Contested international agreements, contested national politics: how the radical left and the radical right opposed TTIP in four European countries

Julia Rone*

This article examines how opposition to TTIP developed in four countries and how the radical right tried to appropriate analyses originally developed by the radical and Green left. It is argued that academic and media attempts to define opposition to trade-plus agreements as 'anti-trade' or 'populist' obscures the ideological tensions and particular agendas which existed within the anti-TTIP camp.

International trade law used to constitute an area of 'quiet politics'[1] in which business interests set the rules. This started to change as regulations became an important part of trade negotiations, and civil society groups with vested interests got increasingly involved. Drawing on the legacy of the global justice movement, contestations over the negotiation by the European Commission of trade-plus agreements with the US and with Canada accelerated the politicisation of international trade law across many member states of the EU.[2] As a

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1 PD Culpepper, *Quiet Politics and Business Power: Corporate Control in Europe and Japan* (Cambridge UP, 2011).

2 G Winslett, 'How Regulations Became the Crux of Trade Politics' 50 *Journal of World Trade* (2016) 47, 70; H Gautney, *Protest and Organization in the Alternative Globalization Era* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); D Della Porta et al. (eds), *Global Justice Movement: Cross-National and Transnational Perspectives* (Routledge, 2015); F De Ville & G Siles-Brugge, *The Truth About the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* (Polity Press, 2016); N Gheyle, 'Trade Policy with

result, it is no longer possible to conceive of international trade law as a low-salience legal field detached from everyday and national politics.

Green and radical left parties and NGOs were the first political actors to raise awareness about the risks of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) as well as, but less prominently, the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA).[3] These groups conducted research, developed expertise, and ensured that opposition to these agreements would mount. In fact, a type of 'new, new sovereigntism' (structurally similar to the 'new sovereigntism' in the US) arose among pro-European movements and parties, mostly centre-left and left, seeking to defend EU laws, values and legal autonomy against a body of international law which was considered procedurally flawed, substantively objectionable, and intruding on the EU's legal order.[4]

However, what is less frequently commented upon is that the radical right also came to contest TTIP and CETA, and often reframed and appropriated leftist critique of the agreements.[5] In cases where authors do acknowledge mobilisation on the radical right, they tend to conflate left-wing and right-wing opposition under the common label of 'populism'.[6] Nevertheless, understanding the differences between radical right, and Green and radical left critiques is

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the Lights on: Linking Trade and Politicization' (Paper presented at the EU Trade policy at Crossroads: between Economic Liberalism and Democratic Challenges Conference Vienna, 4-6 February 2016).

3   The transnational campaign focused first on TTIP and, once it had built momentum, transferred attention to CETA, emphasising the similarities between the two agreements. Interview with Borislav Sandov from the Bulgarian Greens (on file with author).

4   M Pollack, 'The New, New Sovereigntism or How the Europe Union Became Disenchanted with International Law and Defiantly Protective of Its Domestic Legal Order' (Paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Conference, Baltimore, 22-25 February 2017) 2.

5   Many narratives on TTIP neglect this role. See, e.g., D Keith, '"Stop TTIP": Towards a Transnational Eurosceptic Opposing the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership?', in J FitzGibbon, B Leruth & N Startin (eds), *Euroscepticism as a Transnational and Pan-European Phenomenon* (Routledge, 2017) 97; M Strange, 'Implications of TTIP for Transnational Social Movements and International NGOs', in J-F Morin, T Novotná, F Ponjaert & M Telò (eds), *The Politics of Transatlantic Trade Negotiations: TTIP in a Globalized World* (Ashgate, 2015) 81.

6   R Balfour, *Europe's Troublemakers: The Populist Challenge to Foreign Policy* (European Policy Centre, 2016); I Bremmer, 'New Trade Deal May Be Doomed by Populism and Suspicion on Both Sides of the Atlantic', *Time Magazine*, 5 May 2016, available at http://time.com/4319133/new-trade-deal/ (last visited 24 August 2017); DH Joe, 'Spread of Populism in Major EU Countries and Its Policy Implications' (KIEP Research Paper, World Economy Brief, 17-10, 2017); TD Ziegler, 'TTIP and Its Public Criticism: Anti-Globalist Populism versus Valid Dangers' 2 *Legal Supplement: Studies in International Economics* (2016) 19, 51; 'Germans Against Trade: Fortress Mentality. Protectionists and Scaremongers are Winning in Germany', *The Economist*, 15 September 2016, available at http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21707241-protectionists-and-scaremongers-are-winning-germany-fortress-mentality (last visited 3 August 2017).

crucial, as they also lead to important differences in the proposed alternatives to existing neoliberal dimensions of international trade law.

Thus, this article examines, first: how did European radical right parties try to appropriate resistance to TTIP and 'own' an issue, popularised originally by Green and radical left parties and NGOs? Second: how did Green and radical left parties and NGOs position themselves with regard to this appropriation? These two questions are explored in four country cases: Germany, the UK, Italy, and Bulgaria, selected to cover different geographical areas of the EU, different levels of politicisation,[7] and the different levels of public support for TTIP. In 2015, 31 per cent of the population in Germany supported TTIP compared to 58 per cent in Italy, 63 per cent in the UK and 67 per cent in Bulgaria.[8] From one perspective, debates about TTIP followed similar patterns in the four selected countries insofar as, in all cases, common concerns such as the secrecy of the negotiations and the dangers of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement System (ISDS) were highlighted. However, the debates also took on strikingly national accents and in each country different national themes were picked up in the discourse on TTIP. The preservation of European standards and regulations dominated debates in Germany, while how to protect the National Health Service became a prominent consideration in the UK. Italians worried about food sovereignty and small and medium-sized business, and fears about fracking and GMO food were palpable in Bulgaria. These national discussions were explored through interviews and content analysis of news articles and documents produced by activists and party members.

Before introducing the case studies, it is important to explain some of the key terms used in this article. Contrary to the often vague and derogatory uses of the term 'populism' in the press, a more rigorous definition describes it as 'a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, "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'.[9] Populism is a 'thin ideology' in the sense that it needs a host ideology (such as liberalism, nationalism, fascism, socialism, ecologism), and this is crucial for defining its features in different cases.[10] Thus, populism's radical right and radical left versions must be carefully distinguished. The core values of the

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7   Gheyle (2016) 5-6.

8   Bertelsmann Foundation, *Attitudes to Global Trade and TTIP in Germany and the United States* (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2016), available at https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/publications/publication/did/attitudes-to-global-trade-and-ttip-in-germany-and-the-united-states (last visited 2 August 2017) 27.

