POPULIST NARRATIVES ABOUT THE EU IN THE 2024 EUROPEAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN BULGARIA

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Abstract. The European elections on June 9th, 2024, coincided with another early parliamentary election in Bulgaria. As in the previous election campaigns, domestic political problems and sharp party opposition overshadowed the EU-related issues. Although proper political debates on these issues were absent, strong populist anti-EU narratives were used by various parties and politicians, including established ones. The research shows anti-EU narratives in all three categories of populist messages: anti-elitism, people-centrism, and exclusion. Four parties ("Revival", "Greatness", BSP and ITN) form a "discursive coalition" claiming to understand and express the concerns and desires of "the people". They present the EU as a foreign elitist power, claim that the sovereignty should be restored to the Bulgarian people, and exclude the liberal values and liberal elites (parties, media) from "the people". A particular anti-EU narrative is formed about the war in Ukraine. These narratives are characterised by a high propensity to use proven disinformation.

Keywords: populism; EU elections; Bulgaria, anti-liberal; war in Ukraine

Between 2021 and 2024, Bulgarian citizens participated in early elections six times, one of which coincided with the European Parliament elections on June 9, 2024. The inability of the elections to produce a stable government has led to new elections and caused growing voter apathy and declining voter turnout. This vicious circle has a destructive effect on the quality and level of political debate in Bulgaria, including during election campaigns.

For the Bulgarian citizens, the elections on 9 June 2024 were "2 in 1", as European and national parliamentary elections were held simultaneously. As a result, domestic political problems and sharp party opposition drowned out all other topics and, traditionally, topics related to the EU. The present study aims to analyse the populist narratives about the European Union used by Bulgarian political parties during the European election campaign in 2024.

Populism – ideology or rhetoric

Regarding the ideological nature of populism, most scholars agree with the definition suggested by the leading researcher of this phenomenon, Cas Mudde. He defines populism as "an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, '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" (Mudde 2004, pp. 541 – 563). According to Mudde, "Populism is inherently hostile to the idea and institutions of liberal democracy or constitutional democracy" because it rejects any limitation of "the will of the people", the concept of pluralism, and the need to protect individual human rights and minority rights (Mudde & Kaltwasser 2017, pp. 80 – 81).

In his well-known article "The Populist Zeitgeist", Mudde assesses populism as a "thin-centered ideology", since it does not have its own structured core of normative ideas about the world. Although widely accepted, considering current events and processes, some researchers have challenged this view. Ralph Schroeder argues that populism has its distinctive ideology and defines three general features of populist ideology that build on the central conflict of "people vs. elite": welfare chauvinism, exclusionism towards outsiders and a 'my country first' foreign and trade policy (Schroeder 2020, pp. 13 – 28). Michael Hameleers further defines not just features but even types of populism: in-group superiority populism, exclusionist populism, and welfare state chauvinist populism (Hameleers 2018, p. 2176).

An influential group of researchers consider populism a discourse, with M. Canovan, E. Laclau, and S. Mouffe, among others. For Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, populism is a "rhetorical style" that is concerned with the question of who should govern (the people, not the elite) but ignores the questions of what should be done, what policies should be followed, and what decisions should be made (Norris & Inglehart 2019, p. 4). Jan Jagers and Stefaan Walgrave define populism as a political communication style (Jagers & Walgrave 2007, pp. 319 – 345) and Benjamin Kremer – as a form of political rhetoric which "uses an emotional and moralist style, plainspoken, sometimes aggressive, but appealing to common sense" (Krämer 2014, pp. 42 – 60).

To sum up, regardless of whether we define populism as an ideology or a political communication style, there is considerable scholarly agreement around these three key features of populism – anti-elitism, people-centrism, and exclusion.

