

# Proposal Evaluation Form



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON)

## Evaluation Summary Report - Research and innovation actions

**Call:** HORIZON-CL2-2021-DEMOCRACY-01  
**Type of action:** HORIZON-RIA  
**Proposal number:** 101060899  
**Proposal acronym:** AUTHLIB  
**Duration (months):** 36  
**Proposal title:** Neo-authoritarianisms in Europe and the liberal democratic response  
**Activity:** HORIZON-CL2-2021-DEMOCRACY-01-01

N.	Proposer name	Country	Total Cost	%	Grant Requested	%
1	KOZEP-EUROPÁI EGYETEM	HU	770,687.5	25.71%	770,688	25.71%
2	THE CHANCELLOR, MASTERS AND SCHOLARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD	UK	473,931.25	15.81%	473,931	15.81%
3	FONDATION NATIONALE DES SCIENCES POLITIQUES	FR	335,725	11.20%	335,725	11.20%
4	UNIVERZITA KARLOVA	CZ	261,878.75	8.74%	261,879	8.74%
5	SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE	IT	194,850	6.50%	194,850	6.50%
6	SWPS UNIWERSYTET HUMANISTYCZNOSPOLCZNY	PL	429,252.5	14.32%	429,253	14.32%
7	THE TRANSATLANTIC FOUNDATION	BE	240,655	8.03%	240,655	8.03%
8	UNIVERSITÄT WIEN	AT	290,716.25	9.70%	290,716	9.70%
Total:			2,997,696.25		2,997,697	

### Abstract:

To protect the future of liberal democracy in Europe, we must first understand its challengers. AUTHLIB is a multidisciplinary project that aims to explore the varieties of neo-authoritarian, illiberal ideologies in Europe, their social, psychological and historical causes, their organisational background and their political implications. The study aims to capture the dynamics of ideological change in the European Union as a whole, but it will particularly focus on Poland, France, Italy, Hungary, Czechia, the United Kingdom and Austria.

We will map ideological configurations by analysing textual data and social media, and by organising surveys of citizens and experts. The mapping of ideological structures will be complemented by a study of emotional triggers and rhetorical strategies pursued by illiberal actors. The contemporary ideological configurations of illiberalism will be embedded within their historical-cultural context, and the study of ideas and preferences will be supplemented by investigation of illiberalism in power, and the co-operation of illiberal political actors. To develop interventions that effectively target these new challenges, AUTHLIB will define the normative limits for actions that democracies may take in their own defence. In order to identify the mechanisms behind the support of illiberalism, and the susceptibility of citizens towards changing their attitudes, we will conduct laboratory and online panel-based survey experiments.

Finally, in order to observe how ideological and emotional stimuli work in co-operative settings, we will set up deliberative fora, involving both ordinary citizens, ideological opponents, and individuals responsible for educating future generations and operating the intricate procedures of liberal democracy.

The research will provide policy-makers with a comprehensive toolbox to improve support for liberal democracy.

## Evaluation Summary Report

### Evaluation Result

**Total score: 13.50 (Threshold: 10)**

### Criterion 1 - Excellence

Score: **4.50** (Threshold: 3/5.00 , Weight: -)

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme:

- **Clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives, and the extent to which the proposed work is ambitious and goes beyond the state of the art.**

*This is a strong and ambitious proposal that corresponds closely to the aims of the work programme. It clearly identifies the state of the art and builds on very recent literature and research developments seeking to go beyond them.*

*The proposal is innovative in its approach to look at the content of different forms of illiberalism and to consider that the analysis of these should be nuanced, taking into account the diverse groups and the diversity within groups as well as the historical context of their production.*

*An important contribution of the project is to examine how illiberal reactions are triggered going beyond cognitive approaches to incorporate emotional perspectives and also to analyse why and how illiberal ideologies are appealing to citizens. These are pertinent objectives.*

- **Soundness of the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, inter-disciplinary approaches, appropriate consideration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, and the quality of open science practices, including sharing and management of research outputs and engagement of citizens, civil society and end users where appropriate.**

*Both, conceptual and methodological frameworks of the proposal are well based theoretically.*

*The methods are appropriate and well selected. The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches and of documentary and textual*

analysis with mass and elites surveys alongside measuring emotional responses to illiberal stimuli in laboratory settings is exciting and appropriate.

The methodology developed to analyse ideological configurations is particularly impressive in its ambition to analyse huge textual corpora based on cutting edge methodologies.

Interdisciplinarity is well considered in the proposal. The open science practices are of good quality. The gender dimension is generally present in the proposal both in terms of balance of the consortium and of content. However, taking into consideration the focus of the research, for the latter, it is not considered with sufficient attention.

## Criterion 2 - Impact

Score: **4.50** (Threshold: 3/5.00 , Weight: -)

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme:

**- Credibility of the pathways to achieve the expected outcomes and impacts specified in the work programme, and the likely scale and significance of the contributions from the project.**

The project employs several innovative approaches to achieve its impact. Through deliberative forums and action research approaches, it will seek to create toolkits and an e-learning platform to bring the findings of the project to a wider public and to provide those materials to relevant stakeholders. However, the nature of these toolkits and of the e-learning platform remain a little unspecified as well as who stakeholders will be.

The proposal credibly presents both short-term outputs in the form of a major new database as well as longer-term impacts expected to influence both the scientific and policy frameworks within which illiberalism is conceptualized across disciplines.

