POLITICS IN CENTRAL EUROPE

The Journal of the Central European Political Science Association

Volume 16 • Number 2 • August 2020 • ISSN 1801-3422

25 years of CEPSA
Jerzy J. Wiatr – Attila Ágh – Karin Liebhart – Ladislav Cabada

Online Political Communication Research Methods
Olga Brunnerová and Jakub Charvát

How is Expert Knowledge Diffused in International Politics and What Makes It Actionable? Epistemic Infrastructure: a new Framework for Analysis
Šárka Waisová

Justice Reform or Facade Reform: The case of the Western Balkans
Zenun Halili

The Turkish Community in the Czech Republic: A Diaspora in the Making?
Lucie Tungul

Multi-level Governance and Energy Specifics of the V4 Countries within the Context of European Integration
Helena Bauerová and Milan Vošta

The disintegration of KDU-ČSL in 2009: The network analysis of co-voting strategies of the KDU-ČSL deputies
Dušan Brabec

METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY PRAGUE PRESS

POLITICS
in Central Europe

The Journal of the Central European Political Science Association

Volume 16 Number 2 August 2020 ISSN 1801-3422

ESSAYS

25 years of CEPSA
Jerzy J. Wiatr – Attila Ágh – Karin Liebhart – Ladislav Cabada

Online Political Communication Research Methods
Olga Brunnerová and Jakub Charvát

How is Expert Knowledge Diffused in International Politics and What Makes It Actionable? Epistemic Infrastructure: a new Framework for Analysis
Šárka Waisová

Justice Reform or Facade Reform: The case of the Western Balkans
Zenun Halili

The Turkish Community in the Czech Republic: A Diaspora in the Making?
Lucie Tungul

Multi-level Governance and Energy Specifics of the V4 Countries within the Context of European Integration
Helena Bauerová and Milan Vošta

The disintegration of KDU-ČSL in 2009: The network analysis of co-voting strategies of the KDU-ČSL deputies
Dušan Brabec

Politics in Central Europe – The Journal of Central European Political Science Association
is the official Journal of the Central European Political Science Association (CEPSA).
Politics in Central Europe is a biannual (June and December), double-blind, peer-reviewed publication.

Publisher:

Metropolitan University Prague, o. p. s.
Dubečská 900/10, 100 31 Praha 10-Strašnice (Czech Republic)

Printed by:

Togga, Ltd., publishing house
Radlická 2343/48, 150 00 Praha (Czech Republic)
Copyright © by Metropolitan University Prague, o. p. s.

Co-editors:

Ladislav Cabada & Šárka Waisová
E-mail: ladislav.cabada@mup.cz; sarka.waisova@mup.cz

Executive Assistant to the editors:

Hana N. Hlaváčková
E-mail: hana.hlavackova@mup.cz

English language editing:

Damien Galeone

Home Page
http://www.politicsincentraleurope.eu
or http://www.degruyter.com

Executive Committee of the CEPSA (2015–2018)

Senior presidents:

Jerzy J. Wiatr
Attila Ágh
Silvia Miháliková
Karin Liebhart
Ladislav Cabada
President: Miro Haček
Vice-President: Boglárka Koller
Secretary General: Petr Just

National Representatives:

Andreas Pribersky (Austria)
Dario Čepo (Croatia)
Petr Just (Czech Republic)
Krisztina Arato (Hungary)
Liutauras Gudzinskas (Lithuania)
Agnieszka Kasińska-Metryka (Poland)
Jaroslav Ušiak (Slovakia)
Simona Kukovič (Slovenia)

International Advisory Board

Jan Bureš (Metropolitan University Prague, Department of Humanities)
Marek Leszek Górka (Koszalin University of Technology, Faculty of Humanities)
Danica Fink-Hafner (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences)
Seán Hanley (University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies)
Christina Eva Griessler (Andrássy University Budapest, Department of Comparative Politics)
Petr Kopecký (University of Leiden, Department of Political Science)
Alenka Krašovec (University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences)
Christian Lequesne (SciencePo-CERI, Paris)
Paul Luif (University of Vienna, Department of Political Science,)
Cas Mudde (University of Georgia, Department of International Affairs)
Beate Neuss (Technical University in Chemnitz, Institute for Political Science)
Jacques Rupnik (National Foundation for Political Science, Paris)
Boyka Stefanova (University of Texas at San Antonio, Department of Political Science and Geography)
Soňa Szomolányi (Comenius University in Bratislava, Department of Political Science)
Rein Taagepera (University of California, School of Social Sciences)
Jaroslav Ušiak (Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica, Department of Security Studies)

Editorial Office

Metropolitan University Prague, o. p. s, Univerzitní středisko Plzeň,
Koterovská 85, 326 00 Plzeň (Czech Republic)

Politics in Central Europe is an independent scientific journal.
The authors are solely responsible for the content of their contributions.

Politics in Central Europe is an Open Access Journal and may be freely citeed,
downloaded, photocopied, and scanned for scholarly purposes only.

ISSN 1801-3422
MK ČR E 18556

POLITICS IN CENTRAL EUROPE is listed in the internationally recognised database Scopus and Erih.

POLITICS IN CENTRAL EUROPE is indexed in the internationally recognised databases:
Baidu Scholar, CEJSH (The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities), Celdes, CNKI Scholar (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), CNPIEC, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), EBSCO (relevant databases), EBSCO Discovery Service, Google Scholar, J-Gate, JournalTOCs, KESLI-NDSL (Korean National Discovery for Science Leaders), Microsoft Academic, Naviga(Softweco), Primo Central (ExLibris), Publons, ReadCube, Summon (Serials Solutions/ProQuest), TDNet, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory/ulrichsweb, WanFangData, WorldCat (OCLC).