The European populism

For European populists, the EU is the focal point of the anti-elitist pathos directed against globalisation: it is presented as favouring a tiny political and economic elite at the expense of "the people", creating social insecurity and opening its doors to the threat of foreigners. Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser define European populism (typical of Western Europe) as Eurosceptic, xenophobic, and anti-liberal: "populism, authoritarianism, and nativism are experiencing a kind of marriage of convenience

in Europe nowadays" (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2017, p. 34). In recent years, research, as well as public and media attention, has been intensely focused on the so-called right-wing populist parties, "where the 'rightist' element denotes a strong sense of xenophobic nationalism, a tendency towards authoritarianism, while the 'populist' element signifies a reliance on a people-centric and anti-elitist discourse, a denunciation of 'appropriate' political behaviour and a rejection of some features of liberal democracy" (De Jonge 2023, p. 46). Roger Eatwell and Matthew Goodwin use the term "national populism", meaning "an ideology which prioritizes the culture and interests of the nation" (Eatwell & Goodwin 2018, p. 58). They identify four factors (four Ds) fostering the rise of national populism: a sense of *distrust* of the increasingly elitist nature of liberal democracy; fear of *destruction* of the nation related to immigration and ethnic change; concerns about relative *deprivation* in socio-economic terms; *de-alignment* from the traditional parties (Eatwell & Goodwin 2018, p. 212).

Narratives about the EU in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian public sphere has traditions related to the anti-elitist pathos against the EU and the sovereignist pathos concerning Bulgarian membership in the EU. The EU-trelated narratives range from 'the EU gives us money' to 'the EU does not respect us', and the image of the Union is of an external power that gives or takes away, imposes on us or demands something from Bulgaria (Kovacheva 2017, p. 238). For years Bulgarian politicians have been representing the EU as limiting our independence and taking away our sovereignty (Neikova & Kovacheva, 2017). In recent years the value narrative about the EU has already been introduced – "Brussels" has been accused of imposing on us its "gender ideology", contrary to the Bulgarian views on traditional family and sexual orientation (Kovacheva 2023). Anti-European and anti-liberal narratives in Bulgaria can be traced back to the Kremlin. After the annexation of Crimea in 2014, four main narratives were clearly outlined in the Russian state propaganda: "The sunset of Europe," "The rise of Russia," "US/NATO as a world hegemon-puppet master," and "The venal elites of Bulgaria." (Vatsov et al. 2017). These narratives were heavily weaponised during the last three years of frequent early elections in Bulgaria and skillfully adapted to the current topics – first, the COVID-19 pandemic, then the war in Ukraine.

Methodology

Recent studies show that populist narratives are used not only by populist political parties but by various parties across the political spectrum (Engesser et al. 2017, pp. 1109 – 1126). That's why this study doesn't focus on specific political actors but on all political parties and coalitions represented in the European and national parliaments after the elections on June 9th: GERB-SDS coalition, Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF), "We continue the change – Democratic Bulgaria" coalition (PPDB), "Revival" party, "BSP for Bulgaria" coalition, "There is such a people" party (ITN) and "Greatness" party, present only in the National Assembly[1].

For the research, posts on the Facebook profiles of the parties and their leaders in the last week of the campaign were collected, but only those related to the EU and European issues were analysed. Most of the content was not explicitly created for social media – the parties mainly published links to their TV appearances and sometimes short video versions of the same interviews. A common approach was to broadcast live election events, which remain on the channel as a video, often lasting several hours. Last but not least, there were significant differences between the use of social media in general and Facebook in particular by parties – from completely ignoring them (MRF), using them as an extension of the party website (BSP) or for streaming pre-election events (GERB), to full-fledged content creation specifically for social media and adapting the content to different platforms ("Revival" and "Greatness").

Due to the above-described circumstances, a qualitative analysis approach was chosen to establish whether and what populist narratives on European topics were used by the parties in the election campaign. To determine whether a narrative is populist, we use Jagers and Walgrave's research framework, which has three basic categories: anti-elitism, people-centrism, and exclusion (Jagers & Walgrave 2007, p. 322).

GERB, MRF and PPDB don't use populist political communication on EU-related issues. An apparent exception is the leader of GERB, Boyko Borissov, whose style can be defined more as folksy rather than populist. For Borissov (and GERB), the EU is a source of funds and legitimacy – he often reminds of the highways built while he was in power and the visits of high-level EU officials to Bulgaria. The only other topic related to the EU he mentions is the war in Ukraine and the plans for a common European defence. Borissov takes the opportunity to address the speculations of potentially sending Bulgarian troops to Ukraine to present himself as a guarantor that this is not going to happen: "As long as I (and GERB) am here, no Bulgarian soldier will go to Ukraine!"[2].

Although it claims to be pro-European, the PPDB coalition hardly talks about the EU. Their campaign is focused almost entirely on domestic issues and relations with political foes (though former coalition partners) GERB and MRF. On the other hand, MRF had no social media campaign and barely used traditional media, so the party is absent from this analysis. Thus, it turns out that the three parties, pejoratively called by their competitors "the Euro-Atlantic parties," hardly discussed European topics in their campaigns and left this field to the other parties.

