Table A. List of political actors included in analysis and description.

		Number of posts in the sample	Ideology
Czechia			
ANO	party	109	center, populist
Česká pirátská strana (ČPS)	party	70	liberal, center-left
Křesťanská a demokratická unie - Československá strana lidová (KDU-ČSL)	party	129	christian democratic
Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy (KSČM)	party	42	communist, left
Občanská demokratická stran (ODS)	party	382	conservative, right
Starostové a nezávislí (STAN)	party	106	center
Svoboda a přímá demokracie (SPD)	party	282	far-right, populist
TOP 09	party	144	conservative, right
SPOLU	coalition	208	coalition of Civic Democratic Party, TOP 09 and Christian Democrats), center-right
Stačilo!	coalition	200	coalition led by Communist Party (including minor parties)
Danuše Nerudová	politician	85	leader of of coalition led by Mayors and Independents
Jan Farský	politician	68	candidate of coalition led by Mayors and Independents
Kateřina Konečná	politician	52	leader of coalition Stačilo!
Luděk Niedermayer	politician	79	candidate of coalition SPOLU, right-wing
Tomáš Zdechovský	politician	121	candidate of coalition SPOLU, christian democrat
Petr Mach	politician	112	leader of coalition led by Freedom and Direct Democracy, far-right, populist
Robert Šlachta	politician	53	leader of PŘÍSAHA and candidate of coalition PŘÍSAHA a MOTORISTÉ, right-wing, populist
Hungary			
Fidesz	party	240	national-conservative, right-wing populist
Magyar Szocialista Párt	party	93	social-democratic
Mi Hazánk Mozgalom	party	76	far-right, nationalist, populist
Párbeszéd – ZÖLDEK	party	99	green, liberal, progressive

Demokratikus Koalíció	party	50	left, social-democratic
KDNP és Frakciója	coalition	136	conservative, christian democratic
Dobrev Klára	politician	203	leader of Demokratikus Koalíció, top candidate of joint list of DK-MSZP-P; centre-left, liberal
Deutsch Tamás	politician	121	leader of coalition Fidesz-KDNP, populist
Magyar Péter	politician	185	leader of TISZA party, center-right
Poland			
Nowa Lewica	party	76	left, part of ruling coalition
Nowoczesna	party	6	part of Civic Coalition, center
Platforma Obywatelska	party	275	main part of ruling Civic Coalition, center-left
Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe	party	38	agrarian party, center-right
Prawo i Sprawiedliwość	party	258	right, nationalist, populist
Razem	party	48	left, opposition
Zieloni	party	30	part of Civic Coalition, left
Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość	party	281	far right, populist
Polska 2050	party	73	center-right, part of ruling coalition
Adam Szłapka	politician	24	leader of the Nowoczesna; centrist, liberal-conservative
Adrian Zandberg	politician	6	leader of Razem; left
Barbara Nowacka	politician	24	candidate of Civic Coalition, left
Beata Maria Szydło	politician	38	candidate of Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, nationalist, populist
Donald Tusk	politician	65	centrist, liberal-conservative, candidate of Platforma Obywatelska
Krzysztof Bosak	politician	194	candidate of Konfederacją; nationalism, right-wing populism
Marcin Kierwiński	politician	119	centrist, liberal-conservative, candidate of Platforma Obywatelska
Mateusz Morawiecki	politician	61	national-conservative, right-wing populism (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)
Robert Biedroń	politician	55	candidate of Lewica; left
Sławomir Jerzy Mentzen	politician	73	candidate of Konfederacją; nationalism, right-wing populism
Szymon Hołownia	politician	46	candidate of Polska 2050 part, of coalition Trzecia Droga; centrist, liberal
Urszula Zielińska	politician	16	leader of Zieloni, part of Koalicja Europejska; centrist
Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz	politician	27	leader of Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, part of Koalicja Europejska; agrarian, centrist
Włodzimierz Czarzasty	politician	22	leader of Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, part of Koalicja Europejska; left

Slovakia			
SMER - SSD	party	66	social-democratic, left-wing populist
HLAS - sociálna demokracia	party	390	social-democratic
KDH - Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie	party	74	christian democratic, conservative
Progresívne Slovensko	party	92	progressive, liberal
Republika	party	94	national conservative, right-wing populist
Ľudovít Ódor	politician	84	centrist, technocratic
Erik Kaliňák	politician	5	candidate of SMER – SSD; left-wing populist
Milan Uhrík	politician	54	candidate of Republika; national conservative, right-wing populist

Notes regarding sampling: In Czechia, Poland, and Slovakia, all the posts shared by selected parties and politicians in the research period were coded. In the case of Hungary, methods of systematic random sampling were applied. In the Hungarian case, for parties that have published more than 50 posts but less than 100 posts, a minimum of 50 posts (randomly selected) are coded (e.g., DK). For parties that have published more than 100 posts, a 50% random sample of posts is coded (e.g., Fidesz, KDNP, MSZP, MHM, P). In the case of individual politicians, all posts have been coded.