The articles published in this scientific review are also published in Sciendo, http://www.sciendo.com

ISSN 1801-3422 ČÍSLO REGISTRACE MK ČR E 18556

CONTENTS

ESSAYS

Jerzy J. Wiatr
The Crisis of Democracy: An East-Central European Perspective 353

Attila Ágh
Rethinking the historical trajectory of ECE:
From the "original sin" in democratization to redemocratization 367

Karin Liebhart
25 years later – Austria's shift to the populist right:
national characteristics of a pan-European trend 399

Ladislav Cabada
Central Europe between the West and East: Independent Region,
the Bridge, Buffer Zone or 'eternal' Semi-Periphery? 419

Olga Brunnerová and Jakub Charvát
Online Political Communication Research Methods 433

Šárka Waisová
How is Expert Knowledge Diffused in International Politics and What Makes
It Actionable? Epistemic Infrastructure: a new Framework for Analysis 455

Zenun Halili
Justice Reform or Facade Reform: The case of the Western Balkans 479

Lucie Tungul
The Turkish Community in the Czech Republic: A Diaspora in the Making? 499

Helena Bauerová and Milan Vošta
Multi-level Governance and Energy Specifics of the V4 Countries
within the Context of European Integration 525

Dušan Brabec
The disintegration of KDU-ČSL in 2009: The network analysis
of co-voting strategies of the KDU-ČSL deputies 547

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS vii

ESSAYS

The Crisis of Democracy: An East-Central European Perspective

JERZY J. WIATR

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0016

Abstract: *Post-communist states of East Central Europe face the authoritarian challenge to their young democracies, the sources of which are both historical and contemporary. Economic underdevelopment, the retarded process of nation-building and several decades of communist rul made countries of the region less well prepared for democratic transformation than their Western neighbors, but better than former Soviet Union. Combination of economic and social tensions, nationalism and religious fundamentalism creates conditions conducive tom the crises of democracy, but such crises can be overcome if liberal and socialist forces join hands.*

Keywords: ***Authoritarianism, Communism, Democracy, Historical background, Leadership, Revolution***

Introduction

Thirty years after the culmination of the "third wave of democratization" (Huntington 1991) we observe the growing atmosphere of pessimism concerning the future of liberal democracy. Klaus von Beyme in his analysis of "post-democracy" points to the growth of right-wing populism with strong xenophobic elements (Beyme 2018, 2019), Adam Przeworski warns about the consequences of growing economic and social inequalities (Przeworski 2019), and the late Zygmunt Bauman (in one of his last writings) despaired about the "failure of the political class" in modern democracies (Bauman 2019).

There are serious reasons to worry about the future. Three of them seem most important. First, the process of democratization, so powerful in the last

three decades of the twentieth century, stopped in the mid-nineties and has not restarted since then. Its last important moment was 1994 – the first fully democratic election in the Republic of South Africa after the abolishment of apartheid. Later developments, including the "Arab Spring" of 2011, have not resulted in the establishment of stable democratic governments (with the possible exception of Tunisia). Second, there have been instances of gradual retreat from liberal democracy to what I have called "new authoritarianism" (Wiatr 2019) and a steady process of deterioration in the state of democracy as documented in the Freedom House reports (Guesti and Mansfeldova 2018: 9). Third, even in the old and well consolidated democracies there have been strong symptoms of the growing challenges from the populist right, as illustrated by the relative successes of the National Front in France, Alternative for Germany in the Federal Republic, the electoral victories of the Austrian Freedom party, and the election of Donald Trump as the first right-wing populist to occupy the White House in more than a hundred years.

I do not share the extreme pessimistic view on the future of democracy world-wide. My (relative) optimism is based on history. Never in the past has there been a collapse of a democratic system which had lasted for at least two generations (that means at least sixty years). The longest democratic rule existing prior to a coup d'état was Chile – forty years of civilian democratic governments preceded the military coup of September 1973. In Europe, the longest interval between the establishment of liberal democracy and its overthrow was Italy (from 1896, the end of Francesco Crispi's authoritarian rule, and 1922 – the coming to power of Benito Mussolini). More than the level of economic development (emphasized by Przeworski) it is the longevity of democratic rule that makes democracy safe. Even when a populist authoritarian comes to power (like Donald Trump in 2016) he is unable to destroy democratic institutions if and when they have been preserved for over sixty years.

Consequently, I am reasonably optimistic about the future of liberal democracy in Western Europe, Northern America, Australia and some other "old democracies," but not so much about the rest of the world. States ruled by communist parties before 1989 belong to the broader category of new democracies, which still face the uncertain future.

The "post-communist states" can, broadly speaking, be divided into two categories. The first is composed of Russia and those of the states which were parts of the Soviet Union before the Second World War. They shared three main characteristics. First: all of them were part of the Russian Empire, sharing with Russia the heritage of absolutism and authoritarian political culture (Brown 1984). Second, in all of them the communist regimes resulted from revolution and civil war rather than, as was the case in East-Central Europe, a victory of the USSR and its conquest of the eastern part of Europe. Third, communist rule lasted there almost one generation longer than in countries where it was

established after the Second World War. None of these post-communist states was able to establish a consolidated democratic system. The closest to achieving this goal were Georgia and Ukraine, but even they are still far from becoming stable liberal democracies.

The second group of post-communist states is composed of relative newcomers, countries which came under communist rule during or immediately after the war and because of the hegemonic position of the USSR. This category includes three countries annexed by the USSR in 1940 (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and Moldova (annexed by the USSR in 1944), as well as East Central European states where communist parties came to power in the last year of the war or immediately after, in most cases under Soviet pressure passively accepted by the Western allies. In this respect Yugoslavia was an exception – the only country of Eastern Europe where the Communist party came to power as the leader of the partisan army which liberated most of the country by its own forces and did not owe its rule to the Soviet Union. The ability of Yugoslavia to preserve her independence in the face of Soviet pressure and the reformist policies of her communist leadership made her an inspiration for reformists in other communist states (Halperin 1958, Neal 1958).

This historically-rooted division has had an important impact on the thirty years of post-communist development in Europe. In my study of this process (Wiatr 2006), I have emphasized the importance of history as the main factor explaining the patterns of change after the collapse of the communist regimes. It has to be remembered, however, that outside Europe communist regimes are still well entrenched, particularly in China, which combines a fundamental economic change (from state controlled to market-oriented economy) with the basically intact dictatorship of the Communist party.

East-Central Europe: the heritage of history

Terminology does matter. During the cold war, communist states in Europe which did not belong to the USSR were called "Eastern Europe." The term had a political rather than geographic connotation. Prague after all is farther to the West than Vienna. Usually, the Soviet Union itself was not seen as part of "Eastern Europe," partly because most of its territory was in Asia.