The "Revival" party stands out most distinctly against the general background – it is the only party studied that can be defined as populist regarding both ideology and political rhetoric, as is clearly demonstrated by the party's priorities: holding a referendum to preserve the Bulgarian lev, holding a referendum on Bulgaria's membership in NATO, ending the sanctions against the Russian Federation, ending military aid to Ukraine and ensuring that Bulgarian troops are not sent to Ukraine, and renegotiating Bulgarian EU

membership. The "Revival" party defines itself as nationalist, and its representatives in the EP joined the newly created Group of Sovereign Nations, along with Germany's far-right party "Alternative for Germany".

"Revival" is the only party among the six studied, with its main priorities oriented solely towards Bulgaria's foreign policy and EU membership. The party strongly relies on the anti-elitist narrative against the foreign powers that govern Bulgaria (Brussels, Washington) and sovereignist messages related to the preservation of sovereignty (against the adoption of the euro) and its return to the people (referendum on Bulgaria's Eurozone membership). "Revival" refers to the voters as "the Bulgarian people" and "the Bulgarians" in the sense of the Bulgarian nation, but without explicitly excluding ethnic or religious minorities. According to the party, the only ones "excluded" from the people are the "foreign agents" – NGOs, LGBTQ+ activists, media and journalists, intellectuals and all other conduits of (rotten) liberal values. Anti-media rhetoric is very characteristic of "Revival", although the party is by no means devoid of traditional media coverage.

The leaders of the "Greatness" party, Nikolay Markov and Ivelin Mihailov, use vivid anti-elitist rhetoric directed against the USA (NATO, the EU, and the West) and, respectively, the Bulgarian government. The sovereignist pathos of "Greatness" is expressed in praise of the merits of Bulgaria and Bulgarians. There are no exclusionary messages – the leaders explicitly specify that when they say Bulgarians, they include all Bulgarian citizens and do not exclude ethnicities or religious affiliations. Like "Revival", "Greatness" also develops an anti-media narrative, but it is explicitly directed against a specific media end their owner.

"There is Such a People" party (ITN) declares itself as a "non-systemic party"[3]. It can be called populist by birth since it was created by the famous showman Slavi Trifonov. He owns "7/8 TV" television channel where the party conducted its campaign and hardly used other channels. The party's campaign slogan was a typical populist appeal: "Let's bring back common sense" (see Krämer 2014, pp. 42 – 60). The two MEPs elected by the party joined the "European Conservatives and Reformists" group. The party is firmly against the Green Deal, the acceptance of migrants and what it calls "gay propaganda"[4].

The Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) also uses populist narratives in all three categories. Like the previous three parties, the BSP directs its anti-elitist rhetoric mostly against the Bulgarian rulers and indirectly against their foreign partners ("the Euro-Atlanticists", "the warmongers", the Deep state (in Bulgarian "zadkulisieto", literary "the backstage"). Concerning the EU, BSP is traditionally distinguished by anti-elitist messages about "Brussels" disrespecting Bulgaria and imposing its decisions and policies contrary to the Bulgarian interests, as well as sovereignist messages about equal treatment with other countries and an independent policy. Of all the parties, the BSP is the most actively defending the need to ban the so-called "gender propaganda" in Bulgarian schools.

Antielitist narratives: "A choice between war and peace"

A specific anti-elitist narrative about the EU is constructed about the war in Ukraine, skillfully intertwined with the narrative of the "venal elites of Bulgaria" (according to D. Vatsov et al. 2017). This narrative is expressed with the persistent phrase "they are dragging us into war", implying that those who are "dragging us" into war (in Ukraine) are the ruling parties (the "Euro-Atlantic" parties) under the pressure of the EU, NATO, the USA or the so-called collective West.

"Revival", "Greatness", and BSP unequivocally proclaim themselves as "the parties of peace". In the rhetoric of these parties, the elections are presented as a "choice between war and peace" and between "the parties of war and the parties of peace".