It is credible that impact in terms of scale could be generated among academics, politicians, think tanks, and policymakers. It is persuasive the research can be significant to deepen their understanding of the nature of illiberalism.

**- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.**

The dissemination, exploitation and communication plans are one of the strongest elements of the proposal. The proposal proposes to disseminate and maximize the research through a wide range of outlets that build on the partners' already existing strong expertise and networks. However, the proposal fails to convincingly address how to reach audiences other than the ones already persuaded.

The measures proposed, including setting up an international advisory board, academic outputs, international conferences, briefing papers aimed at political and academic networks, blogs, social media outlets, are well-thought of and well-described.

## Criterion 3 - Quality and efficiency of the implementation

Score: **4.50** (Threshold: 3/5.00 , Weight: -)

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme:

**- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks, and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages, and the resources overall.**

The work plan is generally very well developed.

The way in which tasks have been distributed among the consortium members is appropriate and the partition of resources in the project among the participants is adequate. The person months attributed to each WP are also appropriate, even if the repartition between the study of Illiberalism in power and the analysis of the international co-operation and diffusion is not fully balanced and remains underjustified.

The time scale for each phase is appropriate.

The proposal contains a list of pertinent milestones to be reached with measurable and verifiable outcomes.

A chart details precisely the possible risks and applies these to each of the work packages.

**- Capacity and role of each participant, and the extent to which the consortium as a whole brings together the necessary expertise.**

This is an exceptionally strong team of institutions and researchers whose experience and expertise undoubtedly match the project's ambitions. Most have experience of large-scale transnational research projects, including some who were involved in Horizon 2020 programmes. Furthermore, some of the partners have previously worked together, which is also a strong aspect in terms of the coherence of the consortium.

They bring together complementary expertise : theoretical and normative analysis of (il)liberalism including moral perspectives, cognitive and psychological approaches, public opinion analysis and discourse analysis, expertise in civil society and public engagement.

However, it is not clear that there is a sufficiently strong theoretical and methodological capacity in the consortium to analyse the emotional components of illiberalism (e.g. expertise in social or political psychology focusing on emotions).

## Scope of the application

Status: **Yes**

Comments (in case the proposal is out of scope)

Not provided

### Exceptional funding

A third country participant/international organisation not listed in [the General Annex to the Main Work Programme](#) may exceptionally receive funding if their participation is essential for carrying out the project (for instance due to outstanding expertise, access to unique know-how, access to research infrastructure, access to particular geographical environments, possibility to involve key partners in emerging markets, access to data, etc.). (For more information, see the [HE programme guide](#) )

Please list the concerned applicants and requested grant amount and explain the reasons why.

Based on the information provided, the following participants should receive exceptional funding:

*Not provided*

Based on the information provided, the following participants should NOT receive exceptional funding:

*Not provided*

### Use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC)

Status: No

If YES, please state whether the use of hESC is, or is not, in your opinion, necessary to achieve the scientific objectives of the proposal and the reasons why. Alternatively, please state if it cannot be assessed whether the use of hESC is necessary or not, because of a lack of information.

*Not provided*

### Use of human embryos

Status: No

If YES, please explain how the human embryos will be used in the project.

*Not provided*

### Activities excluded from funding

Status: No

If YES, please explain.

*Not provided*

### Do no significant harm principle

Status: Yes

If Partially/No/Cannot be assessed please explain

*Not provided*

### Exclusive focus on civil applications

Status: Yes

If NO, please explain.

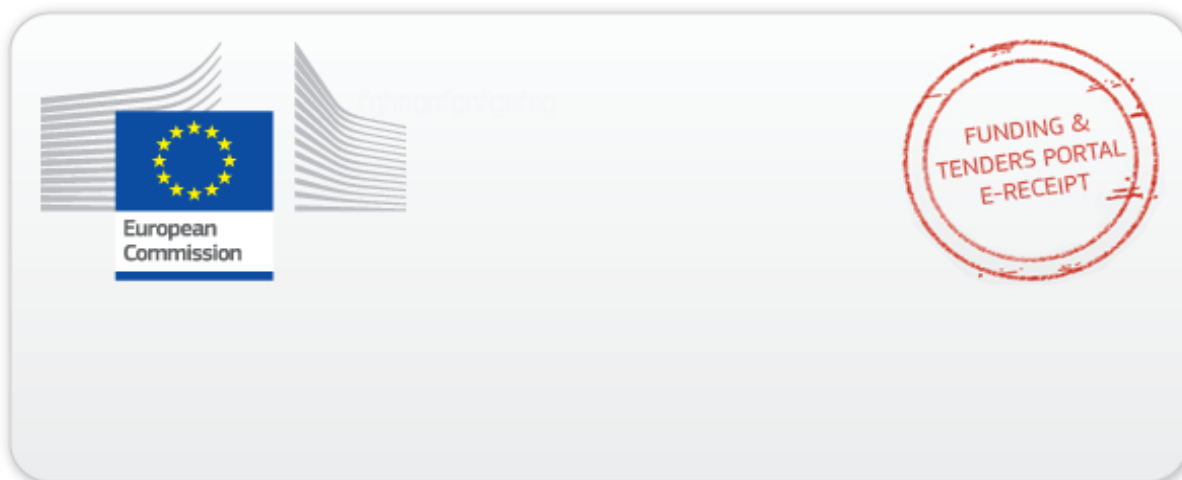
*Not provided*

### Artificial Intelligence

Status: No

If YES, the technical robustness of the proposed system must be evaluated under the appropriate criterion.

### Overall comments



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