Table B. Coding instructions for variables and reliability results.

Category	Description	Code	Brennan and Prediger's kappa	Holsti's coefficient
	Here, we code if a post includes negative statements, images and emotions which are of refusing, hostile, disliking or hating nature. Here, the emotions (faces, gestures) shown in the images are especially important. E.g., fighting, refusing, stopping, dramatic, relentless, fail, merciless, headless, distant, shameful, unworthy, irresponsible, horrible, illegal, terrorism, crime, loss of control, mischief, chaos, perpetrators, violence, excessive demands, fear, mass immigration, grievances, crime etc.			

negeu	Here it is coded as to whether EU institutions and bodies are the target of negative campaigning coded above. Each of the following actors is coded with "1" if negative statements and emotions are addressed to him/her/it. If not, the field is coded with "0". E.g., EU, European Parliament, European Council, Council of the European Union, European Commission, Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), European Central Bank (ECB), European Court of Auditors (ECA), European External Action Service (EEAS), European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), European Committee of the Regions (CoR), European Investment Bank (EIB), European Ombudsman, European Data Protection Supervisor (EDPS); President of the European Commission/of the European Parliament.	0/1	.92	.98
criticism	These categories analyze whether a post criticizes or attributes blame [criticism] to any specific elites or "the elite" in a general way. Blaming the elite (from any sector) as a group *in general* for problems and grievances that the people suffer. This category applies when elites are held responsible for anything undesirable from the people's perspective. Questioning the legitimacy of the decision-making power exercised by the elite and asking for direct democracy (e.g., referenda; "A change of government can't be a Tory stitch-up, the people must decide!"). Calling for resistance against the elite call for resistance against the ideas/ideology of the establishment. Accusing the elite of betraying the people or acting against the people's interest, accusing the elite of being corrupt, (e.g., "The media are the enemy of the people", "The media are dishonest, and journalists are liars").	0/1	.70	.91
People	References to "We, the people" Here we code whether the party or candidate which published the post appeals directly to "the people" as a community or as the political sovereign.	0/1	.59	.90
	References to "the dangerous others" This category analyzes whether groups which are not the elite are presented as antagonists of the people or separated/excluded from the people. Such groups can be ethnic or cultural minorities or people holding opinions portrayed as minority opinions.			

Danger11	Ethnic or cultural "others" are addressed "Islam is not part of Germany", "Gypsies don't belong here", "The foreigners are stealing our women".	0/1	.99	1.0
Danger12	Political "others" (holding <u>allegedly</u> dangerous opinions/ideologies) are addressed. "The Greens are a danger for our future", "The President is selling our country", "Feminism wants to put an end to our traditions".	0/1	.75	.90
fs	Direct fear speech Threat is the main focus of the message. The post describes a danger/threat/risk/insecurity related to a negative situation/development, happening currently or that can happen in the future. Something is described as being scary, terrifying, worrisome, horrifying, frightening, disastrous, fearful… This includes both threats that undergo at least some elaboration (for instance as to why one „should be worried"), short messages (e.g., in the style of a boulevard magazine headline), and the mere mentioning of a broader threat narrative (e.g., great replacement; establishment of a police state; climate crisis) without any additional explanation. Images and videos can include various threats to make people uneasy and anxious, for example images of crime, violence, war, pollution, desolate landscapes, poverty, death, symbols related to negative and threatening situations. In videos, there can be in addition a disconcerting, uneasy, foreboding music. Usually high levels of affective flags and directly relevant or attributable to the threat. E.g., "The capitalist plans of party x will lead to many people losing their jobs since they plan to move these jobs to China."; "We must stop climate change now! Otherwise, many people will lose their homes, and many will die."; "With Party X there is only poverty and inequality"; "The proposals of Party X will hurt the economy."; "The number of refugees has doubled last year. We will lose our own country."; "If we don't help Ukraine, Putin will attack more European countries."; "We should all be scared."	0/1	.70	.91
imacont3	Patriotic symbols	0/1	.75	.92

	Patriotic symbols include for example coats of arms and the national flag. Depending on the national context, patriotic symbols can differ.			