The "Revival" party has been abusing the topic of the war in Ukraine from the very beginning. The party has repeatedly been proven to use pro-Kremlin disinformation and propaganda (Factcheck.bg 2022), easily recognisable by the keywords typical for the Kremlin's propaganda vocabulary. It calls the Maidan protests in Ukraine from 2013 – 2014 a "coup", the rule of President Volodymyr Zelensky – a "regime", and blames the West for the war in Ukraine. Three of the party's five priorities are directly related to the war in Ukraine. It's representatives have repeatedly stated that our country is being pressured to send troops to Ukraine. According to its leader Kostadin Kostadinov, the goal is "to bring back coffins with Bulgarians from there. Coffins of Bulgarian soldiers wrapped in the Bulgarian flag" in order to "unleash anti-Russian hysteria" and "provoke Russia to attack Bulgaria". The result, predicted by the party, is a "nuclear armageddon", after which a "radioactive hole" will be the only thing left of Bulgaria[5]. Regarding the hypothetical sending of soldiers to Ukraine, Kostadinov uses the disinformation narrative about the upcoming mobilisation of Bulgarian citizens, which has actively spread in our country since the first days of the war (Nikolova 2023).

Just like "Revival," the "Greatness" party sounds the alarm that "we are being dragged into war". Through the narrative of the war in Ukraine, "Greatness", like "Revival", builds an anti-elitist narrative against the EU in particular and the USA (the West) in general. The party's leaders, Ivelin Mihailov and Nikolai Markov, barely mention Russia in their narratives about the war in Ukraine. Thus, the real reason for the war (the Russian aggression) is replaced by another – the aggressive and cynical West, which is only interested in its profits. In the "Revival"'s view, Russia is not the aggressor but the victim: "This war against the Russian Federation aimed precisely at the disintegration of the Russian Federation."[6]

Ivelin Mihailov purposefully suggests that the war in Ukraine is not the result of an ideological clash but only of financial interest. The party's candidate for MEP, Darin Georgiev, presented as a participant in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, defines the purpose of the EU mission in Iraq as "promoting corruption practices" as "Brussels is the heart of corruption". According to him, the same thing will happen to Ukraine, which "after the end of the war will be under foreign rule, there are already hundreds of companies that have settled there to drain resources."[7]

Like "Revival", the "Greatness" party claims that Bulgaria will be turned into a "second Ukraine", "thrown into the war", and "sacrificed" by forces directed "against the Slavic peoples and Orthodoxy". According to Darin Georgiev, there will be "tactical nuclear strikes" from Russia to Europe, but only if we pose a threat to Russia: "If there are no weapons on our territory pointing at them, if there are no troops, if there are no [military] bases, we are not a threat."

Nikolay Markov develops the narrative of sending Bulgarian troops to Ukraine and, like Kostadinov (the coffins with Bulgarian soldiers), he uses a strong metaphor: "I don't want to be loaded on trucks like an animal. It's good for all Bulgarian citizens to see how, in Ukraine, they load the Ukrainians into trucks and drive them to the battlefield without any experience. Just to be killed."[8]

The BSP also declares itself a "party of peace", and its election slogan is "For a dignified Bulgaria in a peaceful Europe". The issue of the war in Ukraine strongly dominates the party's campaign. BSP even requests the Bulgarian parliament to vote on a decision that Bulgaria will not send troops to Ukraine and that Bulgarian weapons will not be used to shell targets on the territory of Russia. BSP also speculates on the hypothetical sending of troops to the war, claiming that it "will not allow a single Bulgarian soldier to be sent to Ukraine"[9].

Just like "Revival" and "Greatness", socialists use powerful emotional messages on this topic: "I am the father of two sons, and I am worried. It should be clear to everyone – the BSP will not allow Bulgarian children, Bulgarian men to die on foreign land for foreign interests", says Kristian Vigenin, the leader of the party EP candidates list[10]. The BSP also uses the theme of the war to build anti-elitist narratives directed against the Bulgarian rulers and indirectly against the West ("foreign embassies"): "our homegrown warmongers […] who do not protect Bulgarian national interests and for a pat on the shoulder are capable of throwing Bulgaria into the hell of war"[11].

Sovereignist narratives about the EU and Bulgarian EU membership

All parties from the studied group comment on the EU's Green Deal, particularly its energy aspect – the closure of coal plants and the development of renewable energy sources. Their messages carry both an anti-elitist pathos – the European Commission is imposing the Green Deal on us – and a strong sovereignist pathos – to lead our own independent, national energy policy.