After the end of communist regimes a new term received popularity. Countries of the former Soviet bloc, including the Baltic republics, which in 1991 regained their independence, preferred to be called "Central Europe" and the former name was all but abandoned. Historians tend to distinguish between East and Central Europe by combining political and cultural characteristics. Eastern Europe, according to this line of reasoning, is composed of countries of predominantly Orthodox denomination (except Russia) while the term "Central Europe" is reserved for countries where the dominant religion is either

Roman Catholicism or Protestantism and which are situated east of what has become "Western Europe" (member-states of the Western alliance during the cold war). The realities of the twentieth century dictate, however, a different perspective. Regardless of their distinctly different cultural heritage countries situated between the USSR and the Western alliance (NATO, European Community) were seen as one broad category, which may be called East-Central Europe. Such a concept combines two types of historical differences: the old ones, going back to the Middle Ages, and the new ones resulting from the Soviet domination after the Second World War. It should be remembered, however, that in spite of their religious (cultural) differences countries of East-Central Europe have some common characteristics making them distinctly different from their Western neighbors.

The historical division of Europe along the East-West line has its roots in the Great Schism of 1054 which put an end to the religious unity of Christian Europe. The permanent dividing line between Western and Eastern Christianity goes along the eastern borders of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia, as well as the borders of Croatia in the South. In Huntington's terminology, these lines separate two great Christian civilizations (Huntington 1996). Such a division, however, does not explain the specific place of the central and/or eastern group of states. The borderline between two (and three, if we consider the Islamic South) civilizations can be considered a separate region, which I should like to call East-Central Europe. The countries of East Central Europe have four characteristics which make them distinctly different both from Western Europe and from Eastern Europe, the core of which has been Russia.

First, historically East Central Europe lagged behind Western Europe in economic development and in the process of state consolidation. Even in times of their greatest strength (like Poland in the XVI century), the states of East--Central Europe were weaker (economically and militarily) than the strongest powers of Western Europe. Their economies remained mostly based on agriculture and their cities were smaller and by far less affluent than cities in the Western part of Europe.

Second, by the end of the XVIII century the whole region was divided between three multi-ethnic empires: Russia, Austria and Turkey (Ottoman Empire), with the exception of the North-Western part of Poland, incorporated by Prussia. This not only prolonged but also deformed the process of nation building in the East-Central European region.

Third, the region was a borderline between three civilizations, which caused not only intense conflict but also the processes of cultural interaction. It also produced a tendency to identify nationality with religious affiliation, particularly strong in pre-partition Poland and in the Balkans.

Fourth, as the result of the First World War several newly independent states emerged in the region (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czecho-

slovakia, and Hungary) and the Slavic nations of the Habsburg Empire united with Serbia into what after 1929 came to be known as Yugoslavia. All the states in the region, except Czechoslovakia, experienced the rapid fall of democratic governments. In chronological order authoritarian regimes emerged in Hungary (1919), Bulgaria (1923), Poland (1926), Lithuania (1926), Estonia (1927), Yugoslavia (1929), Latvia (1934), and Romania (1938).

Fifth, the Second World War divided the region into states allied to and more or less controlled by Nazi Germany (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia) and two states which offered military resistance to Nazi invasion and were parts of the winning coalition (Poland and Yugoslavia). The status of Czechoslovakia (as different from the separatist Slovak state under German tutelage) was complicated. While as a state she never entered the war, her former president Edvard Beneś and a group of his followers were able to establish a nucleus of a state-in-exile in London becoming therefore parts of the anti-German coalition.

In 1941, the German attack on the USSR resulted in the temporary separation of the Baltic republics from the USSR and the collaboration of significant sectors of their population with Germany. Also in Yugoslavia, where the "independent" Croat state under German control was established, part of the population sided with the conqueror. Consequently, during the 1941–1945 war Yugoslavia experienced simultaneously the ethnic conflict between her main nationalities (Serbs and Croats) and the foreign occupation. The success of the communist-controlled partisan army resulted mostly from the fact that it was the only force recruited from all Yugoslav nationalities and commanded by ethnically mixed leadership.

All these historical factors combine into creating a specific East-Central European historical heritage. Common experience and nation-specific developments are parts of this heritage, making East-Central Europe a region of differences as well as similarities.

Transformation One: from peripheral capitalism to state socialism

In the new political constellation resulting from the Second World War, countries of East-Central Europe undertook the task of transformation of their economic, social, and political structures. After a brief period of uncertainty (1945–1947), when various options seemed possible, the general direction of this transformation was settled. All the countries of the region were supposed to become carbon copies of the Soviet model. Nationalization of banks as well as big and medium factories, collectivization of the agriculture, rapid industrialization, and reorientation of international economic contacts in the direction of integration within the socialist bloc were perceived as the only acceptable pattern of new economics. Cultural revolution, massive expansion of education and political control of the spiritual life became a universal norm. Political con-

trol over practically all aspects of life, combined with the massive use of police violence produced what could have been rightly defined as a totalitarian system.

There were, however, two reasons why the original model of imitating Stalinist Soviet Union was never fully implemented. The first was the shortness of time. Stalin died less than eight years after the end of the war and the political changes in the USSR which followed his passing resulted in slowing down the process of the "Sovietization of captive peoples," as it was called by American political scientist Richard Staar (1962). The concept of "actually existing socialism" was adopted as an alternative for a more ambitious program of "building communism."

The second reason was by far more important. Within the ruling communist parties in the key countries of the region, unorthodox political tendencies emerged. Their common characteristic was an attempt to find an alternative to the totalitarian model of soviet-style state socialism. In Yugoslavia, following the break with the USSR (1948–1949), several reforms were undertaken, including decentralization of the economy and a greater role for territorial self-government. While not aiming at the establishment of the liberal democratic system, such reforms indicated a meaningful attempt to make communist rule more responsible to the needs of the population. Fred Warner Neal was the first among Western scholars to recognize the importance of what he called "Titoism" (Neal 1958). It was Tito's historical achievement that under his leadership Yugoslavia not only defended her sovereignty but also became the first communist state to depart from Stalinist totalitarianism (Kulić 1966, 1998).

