 and annexation by Romania of the territories that belonged to it (North Bucovina, Herța, Bugea, Maramureș historical and Snake Island)²⁵. The proposal was rejected by both Rooms.

In the declaration of March 22, 2023, entitled *Reunification Greater Romania, supported by the great power* will says: “ This initiative is one support including by Congress The United States of America , which on June 11, 1991 adopted resolution Senate 148 , which « To express convinced the Senate that The United States must saddle support the right to self-determination of the people of the Republic of Moldova and Northern Bukovina... Therefore, let it be decided, in the present moment, that is convinced the Senate that Government The United States must 1) support the right of the people to self-determination Moldova and Northern Bukovina , occupied by the Union Soviet , and saddle issue a declaration to that effect; and 2) To support efforts future of the Government Moldova saddle negotiate peacefully, if this is theirs the will, the reunification Romania with Moldova and Northern Bukovina, as established in The Paris Peace Treaty of 1920, in norms prevailing laws international and in accordance with Principle I of the Helsinki Final Act“.²⁶ For Diana Șoșoacă it doesn't matter that that resolution was given during the USSR and that is totally outdated. The end statement states that: “In this meaning, especially seeing US and EU support for reunification Republic of Moldova with Romania , in Background conflict Russian-Ukrainian, but seeing and resolution US Senate 1991, Declaration Parliament Romania in 1991, acts that were not never repealed or

²⁴ See [<https://www.senat.ro/PDFIntrebari/1298%20iovanovici%20sosoaca%20d.pdf>], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

²⁵ See [<https://www.senat.ro/legis/PDF/2023/23L568FG.PDF?nocache=true>], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

²⁶ See [<https://www.senat.ro/PDFIntrebari/1726%20iovanovici%20sosoaca%20d.pdf>], accessed, 1st of December 2024.

denounced, we ask the USA and the EU to support us in unification Romania with the Republic of Moldova and lands HELD illegal and abusive of Ukraine , through their takeover from the USSR, the North Bukovina, Herța, Bugea (Cahul, Bolgrad, Ismail), Maramureș historical and Snake Island. In this meaning, I will continue these requests and externally.”²⁷

4. The Party of Young People

The Party of Young People had been founded by MP Anamaria Gavrilă (a former member of Romanian diaspora, living in UK and Germany for more than a decade), who had previously left the Alliance for the Union of Romanians, after one term in office as MP. The party PYP supported the candidacy of independent Călin Georgescu in the 2024 presidential election, even before Georgescu appeared in opinion polls. PYP has a sovereignist, nationalist, right-wing Christian, conservative and populist ideology. It is a self-proclaimed anti-system party, and a supporter of traditional and Christian values. It is a party that declares itself Eurosceptic, with anti-Western messages.²⁸ Since the 2024 parliamentary elections, it has 35 seats in the Romanian Parliament.

The party uses Facebook and TikTok as main online distribution channel, in which the dominant theme is the fight against Romanian “deep state”, a term that encapsulates a network of government officials, business elites, and foreign influences from the West, viewed the party and Georgescu’s campaigns as a direct challenge to the existing power structures. Much like the opposition faced by President-elect Trump, Georgescu’s and PYP’s fight to secure the presidency became a so-called battle against a system intent on preserving its hegemony.

PYP, as the latest sovereignist party in Romania, presents itself at the only authentic sovereignist one. The second round of Romanian presidential elections, scheduled for December 8, 2024, was cancelled just days before the vote, raising concerns about the integrity of Romania's democratic institutions. The decision was reportedly a directive from incumbent president Klaus Iohannis, who saw the impending threat of Georgescu's victory as a threat to his legacy. POT argued that the move was

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ See [<https://sieupot.ro/statutul-partidului/>], accessed 1st of December 2024.

an attempt to undermine the electoral process and silence dissenting voices. Georgescu, undeterred by the court's ruling, vowed to continue his fight for democracy and announced plans to appeal the decision. On December 30, 2024, the Court of Appeal of Bucharest reviewed Georgescu's appeal, but the next day, the court ruled against him. PYP claims that it is a reinforcement of the Deep State's stranglehold on the political process. POT and Georgescu's non-affiliated supporters remained resolute, emphasizing the need for a transparent electoral process and accountability in governance.