"Revival" states that "our energy should not be in foreign hands". According to the party leader Kostadinov, the Green Deal is "perhaps one of the biggest frauds of the beginning of the 21st century"[12].

For the BSP, the Green Deal, apart from a threat to our energy independence, is an occasion to address other issues: to attack the non-governmental sector for dictating the national energy policy in private interests and the European Commission for allowing the import of agricultural products from Ukraine.

ITN is also against the Green Deal because of the coal mines, but also because it

represents an ideology "about clean air, about clean nature" that "spoils the whole real and normal life."[13]

Most actively, although implicitly, the narratives against the Green Deal are developed by "Greatness". The story always goes the same: there is a plan to set up offshore wind farms near Varna and all along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast so the politicians will profit at the expense of the population. Ivelin Mihailov describes the destruction of Varna as a tourist city, a total decline in livelihoods and depopulation. Although he does not mention the EU and the Green Deal, the entire narrative is directed against green energy. Describing the apocalyptic picture of Varna and the Black Sea because of the offshore wind parks, Mihailov always mentions the war:

"They say they want Varna to become a military base – it is becoming a military base. They say they want to install wind generators – wind generators are installed".

"What they have prepared – offshore wind farms, military bases, in general, this should become a militarised place"[14].

In this way, the two narratives, about the war and green energy, mutually reinforce each other and focus on the common enemy: the Bulgarian rulers who serve to foreign interests. Bulgarian fact-checkers have proven that "Greatness" actively spreads disinformation against green energy and the war in Ukraine through a network of media outlets and social media channels (Kirkova 2024).

"Revival" employs the most extensive arsenal of sovereignist populist narratives about the EU. One of its priorities is to renegotiate Bulgaria's membership in the EU. According to Kostadin Kostadinov, "the EU membership is harmful to national interests". "Preserving the Bulgarian lev" and not accepting the Euro is the priority of "Revival". The party insists on holding a referendum on Bulgaria's Eurozone membership, even though this contradicts the Bulgarian Constitution (Vasileva 2022). Another sovereignist narrative, developed by "Revival", is that the European Commission "takes away our right of veto". It is about the ongoing debate about the voting method in the Council of the EU, which is misleadingly presented as a matter of a decision of the European Commission (Kovacheva 2024).

The BSP has its tradition of using sovereignist narratives about the EU, focusing on the unjust treatment of Bulgaria and the need for independent national policies: "Finally, Bulgaria should be recognised as equal to other European countries, and the Bulgarian people should be recognised as equal to other nations"[15].

Exclusion narratives: traditional versus European (liberal) values

Unlike the typical case of Western European populists, who direct their messages against refugees, migrants, and ethnic and religious minorities, the studied Bulgarian parties hardly mention these groups. To the extent that the topic of migrants appears, it is in the context of our entry into Schengen, so it cannot be defined as an exclusionary narrative. On the other hand, exclusionary narratives can be distinguished in terms of liberal values and their proponents. All four studied parties declared themselves to share conservative (traditional) values:

Kostadin Kostadinov, "Revival": "The ship of Europe is turning in the direction of traditional and conservative values because Europe is less and less European and the EU is becoming a threat to European civilisation."[16]

Ivaylo Valchev, ITN: "We believe that a family consists of mother, father and children […] no one will oblige me to say that there are no words like 'father' and 'mother', but 'parent 1' and 'parent 2'"[17]. The party blames liberal democracy not just for the imposition of values in terms of sexual identity and orientation but for restricting freedom of thought and expression.

The socialists use the same narrative: "I don't want my children to call me 'parent 1' or 'parent 2'. It's too ugly, it's not Christian, it's not a family."[18]

The BSP denies the "neoliberal concept of gender and gender identity, known as gender ideology",[19] and fights "not to educate children in non-standard and foreign to Bulgarians matters such as gender ideology"[20]. "Revival" completes the picture of the value enemies by expanding their circle to all who share liberal (European, foreign) values: "puppets", "apostates", "janissaries", and "foreign agents". We previously called this narrative "the gender danger narrative". It originates from the Kremlin propaganda playbook, adapted by local actors and used to instill anti-European and anti-liberal sentiment in Bulgarian society (Kovacheva 2023).