9   C Mudde & C Kaltwasser, *Populism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP, 2017) 6.

10   Ibid 21.

populist radical right are nativism (the view that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group, 'the nation') and authoritarianism (the desire for law and order).[11] The populist radical left, on the other hand, embraces collective economic and social rights, expresses anti-capitalism, and is often internationalist, both in terms of its 'search for cross-national networking and solidarity, and in its assertion that national and regional socio-political issues have global structural causes (such as "imperialism" or "globalisation")'.[12] As for the Green left, which also figures prominently in the case studies presented below, it finds practical links between 'socialism and ecology, arguing that ecological problems cannot be solved without challenging capitalism, and that a socialism which does not respect the environment is worthless'.[13] Green left actors are close to radical left actors in that they share a critical analysis of the problems of capitalism and embrace democratic internationalism against authoritarian nativism.

Summing up the observations from all cases analysed, Germany's radical left initiated the fight against TTIP and CETA in Europe. This fight was later taken up by the radical right German Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party. Both left and right mostly campaigned under the banner of protecting EU standards and did not express anti-EU sentiments. However, their commonalities stopped there. The left refused AfD's offers for cooperation in campaigning efforts against TTIP, referring to what they regarded as AfD's anti-American and nativist tendencies. In the UK, discussions on TTIP became intertwined with debates on Brexit. The radical right party, UKIP, was of the view that a 'No' to TTIP necessarily also meant a 'No' to the EU. The radical left was divided on this question. It also responded in different ways to the appropriation of some of their arguments by UKIP, occasionally cooperating but mostly repudiating common actions with UKIP. In Italy, Lega Nord, following the example of the French Front National, opposed TTIP early on and later, connected it with the Italian 2016 constitutional referendum, urging for a 'No' to TTIP and a 'No' at the referendum. The party that was most active against TTIP and CETA, however, was the catch-all populist Five Star Movement that lobbied actively on the European level and cooperated with a wide range of actors to oppose the agreement. Finally, in Bulgaria as in most of Eastern Europe, there was strong support for TTIP, due to the geopolitical importance of the US in the region. Left and Green NGOs first popularised the issue and mounted a public campaign. A part of the radical right initially

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11   C Mudde, *Populist Radical Parties in Europe* (Cambridge UP, 2007) 19, 24.

12   L March, *Radical Left Parties in Europe* (Routledge, 2011) 9.

13   D Wall, *The Rise of the Green Left: A Global Introduction to Ecosocialism* (Pluto Press, 2010).

supported TTIP and CETA, but after a backlash from its own constituency, was forced to switch sides.

The main argument of this article is that amalgamating all opposition to trade-plus agreements as 'anti-trade' or 'populist' obscures the ideological tensions and particular agendas which exist(ed) within the anti-TTIP camp. Spelling out where the opposition to TTIP came from and how it evolved in the four selected countries is a significant exercise in the context of this Issue because it serves as an important reminder that international law does not emerge from a distinct international arena, but is generally the result of competing and contradictory forces, including convoluted national politics.

GERMANY: PRESERVING EUROPEAN STANDARDS

German civil society groups have been at the forefront of the opposition to TTIP in the EU. In October 2015, more than 200 000 people protested in Berlin, and in September 2016, more than 160 000 people protested across Germany against TTIP.[14] What is more, the STOP TTIP citizen initiative, a petition signed by more than three million European citizens, was started by German NGOs, supported by Die Linke and the Greens.[15]

The concern which resonated most with German people was the lowering of food, auto and environmental safety standards. This was followed by worries about unfair advantage for foreign companies and threats to jobs and wages.[16] The percentage of people in Germany who considered TTIP to be a good thing plummeted from 55 per cent in early 2014 to 34 per cent in late 2015; the percentage of people who considered it a bad thing rose from 25 per cent in early 2014 to 46 per cent in late 2015.[17] Supporters of TTIP attributed this dramatic change of attitude to the persistent and well-organised campaign led by local STOP TTIP organisations and the TTIP Unfairhandelbar coalition, the Greens, Attac Germany, Die Linke, the German Federation for the Environment

14 'Hundreds of Thousands Protest in Berlin Against an EU–US Trade Deal', *Reuters*, 10 October 2015, available at http://www.reuters.com/article/us-trade-germany-ttip-protests-idUSKCN0S40L720151010 (last visited 2 August 2017); 'Zehntausende demonstrieren gegen TTIP und Ceta', *Zeit Online*, 17 September 2016, available at http://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/2016-09/ttip-ceta-demonstrationen-freihandel-sabkommen-sigmar-gabriel (last visited 2 August 2017).

15 M Bauer, *Manufacturing Discontent: The Rise to Power of Anti-TTIP Groups* (ECIPE, 2016).

16 Statista, 'Why Do You Think the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the US and the EU Would Be Bad for Our Country?', 2017, available at https://www.statista.com/statistics/427334/reasons-against-ttip-public-opinion-of-germans-and-americans (last visited 2 August 2017).

17 Bertelsmann Foundation (2016) 24.

and Nature Conservation, and the Confederation of German Trade Unions, among others.[18] These actors provided in-depth expertise in the field of trade policy, explaining not only the threats of lowered standards, job losses, and advantage to foreign corporations, but also the dangers of ISDS, the regulatory chill that 'regulatory cooperation' might entail, the secretive nature of the negotiations, and the ways TTIP and CETA might increase inequalities.[19]

The left's virtual omnipresence and the strong resonance of its messages put the radical right German party AfD in a difficult situation. AfD was founded in 2013 by a group of Eurosceptics who opposed German-backed bailouts for poorer Southern European countries and wanted Germany to leave the Eurozone.[20] Derisively called 'the professors' party' due to the high number of economics professors amongst those who had endorsed its manifesto,[21] it found it difficult to adopt a clear position on TTIP. In March 2014, at the party conference in Erfurt, the chairman, economics professor Bernd Lucke, presented TTIP as a positive, constructive agreement in the interests of Germany, including for the car industry. However, another party member, Berlin lawyer Beatrix von Storch, argued TTIP could threaten consumer and environmental protection, as well as working standards. Her position won a party vote on the issue[22] and, two months later, Lucke made a passionate speech against TTIP in Dresden as part of the European Election campaign. He now presented ISDS as a big problem, claiming it would be neither correct nor appropriate for American companies in Germany to avoid being subjected to German jurisdiction in legal disputes.[23] Nevertheless, contrary to the sentiments of the supporter base and the official party line, economists such as Joachim Starbatty declared themselves fully in support of the agreement.[24]

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18   Bauer (2016).