Table C. Model Information Criteria for Different Models for RQ1.

	Null model	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 2c
N	6159	6159	6156	5287	6156
R^2 marginal	.000	.136	.139	.165	.142
R^2 conditional	.174	.207	.214	.229	.209
Adj. ICC	.174	.082	.086	.077	.078
-2LL	39705.319	42870.603	43126.786	36667.718	42948.762
AIC	39707.319	42872.604	43128.786	36669.718	42950.763
BIC	39714.044	42879.327	43135.508	36676.288	42957.485

Note. The null model estimated only intercept and accounted for the nested structure of data by controlling for the level of actors (candidates' social media profiles). Model 1 included countries, binary variable for non/populist actors, variables for populist communication (anti-elitism, people-centrism, ethnic danger, political danger), fear speech, and patriotic symbols. Model 2 extended Model 1 variables with (a) count, (b) log-transformed, and (c) square root-transformed values of engagement: reactions, comments, and shares.

Table D. Full results for RQ1 (Model 2b).

	p	OR	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Intercept	.068	0.111	0.010	1.180
Czechia	.814	1.181	0.287	4.868
Hungary	.009	8.917	1.784	44.556
Poland	.426	1.611	0.476	5.444
Populist actor	< .001	7.898	3.386	18.427
Anti-elitism	< .001	9.207	5.309	15.967
People-centrism	.001	1.841	1.274	2.659
Ethnic danger	.252	1.454	0.766	2.758
Political danger	.001	1.772	1.247	2.519
Fear speech	.002	1.809	1.234	2.652
Patriotic symbols	.044	1.282	1.006	1.633
Reactions	.906	1.025	0.678	1.551
Comments	.007	1.282	1.070	1.535
Shares	.210	0.842	0.643	1.102

Note. Reference category for countries: Slovakia. Reactions, comments, and shares are based on their log-transformed values. Random intercept controls for the level of actors (candidates' social media profiles).

Table E. Model Information Criteria for RQ2.

	Null model	Model 1a	Model 2a	Model 1b	Model 2b	Model 1c	Model 2c
Reactions							
N	6159	6159	6159	6159	6159	6159	6159
R^2 marginal	.000	.040	—	.081	.082	.078	.079
R^2 conditional	.481	.277	—	.655	.655	.660	.660
Adj. ICC	.481	.247	—	.624	.624	.630	.631
-2LL	116260.906	26196.236	—	17971.720	17976.685	52407.838	52374.690
AIC	116264.908	26198.237	—	17975.722	17980.687	52411.840	52378.692
BIC	116278.357	26204.960	—	17989.168	17994.131	52425.286	52392.136
Comments							
N	6159	6159	6159	5934	5934	6159	6159
R^2 marginal	.000	.005	.005	.022	.023	.024	.025
R^2 conditional	.366	.219	.220	.637	.638	.616	.616
Adj. ICC	.366	.215	.216	.629	.629	.606	.606
-2LL	96043.364	26971.291	26995.970	19459.228	19454.769	42462.778	42441.892
AIC	96047.366	26973.292	26997.971	19463.230	19458.771	42466.780	42445.894
BIC	96060.815	26980.015	27004.693	19476.601	19472.140	42480.226	42459.338
Shares							
N	6156	6156	6156	5472	5472	6156	6156
R^2 marginal	.000	.054	.056	.134	.137	.112	.113
R^2 conditional	.286	.206	.208	.602	.603	.565	.565
Adj. ICC	.286	.160	.162	.540	.540	.510	.510
-2LL	87293.728	26558.125	26515.512	17433.501	17420.763	38373.028	38347.801
AIC	87297.730	26560.126	26517.513	17437.503	17424.765	38377.030	38351.803
BIC	87311.178	26566.848	26524.235	17450.711	17437.971	38390.475	38365.246

Note. The null model estimated only intercept and accounted for the nested structure of data by controlling for the level of actors (candidates' social media profiles). Model 1 included countries, negativity toward the EU, variables for populist communication (anti-elitism, people-centrism, ethnic danger, political danger), fear speech, and patriotic symbols. Model 2 extended Model 1 variables with interactions of negativity toward the EU with variables for populist communication, fear speech, and patriotic symbols. Letters indicate models fitted for (a) count, (b) log-transformed, and (c) square root-transformed values of engagement. Model 2a did not converge and thus did not produce any output.