Conclusions and discussion

In line with recent studies published in other countries, the research shows that various Bulgarian political parties and politicians, including established ones, use populist narratives about the EU. Anti-EU narratives are established in all three categories of populist messages: anti-elitism, people-centrism, and exclusion. The EU is presented as an elitist project, favouring the ruling ("Euro-Atlantic") parties and opposing the interests and wishes of the Bulgarian people. A specific anti-elitist anti-EU narrative is being formed on the issue of the war in Ukraine. According to this narrative, the EU (under the dictates of the USA) is "dragging us into the war" by sending Bulgarian soldiers to the front and making Bulgaria a target for Russian (nuclear) weapons.

People-centric (sovereignist) narratives describe Bulgarian EU membership as unjust treatment and humiliation, calling for restoring national dignity and national (independent) policies (independent currency, independent foreign policy, energy independence).

Unlike Western European populism, exclusion messages do not target migrants or ethnic minorities but mostly sexual minorities. A specific narrative (the Gender Danger narrative) is used to present European and liberal values as protecting (and enforcing) so called non-traditional sexuality. Regardless of their apparent difference, four parties ("Revival", "Greatness", BSP and ITN) form a discursive coalition claiming to understand and express the concerns and desires of "the people". Their speech is full of anti-elitist messages directed against the EU as a projection of the global elites (puppet of the USA). These political forces emphasise the need to protect the state's

national sovereignty, dignity and independence. The relationship between populism and disinformation is worth exploring further in a separate study.

NOTES
1. Shortly after entering parliament, the group of the Greatness Party disbanded.
2. Facebook profile of Boyko Borissov. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/boyko.borissov.7/videos/365999129390308/.[Viewed 2024-8-17].
3. Ivaylo Valchev. There's Such a People Facebook page. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/reel/1789244121601140. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
4. Toshko Yordanov. There's Such a People Facebook page. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1829398004247672 [Viewed 2024-8-17].
5. Kostadin Kostadinov live from Sliven. Facebook page of Kostadin Kostadinov. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=420903130764669. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
6. Darin Georgiev. YouTube. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/live/WDufEZlFQ-Q [Viewed 2024-8-17].
7. Ibidem.
8. Nikolay Markov. Greatness Facebook page. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1754191524990853. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
9. Kornelia Ninova. BSP Facebook page Available at: https://www.facebook.com/BulgarianSocialistParty/posts/pfbid0SkdRbetSXSi4UWzBnyxonLF88QTn6npmkj7NRYHeTMQSArvsK2k72gc8dzsS5puTl. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
10. Kristian Vigenin. BSP Facebook page Available at: https://www.facebook.com/BulgarianSocialistParty/posts/pfbid02pcLdAEbFStzP6umL1dt6fm2zPRQBbNciU7gxxtnLZvPzp8rxuXGYaRmD9fFj6oVTl. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
11. Atanas Zafirov. BSP Facebook page Available at: https://www.facebook.com/BulgarianSocialistParty/posts/pfbid0cCTQmTmvAELp3C3r7dLaw6VLQ6zPzCn6JvaDGUQmRAuEHUJWkcACM8pWccpMR19jl. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
12. Kostadin Kostadinov live from Sliven. Facebook page of Kostadin Kostadinov.
13. Meeting of Slavi Trifonov in Plovdiv. Facebook page "Slavi T. Trifonov".
14. Live from Varna. Greatness Facebook page.
15. Kornelia Ninova. BSP Facebook page Available at: https://www.facebook.com/BulgarianSocialistParty/posts/pfbid02pBz6o3HWRRyth2JugcVmPgtu1NY88Cy4rRrjX5yuNqKXiNbedg2ExnzQufBrAmsXl. [Viewed 2024-8-17].
16. Kostadin Kostadinov live from Sliven. Facebook page of Kostadin Kostadinov.
17. Meeting of Slavi Trifonov in Plovdiv. Facebook page "Slavi T. Trifonov".
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19. Vesela Vasileva. Bulgarian Socialist Party. Available at: https://bsp.bg/news/view/26153-vesela_vasileva__djendyr_ideologiyata_opasno_podkopava_bylgarskoto_obrazovanie__samo_bsp_povede_bitkata.html [Viewed 2024-9-30].

20. Kornelia Ninova. BTA. Available at: https://www.bta.bg/bg/vote-epns2024/682893-korneliya-ninova-samo-bsp-ne-vlyazohme-v-sgovor-sas-zadkulisieto-i-pokazahme-re [Viewed 2ои024-9-30].

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