19   Stop TTIP, 'About Stop TTIP', available at https://stop-ttip.org/about-stop-ttip (last visited 1 June 2018).

20   K Arzheimer, 'The AfD: Finally a Successful Right-Wing Populist Eurosceptic Party for Germany?' 38 *West European Politics* (2015) 535, 556.

21   J Hill, 'What Next for Germany's Europsceptic AfD Party?', *BBC*, 21 July 2015, available at http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33593500 (last visited 1 June 2018).

22   J Jahn, 'AfD gegen mehr Freihandel mit Amerika', Faz, 23 March 2014, available at http://www.faz.net/aktuell/wirtschaft/parteitag-afd-gegen-mehr-freihandel-mit-amerika-12860008.html (last visited 1 June 2018).

23   G Lachmann, 'Freihandel reißt tiefe Gräben in der AfD auf', Welt, 22 October 2014, available at https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article133530458/Freihandel-reisst-tiefe-Graeben-in-der-AfD-auf.html (last visited 1 June 2018).

24   Ibid.

In July 2015, AfD elected Frauke Petry as its new chairman. Her election marked the victory of the radical right faction of the party that was more vocal on issues such as migration.[25] Lucke resigned and formed a new party which most of the economic professors joined. In a sense, the inner tension in the AfD between neoliberal support for free trade and national-conservative protectionist positions was resolved by the split in the party. Having lost its economics specialists, AfD had to formulate an economic policy quickly.[26] Regarding TTIP, it drew on the anxiety prevalent in the German public around TTIP and strongly opposed the agreement. To do so, it took up many of the arguments against TTIP that had been formulated by Die Linke. This created a remarkable overlap in their arguments,[27] making it difficult for Die Linke to retain ownership of the issue.

Die Linke responded with an article entitled 'Die LINKE and the AfD—No Common Denominator'.[28] Die Linke acknowledged that some of its criticism of TTIP had been appropriated by the radical right, but observed that:

> [AfD's] criticism is directed either against the Americans or the global financial elites, who want to exploit the German people. It thus serves anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism. . . . Die Linke's criticism of CETA, TTIP and similar agreements is directed against their anti-democracy. These agreements are neo-liberal and anti-social. Left answers must describe a design for a better future, the development of our society towards lived solidarity, more democracy, and a peaceful world.[29]

The prevailing position in the STOP TTIP initiative was that TTIP should be stopped specifically to protect higher European standards of work, food and

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25 S Franzmann, 'A Right-Wing Populist Party Founded by Economists: The Strange Case of Germany's AfD', LSE Blog, 11 March 2017, available at http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/03/11/the-strange-case-of-afd/ (last visited 1 June 2018).

26 AfD's economic policy after the split has been described as 'a grotesque mixture of the questionable (dissolution of European Monetary Union), the reasonable (reforms of renewable energy subsidies) and the naïve (passing the costs of financial crises entirely onto the banks)'. See D Riedel & F Specht, 'German Populists Take Anti-Business Line', *Handelsblatt Global*, 23 March 2016, available at https://global.handelsblatt.com/politics/german-populists-take-anti-business-line-478100 (last visited 1 June 2018).

27 S Wagenknecht, 'Streitgespräch zwischen Sahra Wagenknecht und Frauke Petry', 2 October 2016, available at http://www.sahra-wagenknecht.de/de/article/2432.streitgespr%C3%A4ch-zwischen-sahra-wagenknecht-und-frauke-petry.html (last visited 1 June 2018).

28 fdsHamburg, 'DIE LINKE und die AfD—kein gemeinsamer Nenner', available at http://www.fdshamburg.org/die-linke-und-die-afd-kein-gemeinsamer-nenner (last visited 1 June 2018).

29 Ibid (my translation).

environmental protection.[30] Unlike in the UK (see next section), opposing TTIP in Germany did not mean opposing the EU. Both the radical left and the radical right welcomed EU standards. They also wanted to protect small and medium-sized enterprises against big business.

Notably, the Green left and radical left activists in Germany categorically refused any support from the AfD in their campaign against TTIP. In August 2016 AfD sent a letter to the coordinator of the alliance against TTIP and CETA, asking how to join the march and make the AfD's rejection of CETA and TTIP clear. Such offers had been made earlier in Hannover. In both instances, the AfD was refused permission to join.[31] The coordinator of the Stop TTIP initiative in Germany, Christian Weßling, said their rejection of right-wing populism and free trade criticism was meant to demonstrate that there was no space for anti-Americanism and racism in their initiative.[32]

UK: NO TTIP, NO EU

The case against TTIP evolved very differently in the UK and some distinguishing features are worth noting from the outset. First and foremost is the fact that the British population, including the radical left, was extremely divided about the merits or otherwise of the EU. This became clear for all to see in the unexpected result of the referendum on UK membership announced in June 2016. Remarkably, two years before this, UKIP, the UK party of the populist radical right, had managed to attract no less than 26.6 per cent of the UK vote for the European Parliament, more than any other party in the UK. It is also worth noting how the protection of the National Health Service was widely discussed in relation to TTIP in the UK. This is the only country where this happened so prominently, showing how an international issue can come to be connected to various pre-existing salient national debates.

As in Germany, radical left organisations such as War on Want had been developing and providing expertise on TTIP as early as 2013.[33] They opposed the agreement as a neoliberal project that bypassed democracy and entailed

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30 Stop TTIP, 'TTIP and CETA in Detail', available at https://stop-ttip.org/what-is-the-problem-ttip-ceta/faqs (last visited 1 June 2018).

31 F Leben, 'Anti-TTIP-Bündnis will AfD-Teilnahme verhindern', *Tagesspiegel*, 15 August 2016, http://www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/demo-gegen-freihandelsabkommen-anti-ttip-buendnis-will-afd-teil-nahme-verhindern/14013694.html (last visited 1 June 2018).