Poland turned away from strict imitation of the Soviet model in 1956, when for the first time in the history of the Soviet bloc the ruling party openly challenged Soviet leaders, turning over power to the freshly "rehabilitated" party leader Wladyslaw Gomulka, abandoning the policy of forced collectivization and of persecuting the Roman Catholic Church and granting citizens by far broader freedom than in any other state ruled by the communist party. While some of the 1956 reforms were later toned down (Gibney 1959), Poland remained the least oppressive of all communist states and in the early nineteen-eighties became the cradle of a massive democratic opposition under the umbrella of the "Solidarity" trade union (Taras 1984).

The Hungarian national revolution of 1956 went farther than trying to reform the system. It was the first (and only) attempt to overthrow the communist regime by force. As such it was put down by Soviet military intervention but in the years that followed the Hungarian Communist Party changed its economic policy by introducing limited elements of market economy and gradually distancing itself from rigid ideological dogmas – at least in economic relations (Szamuely 1989).

Czechoslovakia started informal reforms late (in 1968), but went farther than any other communist state in presenting a comprehensive program of

democratic reforms (Golan 1971, 1973, Skilling 1976). The Soviet-led military intervention of the Warsaw Pact states put an end to this ambitious initiative and for twelve years put an end to more ambitious political reforms.

In the summer of 1980 came a wave of worker strikes in Poland to which the communist leadership responded not by force but by compromise under which the massive Solidarity movement came to life. While sixteen months later it was put down by the imposition of martial law (as an alternative to the very serious threat of Soviet intervention), this experience was not in vain and in a relatively short time led to the "round table" compromise of 1989 and the establishment of the first non-communist government in East-Central Europe (Hayden 2006).

Not all countries of the region were as reformist as Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, and (in 1968) Czechoslovakia, but in some of the others there were interesting political changes. In Romania, the stagnation of totalitarian control was combined with a comprehensive program of nationalist state policies distancing this country from Soviet foreign policy (Jowitt 1971). In Yugoslavia, the death of President Josip Broz Tito (1980) was followed by growing tensions between republics and the emergence of nationalistic leadership on a republican level, particularly in Serbia and Croatia.

All these combined changes produced a complex picture of East-Central European communist politics quite different from the Soviet model. It was, however, impossible to go much farther until change occurred in the Soviet Union itself.

Transformation Two: from state socialism to liberal democracy and market economy

History is full of surprises. In the late 1980s the dominant trend among Western specialists writing on the perspectives of communist regimes kept stressing the long-term perspectives of the rivalry between Western liberal democracy and Soviet-style communism (Brzezinski 1986). Only four years later the situation was totally different, as reflected in another book by the former national security advisor to President Carter (Brzezinski 1990). The collapse of communist regimes in Europe resulted from a combination of long-term processes and human error.

Relatively, the simplest part of the puzzle is the fall of communist regimes in East-Central Europe (except Yugoslavia) where the ability of the ruling parties to rule depended, more or less visibly, on Soviet hegemony. Memories of Soviet interventions in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968), as well as of Soviet pressure on Poland during the political crisis of 1980–1981 were still fresh and resulted in a kind of passive acceptance of the regimes by the majority of the population. It was Mikhail Gorbachev's blunt decision to publicly reject the "Brezhnev doctrine" (in Warsaw, July 1989) that changed the situation and allowed the reformist communist leaders in Poland to initiate the process of negotiated transition, soon followed by other states of the region.

The fall of regime in the USSR was a different story. The communist system in Russia was by far more deeply entrenched than its copies in East-Central Europe. It also existed for almost a generation longer. The reasons for its demise can be divided into three categories. The first is the consequence of Russia's historical underdevelopment (both economic and political) which many Marxists believed to constitute the fundamental obstacle to achieving the goals of the communist revolution (Schaff). In the late 1930s the Soviet Union was already showing symptoms of deep internal crisis, resulting from the trauma of forced collectivization and political purges. It was the victory in the Great Patriotic War that gave new life to the Stalinist regime. The system, however, was stagnant and with the passing of time its dynamics were disappearing. Limited reforms during the short period of Nikita Khrushchev's leadership was followed by more than twenty years of conservative policies (Malia 1994: 351–401). When Gorbachev came to power (in March 1985) it was probably too late for gradual reforms to bring success. The second reason for Soviet collapse is the fact that in the long run the arms race and world-wide rivalry with the much richer Western powers was too taxing for the Soviet economy. The third is the logic of the reform process itself. Gorbachev was unwilling to purge the ambitious political reforms which were not supported by an important segment of the communist elite but at the same time was unwilling to purge the party leadership from the opponents of the reform program (Brown 1996). His politics of balancing both sides of the growing internal conflict resulted in his political isolation during the August 1991 coup and, consequently, in the capture of power by the radicals under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin (Remnick 1993). Following the coup came the decision to dissolve the Soviet Union and the prolonged crisis of post-Soviet Russia.

Yugoslavia constitutes a special case. Her independent position vis-à-vis the USSR and her moderately reformist policies could have allowed her to successfully democratize the system in evolutionary way. Such a scenario did not materialize, mostly because of the unresolved national question, which – after Tito's death – became even more burning due to the emergence of nationalist leadership on the republican level, particularly in the biggest one – Serbia (Ramet 1983). It is true that in the eighties economic difficulties were accelerating a serious social malaise (Horvat 1985), but it was the nationalistic politics of the Serbian leadership, combined with the growth of Croat nationalism, that brought the Yugoslav federation to a rapid, and bloody, death.

There were several patterns of transition from the rules of communist parties. Negotiated reform, first in Poland, then in Hungary, was rather rare. More often we were faced with the collapse of the old system, either under the pressure of the rebellious streets (Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic) or the dissolution of the multinational federation due to the combined effect of deep divisions on the level of top leadership and the nationalistic pressure from below. Only in one case (Romania, December 1989) was the communist

dictatorship overthrown by an armed revolt. In Bulgaria, and a little later in Albania, a peaceful transition took place through elections lost by the (reformed) parties of the old regime.

