

We have been dealing with a global crisis of democracy for several years. The significant popularity of populist politics that divides citizens, the growing tendency to express extremist views, hatred towards minorities and the decreasing civic and political participation are phenomena affecting many European countries. At least some of the above-mentioned phenomena can also be observed in Poland. Why do some of us support democracy, while others are turning away from it? Could the way we perceive ourselves play a role in these processes?

The aim of our project is to answer the above-mentioned questions based on the analysis of one of the key variables in the field of personality psychology, which is narcissism (understood as a form of self-evaluation characterized by self-importance and a sense of entitlement to special treatment).

By combining political psychology and personality, we aim to:

- (1) check what forms of narcissism may be responsible for anti-democratic attitudes and choices (e.g., support for radical views or expressing hostility towards people who have views different from ours);
- (2) examine what psychological context can attenuate the link between some of the narcissistic facets and lower support for democracy (e.g., strengthening interpersonal trust/reducing social cynicism);
- (3) understand what impact a specific (e.g., antidemocratic or authoritarian vs. democratic) political context may have on fluctuations in narcissistic states.

Our project will allow us to observe and describe the nuances related to the relationship between different types of narcissism (antagonistic, neurotic, communal and agentic) and the *pro versus* antidemocratic attitudes. We assume that not all forms of narcissism must be associated with negative attitudes towards democracy, which requires not only personal engagement in civic activities, but also, acceptance of the civic activity of other people who do not always share our political views. Bearing in mind that support for democracy requires a sense of security in relationships with others and an open attitude towards others, we predict that a negative attitude towards democracy will characterize antagonistic narcissists (arrogant, defensive and hostile towards others) and neurotic narcissists (characterized by low sense of psychological security and high sensitivity to psychological threats). Agentic narcissists (focused on themselves and their own achievements) and communal narcissists (who want to be perceived as altruistic and helpful) should, at least in certain circumstances, demonstrate attitudes supporting democracy. In the next steps, we will check how to strengthen democratic attitudes/weaken anti-democratic attitudes among different types of narcissists and whether it is possible that exposure to a democratic (vs. anti-democratic) political context may lead to fluctuations in narcissistic states. For example, we posit that exposure to autocratic norms may lead to an increase in an antagonistic and neurotic narcissistic state.

Does narcissism always have negative consequences in the political arena? What can be done to counteract these effects? Or maybe certain political systems have greater potential to attenuate vs. boost our narcissistic tendencies? We will answer these questions by implementing our project. We will inform about the project results on our team's website:

<https://psychpol.psych.pan.pl/pl> and on social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/psychpollab> .