32 Ibid.

33 War on Want, *TTIP and Third Countries: A Compendium of Research Studies and Articles relating to the Impact of EU–US Trade Negotiations on Third Countries, with Special Reference to the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP)* (Ramphal Institute, 2013), available at http://media.

deregulation and the lowering of working, environmental, and food safety standards.[34] The main political parties did not accept this criticism. The 2014 manifestos of the Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Labour parties specifically supported TTIP, although they also all promised to monitor TTIP's impact on the NHS. Only the Green Party opposed TTIP.[35] As for UKIP, its manifesto was silent on it. Moreover, again as in Germany, the British radical right was struggling to form its position on TTIP. UKIP had often espoused economically liberal positions in the past. The big question for the party was how to reconcile its usual support for free trade with the demands by its supporters that it oppose TTIP. A few months after the European elections of 2014, UKIP was forced to clarify its position after a series of eventful misunderstandings. On the morning of 20 October 2014, the International Business Times (IBT) published an article stating that William Dartmouth, UKIP MEP and the party's spokesperson for trade, had confirmed in an email exchange that, should a transparent agreement come to pass, the party 'wishes to see public services such as the NHS and education included in TTIP'.[36] By the afternoon, UKIP had backtracked on this position, explaining that an error had occurred and a member of staff not permitted to speak on UKIP policy had received the answers by Dartmouth on the phone hurriedly and had subsequently confused the words 'include' and 'exclude' while drafting the email response.[37] UKIP's then leader, Nigel Farage, later sent a confusing letter to the IBT, which immediately necessitated further clarification. The clarification took the form of the following statement from Farage's office:

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waronwant.org/sites/default/files/TTIP%20and%20Third%20Countries%2C%202016.pdf (last visited at 1 June 2018).

34   M Dearn, 'Brexit: What Now for TTIP, CETA and UK Trade?', *War on Want*, 24 June 2016, available at http://www.waronwant.org/media/brexit-what-now-ttip-ceta-and-uk-trade (last visited 1 June 2018); J Maier, 'We the People? Right Wing Opposition to TTIP—Some Necessary Comments', *Stop TTIP Blog*, 30 June 2016, available at https://stop-ttip.org/blog/we-the-people (last visited 1 June 2018).

35   Green Party, *Real Change: Manifesto for the European Parliament Elections 2014*, available at https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/European%20Manifesto%202014.pdf (last visited 22 June 2018).

36   F Bermingham, 'TTIP Exclusive: Ukip Wants to Privatise the NHS in Controversial EU–US Trade Deal', *International Business Times*, 20 October 2014, available at http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ttip-exclusive-ukip-wants-include-nhs-controversial-eu-us-trade-deal-1470790 (last visited 1 June 2018).

37   F Bermingham, 'TTIP: Ukip Backtracks on NHS Privatisation Amid Communication Shambles', *International Business Times*, 20 October 2014, available at http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ttip-ukip-backtracks-nhs-privatisation-amid-communication-shambles-1470926 (last visited 1 June 2018).

> The trade agreement is being negotiated by the unelected EU Trade Commissioner behind closed doors—all our MEPs can do at the moment is sit and wait until the final agreement is forwarded to the EU 'parliament' and then say yes or no to it. Astonishingly, MEPs have no power to make amendments to any agreement the EU makes on international trade, nor does our elected UK government.

> Ukip is in favour of free trade but we are opposed to the undemocratic Commission negotiating on our behalf. Of course we look at each trade deal on [a] case by case basis, so if this one is not in the UK's interest, we will have no reservation in voting against. However we have yet to receive even the draft agreement (let alone the final agreement). In the meantime, we share your concerns.[38]

UKIP was seeking to reconcile its stance in favour of free trade with an anti-TTIP position by claiming that TTIP was not free enough since it was negotiated by the EU. Over time, the party's position developed further and introduced subtle distinctions, such as the claim that TTIP was not *really* about free trade. On 10 June 2015, in a session of the European Parliament, UKIP protested against a decision to cancel the vote on a TTIP resolution holding up posters with the words: 'Free Trade—yes. TTIP—no!'. In a June 2016 piece on TTIP for *Breitbart*, Farage claimed that TTIP, as negotiated by the European Commission, was in fact 'corporatist': [w]hilst TTIP may masquerade as being about free trade, actually it's not. It's about harmonisation, standardisation and a market place in which the giant corporations can dominate'.[39]

One reason which prompted UKIP to declare itself against TTIP was the barrage of popular protest the prospective agreement attracted. On his own admission, in his 16 years as an MEP, Farage had 'never seen such a vast amount of emails, correspondence, even members of the public phoning my office in Strasbourg as I have recently over the issue of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)'.[40] The source of this pressure was the information campaign waged by Green left and radical left parties and NGOs.

The *Breitbart* piece by Farage offered a similar analysis to those by War on Want and Global Justice Now. What is more, it specifically acknowledged the

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38 Ibid.

39 N Farage, 'FARAGE FOR BREITBART: TTIP is About Giant Corporations Dominating Our Economies', *Breitbart*, 11 June 2015, available at http://www.breitbart.com/london/2015/06/11/farage-for-breitbart-ttip-is-about-giant-corporates-dominating-our-economies (last visited 3 August 2017).

40 Ibid.

expertise of the NGO '38 Degrees' and expressed gratitude for receiving 'a nice letter from Francis [sic] O'Grady, the TUC's General Secretary, regarding TTIP's dispute mechanism'.[41] In 2014, 38 Degrees had approached UKIP at its party conference in Doncaster to provide it with information on TTIP. Consequently, UKIP supporters joined 38 Degrees members and handed out leaflets explaining the dangers of TTIP in August 2015.[42] 38 Degrees, a progressive not-for-profit activist organisation, offered the following rationale for approaching UKIP: 'No matter what you think of UKIP, they have 24 members of the European Parliament (MEPs)—and they'll all get to vote on TTIP'.[43]

That said, the readiness of 38 Degrees to collaborate with UKIP in grassroots campaigning was exceptional. Other left wing and/or Green NGOs were highly hostile to the way UKIP appropriated the issue. For example, Ruby Stockham from the political blog Left Foot Forward claimed that, while UKIP focused on where the deal was negotiated, most parties had problems with the actual content of the deal. What is more, 'UKIP would welcome the relaxation of environmental restrictions' and they are 'in favour of reduced rights for workers—they want to scrap race discrimination laws, think paid maternity leave is "lunacy" and want to scrap holiday and sick pay'. In a sense, 'UKIP are actually in favour of many of the things TTIP stands for; they just don't like it being negotiated by the EU'.[44] Morten Thaysen from Global Justice Now passionately argued that the left could not let the fight against TTIP become a platform for UKIP:

> Yes, we need every vote we can get against TTIP in the European Parliament, including UKIP's. But celebrating a party associated with racism and homophobia as a champion of the campaign against TTIP is a mistake. In the fight for social and economic justice we must ally ourselves with the people who are going to be hit the hardest by deals like TTIP, not their oppressors.[45]

41   Ibid. Frances O'Grady is the General Secretary of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC).

42   UKIP with 38 Degrees, 'Braintree UKIP Protests with 38 Degrees Against TTIP in Sudbury', 25 August 2015, available at http://www.ukipessex.org/?p=3337 (last visited 1 June 2018).