During a remarkably short period of time, the abolition of the communist system in Europe was complete. It remains an open question whether there was an alternative. China's evolution under the rule of the Communist party suggests a positive answer, but one may doubt whether the Chinese way of reform from above would have worked in fundamentally different conditions of European communist states.

The fall of communist regimes was met with optimistic predictions that countries freed from communism would smoothly move to liberal democracy and a market economy. There were, however, scholars who warned that in at least some of these countries the authoritarian past would come back (Avineri 1991, Huntington 1991). Thirty years later we are in the position to assess the validity of such warnings – at least in a preliminary way.

Transition Three: from unconsolidated democracy to new authoritarianism or else?

In the early years of transition from the communist regimes there were serious worries about the potentially disastrous consequences of radical economic reforms and their immediate impact on unemployment and the falling standard of living. Having participated in two cross-national studies conducted during the first decade of transition (Przeworski 1995, Jahn and Wildenmann 1995) I was aware of the seriousness of such worries. The paradox of this period, however, was that the political situation in the post-communist states in the early period of transition was by far less dramatic than their economic situation. There were some, rather limited, political successes of radical populist parties and some instances of labor protests, but nothing close to a crisis of the political system. Newly born democracy, where it emerged, was able to defend itself. The logic of electoral democracy worked. In several countries (Lithuania in 1993, Poland in 1993, Hungary in 1994) Left-wing parties formed by people who had been active in the reformist wings of the communist parties came to power after having won parliamentary elections. The democratic alternative to a radical counter-revolt did work.

In Russia and in several post-Soviet republics the change of regime did not produce democratic alternatives but more or less consolidated authoritarian regimes. Both the lack of democratic traditions and the length of time during which these countries lived under the communist dictatorship explain the easiness with which new authoritarianism was established. The notorious weakness of the liberal democratic opposition is not only a Russian phenomenon, even if in the Russian Federation we can observe the consequences of this weakness

with the greatest clarity (Velikaya 2019). It will probably take at least one more generation to change this situation.

East Central Europe looked more promising. In the early years of transition all the countries of the region except some of the former Yugoslav republics became parliamentary democracies. Even if some of them suffered from intense fragmentation of their party systems, the over-all picture was reasonably good. The brief period of Victor Mećiar's authoritarian and nationalistic rule in Slovakia (1984–1988) ended with him having lost the parliamentary election. The end of the ethnic war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1966) and the forced withdrawal of Serbia from Kosovo were followed by the defeat of Slobodan Milośević in the Serbian presidential election and the death of his Croat alter ego Franio Tudjman. By the beginning of the 21st century East Central Europe looked well from the perspectives of new democracies.

There were, however, reasons to worry. In an essay published in this early period of democratic transition, I warned against three main dangers (socio-economic dissatisfaction, nationalism, and religious fundamentalism) and postulated the strategy based on including the post-communist Left in the broad coalition of reformists (Wiatr 1996). A quarter of a century later I am even more convinced that the challenges to new democracies have deeper roots than economic and social dissatisfaction alone. New authoritarianism and right-wing populism are growing in most of East-Central Europe. They cannot be explained exclusively by referring to mistakes committed by reformist governments, even if such mistakes contributed to the growth of anti-democratic forces. It has to be remembered that the democratic project in our part of Europe confronts the heavy burden of history – old and recent. The crisis of democracy is not an inevitable scenario, but – as Hungary and Poland have already demonstrated – it is a very serious possibility. It is still possible to defend and/ or restore democracy by casting ballots. "Electoral authoritarianism" depends on being able to maintain public support. It is not too late to believe that democracy can win in our part of Europe, but it is necessary to understand the sources of the crisis and to look for effective alternatives.

Such alternatives cannot be based on continuing old liberal policies. The socio-economic policy of the democratic forces should combine the attachment to the market economy with a courageous policy of protecting the poorer strata and with resolute fight against the growth of corruption, itself one of the essential features of new authoritarianism. Confronting nationalism and religious fanaticism, new democracies should formulate and promote a policy of tolerance and solidarity. This cannot be achieved without overcoming the traditional rift between liberal and socialist forces. Democracy in East-Central Europe can be defended and consolidated but it would be a self-defeating strategy to accept such outcome as inevitable. In reality, the region stands at the cross-roads and its political future depends on which direction its leaders and citizens decide to go.

References

Avineri, Shlomo (1991): Reflections on Eastern Europe. *Partisan Review* 3: 442–448

Bauman, Zygmunt (2019): Some of the Foremost Challenges to the Status Quo, in: Jerzy J. Wiatr, ed. *New Authoritarianism: Challenges to Democracy in the 21st century,* Opladen-Berlin-Toronto: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 37–49.

Beyme, Klaus von (2018): *From Post-Democracy to Neo-Democracy,* Cham: Springer International Publishing.

Beyme, Klaus von (2019): Populism, Right-Wing Extremism and Neo-Nationalism, in Jerzy J. Wiatr, *New Authoritarianism,* 9–16.

Brown, Archie, ed. (1984): *Political Culture & Communist Studies,* Handsmills-London: Macmillan.

Brown, Archie (1996): *The Gorbachev Factor,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1986): *The Game Plan: Framework for the Conduct of the US-Soviet Contest,* Boston-New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew (1990): *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism on the Twentieth Century,* New York: Collier Press.

Gibney, Frank (1959): *The Frozen Revolution, Poland: The Study in Communist Decay,* New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy.

Golan, Galia (1971): *The Czechoslovak Reform Movement,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Golan, Galia (1973): *Reform Rule in Czechoslovakia: The Dubcek Era 1968–1969,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Guasti, Petra and Mansfeldova, Zdenka, eds. (2018): *Democracy Under Stress: Changing Perspectives on Democracy, Governance and Their Measurement,* Prague: Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

Halperin, Ernst (1958): *The Triumphant Heretic,* London: Heinemann.

Hayden, Jacquelin (2006): *The Collapse of Communist Power in Poland: Straetegic Misperceptions and Unanticipated Outcomes,* London-New York: Routledge.

