

After his election in 2016, Donald Trump became the first president to openly question whether Europe was in America's interests, and his blatant disregard for the historical ties with the other side of the Atlantic found in NATO the perfect target. This thesis aims to contribute to knowledge on the field by conducting a study on the potential impact that the populist foreign policy rhetoric of the 45th President of the United States had on the Congress' bipartisan consensus on NATO, by examining if Trump's narrative on the alliance was replicated by Congress members. Understanding this becomes crucial at a time when the US support for its European counterparts is the cornerstone of the international world order and the key partnership to overcome global challenges ahead. The chosen methodology is a two-step deductive-inductive discourse analysis, that first analyzes a sample of Trump's public statements to extract his main arguments on NATO, to then create a codebook that is used to identify the appearance of these arguments in the US Congress' debates and hearings on NATO. In light of the sample material analyzed, it can be safely argued that the political actors in the House of Representatives of the US Congress do not fully reproduce Trump's populist arguments used to criticize the alliance. Even though all of Trump's main arguments come up in the discussion from members of both sides of the political spectrum, they do so only occasionally, while the arguments supporting NATO are much more frequent and vehement.