43   J Blair, 'TTIP at UKIP Conference—This Saturday', 38 Degrees, 24 September 2014, available at https://home.38degrees.org.uk/2014/09/24/ttip-ukip-conference (last visited 1 June 2018).

44   R Stockham, 'Don't Buy UKIP's Hypocrisy on TTIP', Left Foot Forward, 16 April 2015, available at https://leftfootforward.org/2015/04/dont-buy-ukips-hypocrisy-on-ttip (last visited 1 June 2018).

45   M Thaysen, 'Why We Shouldn't Let the Fight against TTIP Become a Platform for UKIP', Global Justice Now, 9 July 2015, available at http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/blog/2015/jul/9/why-we-shouldn%E2%80%99t-let-fight-against-ttip-become-platform-ukip (last visited 1 June 2018).

Sam Lowe from the environmental NGO Friends of the Earth insisted that opposition to TTIP was not a reason to leave the EU.[46] Lowe underlined the benefits of EU membership and claimed that ultimately, 'if we want to stop TTIP, we can only do it as part of the EU, as part of a Europe-wide movement'.[47] In contrast, for the director of War on Want, John Hilary, the EU was such a problematic institution that his organisation decided not to join the Remain campaign in the Brexit referendum and entertained instead the idea of left exit ('Lexit') (though this did not mean an alliance with UKIP).[48]

To sum up, the fact that UKIP appropriated resistance to TTIP and framed it as opposition to the EU was far from welcome to, and provoked a series of reactions from, Green and left NGOs that tried to distance themselves from UKIP and underline where the real problems with the agreement lay. But once the genie of Farage was let out of the bottle, it was difficult to put him back. UKIP cleverly reframed the issue in ways that obscured the apparent contradiction between their support for free trade and their opposition to TTIP. It was a winning card that could be played, and UKIP did not miss the opportunity.

ITALY: PROTECTING SMALL BUSINESS AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN THE FACE OF TTIP

In Italy, the radical right Lega Nord, far from being a latecomer, had formulated an explicit opposition to TTIP as early as 2014. Even though the party did not mention TTIP in its 2014 European Election Manifesto, it had already run several highly critical articles on it in the party newspaper *La Padania*.[49] At a press conference in May 2016, the leader of Lega Nord, Matteo Salvini, claimed that 'with such bad treaties and a bad currency, with uncontrolled migration and an Islamic invasion . . . an attempted genocide of the European people is taking place.'[50] The very same month Lega Nord started establishing committees campaigning for a 'No' at the 2016 constitutional referendum in Italy and a

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46 S Lowe, 'Is the EU's Pursuit of TTIP Reason Enough to Leave?', *Friends of the Earth*, 4 August 2015, available at https://www.foe.co.uk/blog/eu-s-pursuit-ttip-reason-enough-leave (last visited 1 June 2018).

47 Ibid.

48 J Hilary, 'EU Referendum: How Should the Left Vote?', *War on Want*, 1 January 2016, available at www.waronwant.org/media/eu-referendum-how-should-left-vote (last visited 1 June 2018).

49 P Zygulski, 'Europee 2014: Claudio Borghi', *La Padania*, 17 May 2014, available at http://www.correttainformazione.it/europee-2014-claudio-borghi-lega-nord/81610417.html (last visited 1 June 2018).

50 'Live Le Pen and Salvini, LIVE: Le Pen and Salvini gives press conference on TTIP and CETA at European Parliament [ENGLISH]', 11 May 2016, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VjqtyXlN0RA (last visited 1 June 2018).

'No' to TTIP, which they claimed could pose risks to consumers' health and could affect Italian food sovereignty.[51]

The emphasis on food sovereignty and on protection of small and medium-sized businesses was also a main issue for another party in Italy strongly opposing TTIP, the Five Star Movement. Founded by the comedian Beppe Grillo and the social media entrepreneur Gianroberto Casaleggio, it is difficult to position the Five Star Movement on a left–right scale. Indeed, in terms of votes, support for the Five Star Movement has come in 'three different waves': firstly from the left and from areas with previously high rates of voter abstention (until the local elections of May 2012); then from the right (Lega Nord and Popolo della Libertà) in May 2012; and, finally, from the centre-left in the general election of February 2013.[52] The diversity of the voter base reflects a similar diversity of issues embraced by the Five Star Movement: 'Far from progressive, its political agenda is an incongruous mix of common-sense, populist appeals and right-wing and left-wing slogans'.[53] The Five Star Movement has been termed a 'catch-all party' in which ideologies of the world-wide web as a tool for radical change and the rhetoric of networks play an important role.[54] The authoritarian and charismatic leadership of Grillo often clashed with grass roots participants on issues such as illegal immigration, where members of the party often had more left wing views than Grillo.[55] Regardless of how we describe the Five Star movement, it embraced the campaign against TTIP early on. The secretive negotiations of TTIP and its undemocratic nature, combined with the dangers the agreement could pose to food safety, food sovereignty, and the environment made it an ideal target for a movement demanding more democracy and more environmental awareness.

What is more, the national campaign Stop TTIP Italia (related to, but not overlapping with, the transnational Stop TTIP initiative dominated by German

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51   'Lega Nord in campo contro Referendum costituzionale e Ttip', *Il Piacenza*, 17 May 2016, available at http://www.ilpiacenza.it/politica/lega-nord-in-campo-contro-referendum-costituzionale-e-ttip. html (last visited 1 June 2018).

52   L Mosca, 'The Five Star Movement: Exception or the Vanguard in Europe?' 49 *International Spectator: Italian Journal of International Affairs* (2014) 36, 52, discussing F Bordignon & L Ceccarini, "Tsunami" a 5 stelle', in I Diamanti, F Bordignon & L Ceccarini, *Un salto nel voto. Ritratto politico dell'Italia di oggi* (Laterza, 2016) 60–71.

53   N Melloni, 'Behind the Five Star Movement', *The Jacobin*, 23 September 2015, available at https://www. jacobinmag.com/2015/09/beppe-grillo-berlusconi-renzi-italy-corruption (last visited 1 June 2018).

54   L Mosca, C Vaccari & A Valeriani, 'An Internet-Fuelled Party? The Movimento 5 Stelle and the Web?', in *Beppe Grillo's Five Star Movement: Organization, Communication and Ideology* (Ashgate, 2015); Mosca (2014) 36, 52.