PYP nationalism and populism differ from those of AUR and SOS, but all three parties emphasize the biblical inheritance national identity. Gavriła's belief that an economy exists "the hard-working people" aligns with Donal Trump's doctrine. She defends in her live videos²⁹ the suffering working-class who are abused by many of society's economic opportunists of post-communism. She addresses to the workers from the diaspora who have seen their lives shipped thousands far away.

5. A short comparizon

As an attempt to compare the three parties, the graph represents a potential view on the main similarities and differences in their ideology.

All three parties have a sovereigntist and conservative agenda, aiming to protect traditional values and unite Romanians from the diaspora and at home. In case of AUR, the main mission is to unify Romania with the Republic of Moldova. AUR draws from the historic-cultural unionist background of Great Romania, aiming to rebuild national faith, cultural imagination, and community imaginary. The party is open to religious gatherings co-organized with representatives of the Orthodox Church and organized marches against sanitary restrictions through patriotic songs. The party's success in the last legislative election can be attributed to the disappointment with the old political elite, the rise of religious conservatism, and the role played by social media in promoting the party.

²⁹ See [<https://www.facebook.com/AnamariaGavrilaDeputat>], accessed 1st of December 2024.



Self-proclaimed sovereigntist	Self-proclaimed sovereigntist	Self-proclaimed sovereigntist
Christian values	Christian values	Christian values
Moderately focused on the diaspora	Less focus on the diaspora	Focused on the diaspora
Liberal economic doctrine	Vague economic doctrine	Liberal economic doctrine
Moderate on LGBTQ+ rights	Exclusionary on LGBTQ+ rights	Exclusionary on LGBTQ+ rights
Moderate related trumpism	Vague related trumpism	Focused on trumpist doctrine
Anti-putinist	Sensitivity towards the Russian worldview	Sensitivity towards the Russian worldview
Unionist (towards Moldova)	Unionist (including Moldova and territories from Ukraine)	Unfocused on unionism
Pro-european		

S.O.S. Romania is a dissident from AUR. The party can be considered a nationalistic container of hate speech, providing a cultural and psychological preparation for xenophobic actions, including those against minority groups, like LGBTQ+ and others. Diana Șoșoacă has expressed admiration towards Putin and his ideology. She has supported Putin's statements since the invasion of Ukraine and has been present at the reception of the new Russian ambassador in Bucharest. Șoșoacă has also attacked Ukraine and the West. The Party of Young People (PYP), founded by MP Anamaria Gavrilă, supports independent Călin Georgescu in the 2024 presidential election. PYP uses Facebook and TikTok as main online distribution channels, with the dominant theme being the fight against Romania's "deep state." The party has faced challenges in the recent cancellation of the second round of Romanian presidential elections, raising concerns about the integrity of Romania's democratic institutions.

Conclusion

The article presents arguments to look at the Romanian sovereigntist movement from as is a direct continuation of the authoritarian populist agenda, prioritizing ultra-orthodox religious views, traditional collective values, and selecting national safety at the expense of individual autonomy. The three parties presented – AUR, SOS Romania and PYP, are nuances of the same doctrine, displaying a strong opposition against progressive political perspectives. The differences between them refers primary to the relation to the Russian Federation and EU, as well as the economic doctrine. Sovereignty is used by these parties, generally, as a receptacle concept which unify the three parties. Additionally, it is used as referring to non-interference of supranational actors, and a legitimation discourse for the internal control of the state. Nevertheless, the goal of the states should be the creation of opportunities for the people to be themselves sovereign. This internal contraction is not yet resolved by the sovereigntists movement, at least, in Romania.

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