Horvat, Branko (1985): *Jugoslovensko družstvo u krizi,* Zagreb: Globus.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1991): *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Twentieth Century,* Norman-London: University of Oklahoma Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1996): *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order,* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Jahn, Egbert and Wildenmann, Rudolf, eds. (1995): *Stability in East Central Europe?,* Baden--Baden: Nomos.

Jowitt, Kenneth (1971): *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: Thea Case of Romania 1944–1965,* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Kulić, Todor (1996): Tito's historical achievement, *Serbian Political Thought* 1–2: 101–109.

Kulić, Todor (1998): *Tito – sociološkoistorijska studija,* Beograd: Institut za politićko studije.

Malia, Martin (1994): *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917–1991,* New York--Toronto: The Free Press.

Neal, Fred Warner (1958): *Titoism in Action: The reforms in Yugoslavia after 1948,* Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press.

Przeworski, et al. (1995): *Sustainable Democracy,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Przeworski, Adam (2019): *Crises of Democracy,* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ramet, Petro (1984): *Nationalism and Federalism in Yugoslavia, 1963–1983,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Remnick, David (1993): *Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire,* New York: Random House.

Schaff, Adam (1984): *Die kommunistische Bewegung am Scheideweg,* Wien-Munchen-Zurich: Europaverlag.

Skilling, Gordon H. (1976): *Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution,* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Staar, Richard F. (1962): *Poland 1944–62: The Sovietization of a Captive People,* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Szamuely, Laszló (1989): Ideological Features Yet to be Overcome in Soviet-Type Economies, in Stanislaw Gomulka, Yong-Chool Ha and Cae-One Kim, eds., *Economic Reforms in the Socialist World,* Houndsmills and London: Macmillan, 156–169.

Taras, Ray (1984): *Ideology in a Socialist State: Poland 1956–1983,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Velikaya, Nataliya (2019): Opposition as a Mirage of Political Field in Russia in: Jerzy J. Wiatr ed. *New Authoritarianism,* 77–99.

Wiatr, Jerzy J. (1995): Democracy versus a New Authoritarianism in Eastern Europe, in Richard Kilminster and Ian Varcoe, eds.*, Culture, Modernity and Revolution. Essays in Honour of Zygmunt Bauman,* London-New York: Routledge, 201–214.

Wiatr, Jerzy J. (2006): *Europa postkomunistyczna: przemiany państw i społeczeństw po 1989 roku,* Warsaw: Scholar Publishing House [„Post-communist Europe: transformation of states and societies after 1989", in Polish].

Wiatr, Jerzy J. (2008): Democratizations in Central Europe: Comparative Perspectives, in Jose V. Ciprut, ed. *Democratizations: Comparisons, Confrontations, and Contrasts,* Cambridge, Mass.–London: The MIT Press: 145–163.

Wiatr, Jerzy J. (2019): New and Old Authoritarianism in a Comparative Perspective, in Jerzy J. Wiatr, *New Authoritarianism*, 169–181.

***Jerzy J. Wiatr** (1931) is professor emeritus, University of Warsaw and former rector (now honorary Rector) of the European School of Law and Administration (Warsaw and Brussels). He was president of the Polish Association of Political Sciences (1964–67 and 1976–79), Vice-president of the International Political Science Association (1979–82) and president of Central European Political Science*

Association (2000–2003). He was a deputy to Polish Parliament (1991–2001) and Poland's minister of education (1996–97). He is an honorary senator of the University of Ljubljana and has received honorary doctorates from Kursk Academy of Science and Education and from Oleg Honchar National University in Dniepro.

Rethinking the historical trajectory of ECE: From the "original sin" in democratization to redemocratization

ATTILA ÁGH

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0017

Abstract: *This paper treats East-Central Europe as a region and investigates its common historical trajectory in the last decades. After 30 years of systemic change and 15 years of EU membership, it is high time for the re-evaluation and reconceptualization of the Europeanization and Democratization process in ECE. It is the key to understand the false start as the original sin in democratization and the reasons of ECE divergence from mainstream EU developments in order to prepare the redemocratization process. The progress of the Europeanization and Democratization process in ECE has been widely described in official documents, but for a balanced and complete picture it is necessary to present also the De-Europeanization and De-Democratization process from the very beginning. Basically, after the collapse of the bipolar world order in 1989, the Eastern enlargement was an economic and political necessity as a substantial part of the EU deepening and widening policy. The EU needed the extension of its economic space and political system that had also been pre-programmed in the mission statement of the Rome Treaty. At the same time, the new member states (NMS) needed the "Return to Europe" for their reintegration into the Western world. However, the capacity for this extension was actually missing on both sides, and it has remained so during the last 30 years of systemic change or the 15 years of EU membership. Altogether, this controversial process has produced a colorful picture of successes and failures in all NMS that will be analyzed in an ECE context.*

Keywords: ***reconceptualization, De-Europeanization and De-Democratization, upward convergence, redemocratization***

Introduction: The ECE Road from Europeanization to De-Europeanization

The ECE historical trajectory is exemplary, showing clearly the complexity and the controversial character of both Europeanization and Democratization. *Europeanization* has been a complex concept, as a two-way – both top down and bottom up – process embracing the entire society and presupposing EU-wide homogenization, while preserving country specificities. The entry conditions of the EU were formulated in the "conditionalities," given that in international relations theory conditionality means to impose conditions for the provision of benefits. In the Eastern enlargement only the *ex-ante* conditionalities were elaborated in the Copenhagen criteria and the *ex-post* conditionalities were missing, since both the compliance, the positive attitude to the implementation of the further integration measures, and the linear development of NMS with a point of no return were taken as evident.[1]

Democratization was also considered a rather simple legalistic concept for NMS based on free and fair elections, as a relatively easy process in the legal-constitutional formalities after the collapse of the former "communist" regime. There has been a long and painful process moving from this "minimalist" definition ("free" in Freedom House terms, FH, 2019) to the "maximalist" definition (*thin* democracy versus *thick* democracy in EIU, 2019). The full complexity of democracy with its large socio-economic and cultural-civilizational foundations was only later seriously discussed in the 2010s due to the tragic backsliding of the weak and chaotic democracy in ECE. Similarly, by the late 2010s it had also become crystal clear that the conditionality in the Copenhagen criteria was not enough, and even compliance with all incoming changes was not sufficient within the EU, since the formal-legal, top down democracy does not work either. Thus, the new member states have to move from the "minimalist" to the "maximalist" meaning of democracy in their re-democratization efforts. Therefore, nowadays ECE countries are searching for a new concept of sustainable Europeanization and Democratization because "Economic Europe" has created the brutal dominance of stronger states over the weaker states within the EU that has produced structural socio-economic weaknesses and autocratic political systems in ECE. In a drastic statement it has also formulated in the West: "There was a brainless rush to absorb as much of eastern Europe as possible" (Mason