55   N Conti, 'New Parties and the Transformation of the Italian Political Space' 6 *Contemporary Italian Politics* (2014) 210, 211.

NGOs) actively cooperated with the Five Star Movement domestically, recognising them as valuable allies: a recognition they did not give to Lega Nord. The Stop TTIP Italia coalition has been very active since its inception in 2013 and has been supported by more than 50 diverse organisations, including the Federation of Metallurgic Workers, the No Austerity Movement, the Green NGOs Greenpeace and Legambiente, the Consumers' Movement and the Slow Food Movement, and the food magazine *Il Fatto Alimentare*.[56]

In the 2014 European Elections, the Five Star Movement won 21.16 per cent of the popular vote and sent 17 deputies to the European Parliament, where it entered into an alliance with UKIP. The MEP Ignazio Corrao raised the issue of TTIP in the very first public statement of an MEP from the Five Star Movement in the European Parliament.[57] After that, the movement was highly active against TTIP, with MEP Tiziana Beghin closely following developments in the negotiations. The acceptance of the Five Star Movement as an ally of the left was not only a domestic phenomenon. Tiziana Beghin spoke together with colleagues from the Greens–European Free Alliance and the Confederal Group of the European United Left and the Nordic Green Left during a 2016 event on CETA, for example.[58]

Regardless of whether we focus on radical right, radical left or eclectic actors such as the Five Star Movement in Italy, a common denominator is the strong focus on food sovereignty, protecting geographical indications (such as Parma ham or Parmigiano Reggiano), and small and medium-sized enterprises associated with the 'Made in Italy' merchandise mark. While Lega Nord has also attempted to connect opposition to TTIP to opposition to Matteo Renzi's constitutional reform, food, agriculture and SMEs have been much more prominent in the discussion.[59]

To sum up, in Italy the radical right and the catch-all Five Star Movement were actively involved in opposition to TTIP from the very beginning. Unlike Lega Nord, the Five Star movement was actively cooperating with Green left

56 'Stop TTIP Italia', available at https://stop-ttip-italia.net/info/ (last visited 1 June 2018).

57 'Italian M5S 5-Star Movement—Debut in Europe (English)', 4 July 2014, available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i65HY6PCqq0 (last visited 1 June 2018).

58 Citizens CETA Summit, 'The Citizens' CETA Summit—It's Time to Have Your Say', *TTIP-Free Zones*, 26 September 2016, available at https://www.ttip-free-zones.eu/node/134 (last visited 1 June 2018).

59 T Beghin, 'Su TTIP Abbiamo Sempre Avuto Ragione Noi', 8 June 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaDOtavkNbE (last visited 1 June 2018); M Rizzo, 'I rischi del Ttip? Semplice: la perdita del patrimonio agroalimentare italiano', *La Repubblica*, 6 May 2016, available at http://www.repubblica.it/solidarieta/equo-e-solidale/2016/05/06/news/i_rischi_del_ttip_la_perdita_del_patrimonio_agroalimentare_italiano-139210935 (last visited 1 June 2018).

and radical left parties and NGOs, both domestically and in the European Parliament. The high level of agreement among TTIP opponents in Italy confirms that there are debates and topics of national importance that are typically incorporated into discussions of new issues. While both the radical left and the radical right were alarmed about the dangers of TTIP for local food and small and medium-sized businesses in Italy, the ruling centre-left Partito Democratico, led by Renzi, actively promoted the agreement. Given this strong support of TTIP by the national government, Italian MEPs opposing the agreement shifted their attention and efforts to the European level where they lobbied against it.

BULGARIA: GEOPOLITICAL FEARS AND UNEXPECTED ALLIANCES

Countries from the former Eastern Bloc have been largely passive when it comes to TTIP, mainly due to the strong geopolitical dimension of the agreement. The Visegrad Group of countries, especially Poland, 'tend to be sensitive to the signs of a reborn Russian imperialism and, together with other Central and Eastern European countries, have traditionally been Atlantic-oriented—that is, the geopolitical significance of TTIP is perhaps more appreciated here than in Western Europe where alliance with America is just business as usual'.[60] In many cases, for citizens in Eastern Europe the transatlantic dimension of TTIP trumped other possible considerations and objectives. The geopolitical factor combined with the low salience of the issue were important reasons why people in Bulgaria did not mobilise on a mass scale against the agreement.[61] What is more, while the general trend across the EU was decreasing support for TTIP (support fell 5 per cent on average and opposition increased with 7 per cent on average[62]), support in countries like Romania and Bulgaria increased.[63]

Nevertheless, the Bulgarian Greens and Za Zemyata, the Bulgarian representative of Friends of the Earth, both well connected to Green actors across Europe, launched a national anti-TTIP campaign. While they pointed to the

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60 Z Boda, 'Attitudes to TTIP in Eastern Europe', *Stop TTIP*, 11 March 2015, available at https://stop-ttip.org/blog/attitudes-towards-ttip-in-eastern-europe/ (last visited 1 June 2018).

61 Interviews with Borislav Sandov from the Bulgarian Greens and Ivaylo Popov from Za Zemyata (For the Earth).

62 F Rehn, 'It's EU Official: Opposition to TTIP Keeps Increasing', *Stop TTIP*, 21 January 2016, available at https://stop-ttip.org/blog/its-eu-official-opposition-to-ttip-keeps-increasing/ (last visited 1 June 2018).

63 Bertelsmann Foundation (2016).

undemocratic way in which the agreement was negotiated and the dangers of ISDS, they focused especially on the potentially dangerous ecological consequences from TTIP: the way it could open the door to fracking; GMO imports; imports of toxic pesticides and medicines; and the threats it posed to food safety. Connecting opposition to TTIP to opposition to GMO foods and to fracking was a clever strategic move, considering that some of the biggest protests in Bulgaria in the last 10 years have been precisely in opposition to GMO foods and fracking, and led to a government moratorium on both. The Green party and Za Zemyata hoped to make the agreement more relevant to the local context by focusing on issues that were already salient and highly politicised. But the Bulgarian protests against TTIP attracted only between 50 and 300 people in Sofia and a few other big cities, and could not be compared to previous mass ecological mobilisations in Bulgaria with thousands of participants.