1 The concept of Europeanization, Democratization and systemic change will be discussed in the paper, based on the Bertelsmann (2019), EIU (2019), FH (2019), ISEA (2019) and V-Dem (2019a, b) concepts, these preparatory statements indicate only the short overview as these concepts emerged historically. This paper uses the term East-Central Europe (ECE) for the 5 states of this region (as CZ, HU, PL, SI and SK) and that of the new member states (NMS) for the all 11 states joining the EU in 2004, 2007 and 2013. All other states to the East – except for Russia – have been called Eastern Europe (EE), or with the often-used term of Wider Europe. In my view, the large term of "Central and Eastern Europe" is very confusing, since usually it is not clear, which states belong to it.

2020: 2). All in all, Economic Europe has defeated "Political Europe" and deeply wounded "Social Europe." In fact, it has degenerated the Europeanization and Democratization of ECE. Consequently, for genuine Europeanization across the EU the recovery of Political and Social Europe is also needed to balance and correct the oppressive role of Economic Europe.[2]

Systemic change has also been a very complex and controversial process in its three – political, economic, and social – dimensions. As Dahrendorf (1990) explained in the early nineties: the basic legal-political change needed six months, the economic one needed six years, and the social one needed sixty years. Indeed, the fundamental political-constitutional transformation as the very first step to Europeanization and Democratization in ECE also took place rather quickly in the early nineties. The economic transition from the planned to the market economy with privatization and reintegration into the world economy was finished in the same decade, while the social change obviously needs a much longer time. Actually, it has not yet been completed in the first 30 years. Dahrendorf has also indicated that systemic change as a simultaneous transition would be a very controversial process with many contradictions between these dimensions, which is vital in the emergence of De-Europeanization and De-Democratization.

In the past decades, however, the ruling idea in systemic change was functionalism, with the basic idea that supposedly the positive feedback works as a "spillover" from one social field to another. Above all the economic development "automatically" strengthens the political democratization and vice versa. Although these sequences of positive feedback have also worked, the entire history of systemic change in ECE can still be better described as a chain of negative feedback between the economy, society, and politics. The EU capacity in terms of economic competitiveness, modern society, and strong democratic tradition was missing in ECE, hence there was a weak start of Europeanization and Democratization leading through the negative feedback to gradual De-Europeanization and De-Democratization. Looking back from the early 2020s, the nineties were dominated by a deep *economic* crisis with the restart of economic growth only in the late nineties. The 2000s gradually produced a *social* crisis due to the polarizing effect of the new dependent market economy, provoking the neopopulist *political* crisis that led to the emerging authoritarian systems in the 2010s. Beneath the surface of the legal-political and institutional transformations in Europeanization and Democratization there has been a complex and controversial backsliding socio-political process that makes it understandable why all ECE countries – first of all Poland

2 The concept of democracy or democratization has changed tremendously in the last decades that gives the theoretical adventure of the entire paper. This paper relies to a great extent on two parallel papers (Ágh 2019c; 2020) about the ECE regional developments and it tries to avoid the repetitions of theoretical arguments and references to the ranking institutes.

and Hungary – deviated drastically from the EU mainstream development in the 2010s.[3]

The real starting point of the analysis is that a sufficient EU capacity was missing in ECE in the nineties and it has not been created since then. In fact, ECE development has derailed from mainstream EU developments; hence, EU capacity building has been a failure of original expectations. The historical trajectory of EU membership has usually been characterized as a simple catching-up process, but the recent EU concept is upward convergence (Eurofound 2018, 2019a, b,c), which is not a *quantitative*, but a *qualitative* process since this convergence is much more than economic growth in GDP terms. First, convergence as the proper capacity building means structural change in the socio-economic situation from a late industrial society to a knowledge-based society with an innovation driven economy based on human investment (sustainable economy). Second, convergence is "upward" only if it leads to a more equitable society with social justice and to a new "green" way of life with an emphasis on well-being (sustainable society). Third, it has to produce an inclusive, participative democratic order with a multilevel governance structure and patterns of civic political culture (sustainable democracy). Hence, in the qualitative development the new members have to be "converging" not with the past of the developed countries, but "upward" with their present situation in order to get their EU capacity.

This structural change in the three dimensions described above has been set in motion in the advanced European democracies in the past decades. It is clear, however, that in the last 30 years ECE has not converged with, but diverged from these EU developments, so the gap has increased and not decreased. Again, this has been mainly due to the weak start and the mistaken EU enlargement policy that has been tilting towards "Economic Europe" with the oppressive rule of the overwhelming market forces producing a dependent economy with social disinvestment in ECE. The result is the unilateral dominance of stronger EU economies over ECE, in which the *hard* economic policy defeated the *soft* social policy, i.e. Economic Europe has first defeated Social Europe and then Political Europe. Namely, "an imbalance has grown in Europe over the last few decades because markets have integrated to a greater extent than European level of policymaking" (Papadia and Cadamuro 2020: 1). This is the true nature of the false catching-up trajectory that can be seen not simply in its up-and-down cycles, but in its essence of controversial development, in both Core-Periphery context and within the domestic structures of the ECE countries. The lack of

3 I have analysed the ECE developments through the triple crisis in three periods in my latest book (Ágh 2019a) with its 104 Tables (Ágh 2019b) in great detail. This triplet gives the backbone of this paper without embarking here on their detailed presentation. The Table I in this paper shows the characteristic profile of the ECE countries with slight changes within 2019 and the Table II the current rankings of seven NMS countries.

the real upward convergence has been the same for all ECE countries, although their actual performance has still been somewhat different.