One reason for this might be the complete absence of the topic in mainstream media, which only started actively reporting on TTIP in 2017 when the oppositional centre-left Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) eventually took a clear position and decided to oppose the agreement. BSP was strongly influenced in this decision by the expertise of the association Solidarna Bulgaria [Solidarity Bulgaria], founded in 2012 to act as a corrective to the increasingly neoliberal BSP. While Solidarna Bulgaria is not a radical left organisation, it is one of the few Bulgarian organisations to the left of the social democrats. It focuses on issues such as anti-racism, ecology, healthcare, local politics, education, workers' rights and conflicts, welfare provision and social assistance. With regard to TTIP, the group focused on the potential dangers of TTIP on work regulations, trade union association, and labour rights, leaving the ecological issues to the expertise of Green actors. Solidarna Bulgaria even entered into a debate with the radical right party VMRO (IMRO—Bulgarian National Movement) in an attempt to raise awareness of the dangers of TTIP.

The complete shift of position on TTIP and CETA by VMRO is a particularly indicative episode in the Bulgarian opposition to the agreements. In July 2015, the VMRO MEP, Angel Dzhambazki, member of the European Conservatives and Reformists Group in the European Parliament, published a blog piece entitled 'The Secret Code: TTIP or Unmasking Conspiracy' in which he ridiculed opponents of TTIP as conspiracy theorists who lacked in-depth knowledge of the trade negotiations.[64] Instead, he highlighted what he took to be the complexities involved in the agreement and explained why the

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64   A Dzhambazki, 'The Secret Code: TTIP or Unmasking Conspiracy', 9 July 2015, available at http://djambazki.org/blog/view/138/tajniiat-kod-ttip-ili-razoblichavane-na-konspiraciiata (last visited 1 June 2018).

proposals of the European Commission to amend TTIP made a difference. Dzhambazki's post was shared multiple times on Facebook and provoked a strong reaction from Vanya Grigorova, a key member of Solidarna Bulgaria, who engaged him in a tense online debate.[65] The backlash from VMRO's own supporter base, who accused the party of betraying the Bulgarian national interest, was probably the crucial factor for the U-turn in VMRO's position. Dzhambazki started opposing the agreement in the European Parliament and even asked Solidarna Bulgaria to keep him informed of the latest developments. Both sides in the conversation acknowledged the otherwise strong differences between them.[66] While, in 2015, Dzhambazki had remained loyal to the European Conservatives and Reformists Group that supported TTIP, in February 2017 he was among the members who voted against CETA. Furthermore, in 2017 he published a blog post in which he refuted all allegations that he had voted in support for CETA and insisted that his position was not new: 'I have always put the protection of Bulgarian and European producers first and the accusations of lobbyism or serving corporate interests are disgraceful both for my political opponents and the journalists.'[67]

VMRO opposed TTIP and CETA in order not to alienate its constituency base but did not actively research the agreement or organise discussions on it. Ultimately, the strongest opposition to TTIP and CETA came from the BSP, convinced by Solidarna Bulgaria. The BSP had mobilised its structures to help Solidarna Bulgaria collect signatures for the Stop TTIP Citizens' Initiative, had supported the independent presidential candidate Rumen Radev (currently the president of Bulgaria) who publicly denounced TTIP and CETA, and finally, took a position against TTIP and CETA in the 2017 national elections campaign.

All in all, the campaign against TTIP in Bulgaria remained low key and the issue remained at best a marginal topic in public debate. Green actors alone could not mobilise their constituency, due to low media coverage and the geopolitical implications of TTIP in Eastern Europe. The left-wing association Solidarna Bulgaria played a key role in providing expertise and pushing the social democrats and the radical right into recognising the dangers of TTIP. The way the member of the radical right VMRO, Dzhambazki, initially ridiculed TTIP opponents is further proof that opposition to TTIP was not

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65   Interview with Vanya Grigorova.

66   Ibid.

67   A Dzhambazki, 'Angel Dzhambazki with a Refutation on the CETA Vote', 16 February 2017, available at http://djambazki.org/news/view/539/angel-djambazki-s-oproverjenie-za-glasuvaneto-na-seta (last visited 1 June 2018).

originally a radical right issue, but became one later after the backlash from VMRO's own members.

CONCLUSION

While there is widespread consensus that international trade law has been politicised to an unprecedented extent,[68] what is needed now is a more thorough empirical analysis of how this politicisation manifests itself, including a mapping of actors and their positions.[69] This article takes a step in this direction by examining how the radical right joined the opposition against TTIP and CETA and appropriated an issue initially politicised by Green and radical left actors. Contrary to authors who neglect the role of the radical right,[70] or conflate the radical right and the radical left/Green left under the label of 'populism',[71] this article argues that there are important differences between the ways in which the radical right and the Green/left have politicised the issue.

In the four country cases explored, radical right parties have been pushed to oppose TTIP and CETA by their own opportunistic positioning in the inter-party competition and, more importantly, by strong pressures to respond to their supporter base. Green and radical left parties and NGOs, on the other hand, adopted different strategies to respond to the attempts of the radical right to 'own' their issues: from moderate cooperation with the radical right to public rejection of their positions.

There have also been important cross-national differences in the framing of TTIP and CETA that have marked both radical right and Green left and radical left discourses. In all four countries the debates around the agreements have focused on the secrecy of the negotiations and on ISDS, but have also been linked to previously existing debates, such as preservation of European standards and regulations in Germany, protection of the NHS in the UK, protection of food sovereignty and small and medium-sized businesses in Italy, and preventing fracking and the introduction of GMO food in Bulgaria. There has been a significant overlap between the frames used in the same national context by radical right and Green left parties and NGOs, but there have also been important differences, for example UKIP insisting that TTIP was not free enough

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68   See Gheyle (2016); Pollack (2017); Winslett (2016).

69   Gheyle (2016) 2, 23.

70   Keith (2017); Strange (2015); Pollack (2017).

71   See note 7.

because it was negotiated by the EU, the AfD expressing anti-American senti-ments, and Lega Nord interpreting TTIP as part of a 'genocide of the European peoples'.

Labelling all these diverse actors as 'populist' prevents us from distinguish-ing the different diagnoses they make and the different solutions they offer as an alternative to neoliberal arguments that free trade provides a straightforward answer to stagnating growth.[72] Green left and radical left actors have often supported internationalism, and many of them took part in initiating an 'Alternative Trade Mandate' for promoting fair trade and using trade agree-ments to raise regulatory standards instead of lowering them.[73] The 'TTIP-Free Zones Initiative'[74] that moved resistance to TTIP and CETA to cities and re-gions was also an innovative solution in an attempt to relocate sovereignty to the local level and counteract radical right narratives. After unpacking the com-plex and ideologically contested campaign against TTIP and CETA, we should be able to move beyond simple labels such as 'anti-trade' and 'populism' and address in depth the 'valid dangers'[75] of the agreement and the alternatives that have been proposed.

EPILOGUE

It is worth reflecting briefly on recent developments and to consider the extent to which these critical views on international trade have proved to be deep-rooted and/or durable. TTIP failed largely because of the intervention of US President Donald Trump, who vowed to base his approach to international trade on 'America first'.[76] CETA was approved by the European Parliament on 15 February 2017 and entered into force provisionally on 21 September 2017 as a mixed agreement to be ratified by all member states of the EU according to

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72 G Siles-Brugge, 'The Power of Economic Ideas: A Constructivist Political Economy of EU Trade Policy' 9 *Journal of Contemporary European Research* (2013) 597, 617.

73 Alternative Trade Mandate, 'Trade: Time for a New Vision', *Seattle to Brussels Network*, 30 November 2013, available at http://www.s2bnetwork.org/trade-time-new-vision (last visited 1 June 2018).

74 'TTIP-Free Zones', available at https://www.ttip-free-zones.eu (last visited 1 June 2018).

75 Ziegler (2016).

76 J Moore, 'Trump Calls Time on America's Trade Deals—What Does It All Mean?', *The Independent*, 23 January 2017, available at http://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/analysis-and-features/trump-calls-time-on-americas-trade-deals-what-does-it-all-mean-a7542266.html (last visited 1 June 2018). However, it remains unclear to what extent Trump's rhetoric is the result of a principled turn towards protectionism or a strategy to extract concessions from US trade partners.

their constitutional requirements.[77] Of the 20 UKIP MEPs, only four (including Nigel Farage) voted against the agreement, 15 were absent and one abstained. Six of the absent MEPs and the one who did not vote had previously pledged publicly to vote against CETA.[78] In the course of 2017, UKIP continuously lost support due to a number of factors including lack of leadership and poor organisation.[79] At the same time, CETA and TTIP lost their immediate relevance with the proposed exit of the UK from the EU. The Bulgarian VMRO, another party that had only reluctantly opposed TTIP and CETA, stopped engaging with trade issues once its MEP Dzhambazki fulfilled his pledge and voted against CETA.

In contrast, after AfD's MEPs Beatrix von Storch and Marcus Pretzell voted against CETA, the German radical right party continued opposing the agreement. AfD had included four paragraphs on international trade in its 2017 election manifesto, declaring itself in favour of international trade but against arbitration courts, non-transparent negotiations, and 'undermining domestic law in an unacceptable manner'.[80] However, this criticism was addressed mainly to TTIP, CETA, and TiSA (Trade in Services Agreement) while more recent EU trade deals were not mentioned at all. Finally, in Italy, the 'catch-all' Five Star Movement continued to actively campaign against CETA and officially pledged in its 2018 election manifesto to stop the ratification of the treaty.[81] The radical right Lega Nord also maintained its opposition to CETA and, in fact, supported Trump's rhetoric on imposing tariffs and protecting national businesses.[82] The coalition agreement between the Five Star Movement and Lega Nord explicitly agrees on opposition to treaties such as TTIP, CETA and a prospective investment agreement with China. Meanwhile, the Austrian

77 European Commission, 'EU–Canada Trade Agreement Enters into Force', 20 September 2017, available at http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=1723 (last visited 1 June 2018).

78 'CETA Check', available at https://stop-ttip.org/cetacheck/ (last visited 8 February 2018); K Smith, 'Have Paul Nuttal or Other UKIP Politicians Lied to You About Trade Deals?', *Global Justice Now*, 22 February 2017, available at http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/blog/2017/feb/22/have-paul-nuttall-or-other-ukip-politicians-lied-you-about-trade-deals (last visited 1 June 2018).

79 H Mance, 'Is the Party Over for UKIP?', *Financial Times*, 25 May 2017, available at https://www.ft.com/content/c6d3528a-400f-11e7-82b6-896b95f30f58 (last visited 1 June 2018).

80 AfD, 'Manifesto for Germany', 12 April 2017, available at https://afdkompakt.de/2017/04/12/afd-manifesto-for-germany-das-afd-grundsatzprogramm-gibt-es-jetzt-auch-in-englisch/ (last visited 1 June 2018) 67.

81 'Programma Movimento 5 Stelle', available at https://www.movimento5stelle.it/programma/ (last visited 1 June 2018).

82 J Politi, 'Trump's Tariffs Expose Splits in Italy's Centre-Right Alliance', *Financial Times*, 25 January 2018, available at https://www.ft.com/content/b2abe18e-01c3-11e8-9650-9c0ad2d7c5b5 (last visited 1 June 2018).

FPÖ, one of the staunchest opponents of TTIP and CETA, set a precedent by quickly sacrificing its position on these agreements during the coalition talks with Sebastian Kurz's ÖVP. In May 2018, the Austrian ÖVP-FPÖ government agreed to the ratification of CETA.[83] To sum up, radical right opposition to TTIP and CETA across Europe so far has been situational and fragile rather than offering an overall challenge to the legitimacy of the current international trade regime.

When it comes to the Green left and radical left parties, they continued opposing the agreements but their political influence so far has been rather marginal. Indeed, probably the most significant development has been the dismantling of the international NGO network that campaigned against TTIP and CETA. As Georgi Hristov, the co-ordinator of the anti-TTIP and CETA campaign from Solidarna Bulgaria, noted, once CETA was approved by the European Parliament in February 2017, the majority of NGOs quickly moved to other issues. Due to their professionalisation and dependence on project financing, Green left and left NGOs have arguably missed a great opportunity to use those already established networks and public support to develop constructive proposals on international trade.[84]

Considering the low level of interest in subsequent EU trade deals such as the ones with Vietnam, Singapore or Japan, it remains to be seen whether opposition to TTIP and CETA was an exception or a game-changer in terms of the politicisation of international trade. For different reasons, many radical right and Green left and radical left actors discontinued their critical campaigns. If Green and radical left actors want to move beyond opposing TTIP and CETA, and show more clearly how they differ from the radical right, NGO-led campaigns might not be the best way forward, no matter how professional and successful they are. Offering a compelling and progressive system-wide critique and successfully owning one's issues become increasingly difficult when organisations rely on project-based funding and a piecemeal approach.

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83   A Szigetvari, 'Umfallen vie die FPÖ', *Der Standard*, 16 May 2018, available at https://www.derstandard.de/story/2000079865324/zustimmung-zu-ceta-umfallen-wie-die-fpoe (last visited 22 May 2018).

84   Interview with Georgi Hristov, coordinator of the Stop TTIP and CETA campaign in Bulgaria, on behalf of Solidarna Bulgaria.