Actually, the reason for the false start in the EU was the ruling idea of full competitiveness between the strong and weak economies. The result is that the new "free" market economy with its partial modernization emerged in ECE at the high price of a dependent economy with a subservient role to the Western economies, mentioned often as "cheap workshops of the West" (Krakovsky 2019: III). In general, the newly liberated countries played a functional role in the domestic economy of Western partners and/or in the workings of the given multinationals. The historical tradition of the European semi-periphery is that their partial and controversial modernization produced a special kind of dependency with deep economic and social polarization in the ECE countries. Earlier it took place in the open form of political dependence on the West, but this time it has been a voluntary process of ECE countries by building their own dependency structures, hence this can be characterized as soft and/or *self-colonization*. It has happened to them in the framework of the profound contradiction between Economic Europe on one side and Social and Political Europe on the other. Economic Europe has created a strong economic dependence with brutal social consequences that have partitioned the ECE countries into "West of the East" and "East of the East." It produced the general desecuritization that first damaged Social Europe and later ruined Political Europe in the countries concerned. In principle, Political Europe has offered a perspective of democratization and transnational integration, but in reality this opportunity has been prevented by the radical socio-economic distortions caused by Economic Europe.

Based on this contrast between dreams and reality, the main interest of this paper is to explore the high historical trajectory of Europeanization and Democratization in ECE by pointing out the intrinsic failures and inherent limitations of this process in order to prepare the way for a big historical correction that can be termed as "re-entry" to the EU and to reach a real, effective membership instead of a formal-legal membership. All in all, indicating the successes and failures of EU membership in big outlines – on the positive side there has been a "Return to Europe" as an integration to the Euro-Atlantic world and a modest quantitative economic catching-up to the EU average, on the negative side the key issues are the emergence of a neoliberal hybrid with a deep socio-economic crisis leading to the change of the dominant narratives from "illusory Europeanization" to the "national sovereignty" scenario. The outbreak of the global crisis clearly showed the structural weakness of the chaotic democracy in the first twenty years of systemic change and produced a sharp turn in the political system to "illiberal democracy." This drastic turning point gives the periodization of current ECE history, in which a new downward political spiral of systemic change was finally put in motion in the 2010s. Due to the deep socio-political

deconsolidation it has been a reverse wave from a chaotic democracy through internal Easternization to a new authoritarian system.

Pre-accession as the preparatory stage of the EU membership (1989–2004)

In the international framing structures, the pre-accession stage embraces the first 15 years between 1989 and 2004, while the EU membership stage embraces the second 15 years, in which the institutional cycles of the EU – Barroso I. and II. Commissions (2004–2009 and 2009–2014) and the Juncker Commission (2014–2019) – give the external frame of ECE developments within the EU. Therefore, EU membership has to be analyzed in two main periods, the early accession years before the global crisis and the decade after it. The first 15 years need an overview of the starting situation in the pre-accession process as creating the preconditions of EU membership. Preconditions and conditionalities have to be distinguished. *Preconditions* presupposed the large antecedent socio-economic, legal-political, and cultural-civilizational dimensions for the preparatory process of Europeanization and Democratization, whereas *conditionalities* depended on the actual political decisions and strategic perceptions of the EU policy makers, and its permanent correction will be discussed in the terms of the Copenhagen learning process. This distinction is vital, yet it was not perceived by the EU at the start of the Eastern enlargement, although their divergence was huge due to the missing EU capacity in ECE, given the weak competitiveness of ECE in the "free world." As to conditionalities, all basic EU decisions were made under the Western neoliberal pressure of "Economic Europe" as a soft invasion to get new productive fields and markets, while the ECE population expected the "Return to Europe," which meant for them a return to "normalcy" by creating supposedly harmonized relations between sustainable economy and inclusive democracy. Finally, "For many Central Eastern Europeans, 'leading a normal life', similar to that of Westerners and synonymous with prosperity, has proved to be much more difficult than expected" (Krakovsky 2019: II).

The pre-accession process was a dynamic period with several steps in the framework of the Accession Partnership. The EU decided immediately, in December 1989, on the economic assistance with the Phare (Poland – Hungary Assistance for the Reconstruction of Economy) program, followed by association in the Europe Agreement, whereas the strategic decisions were made by the Copenhagen criteria (1993) and Agenda 2000 (EC 1997). The *Agenda 2000* was a long document issued on 15 July 1997 about the bright future of an enlarging EU by reacting to the "challenge of enlargement." In this optimistic era the EU considered the Eastern enlargement a long process embracing the whole continent in subsequent waves, including Eastern Europe (EE). The pre-accession has usually been described as the process "from Copenhagen to Copenhagen,"

since it took place between the EU Summits in June 1993 and December 2002. It had essentially begun with the Copenhagen criteria and was completed by the decision on the accession at the Copenhagen Summit.[4]

The Europeanization and Democratization process had a long prehistory before EU accession. Establishing a market economy and the key legal-constitutional institutions was the very first step, in which basic socio-economic and political transformations laid the foundations for further developments. Although the legal base was more or less durable, the situation was still precarious since those crisis features that were thought to be *transitional* in the nineties, proved to be *permanent* in the 2000s by becoming the *systemic features* of the new society. Thus, under the pressure of the increasing social contradictions, the legal foundation of the new democratic order eroded rather rapidly, since this start was faulty in many respects. Well, the road to the hell is paved with good intentions. At least it is valid for the nineties when after the collapse of the former regime there was some kind of power vacuum in ECE with economic stagnation and this simplified linear narrative of Europeanization became the only hope. No doubt that the EU compensation mechanisms were also designed in the cohesion policy, but they have not worked properly, as the World Bank warned in 2000 about the polarization between the winners and losers (Tang 2000) and largely documented it in the early 2010s (Gill and Raiser 2011) by pointing out that the "Convergence Machine" did not work. Since then there has been a strong connection between the renewal of the cohesion policy and the deep structural reforms in the EU with many recent reform strategies (see EPC projects like Huguenot-Noel et al. 2018 and Hunter 2019), but no meaningful reform has taken place so far and the EU cohesion policy still produces structural divergences (Bachtler and Ferry 2019). Therefore, the critical approach to the half-made cohesion policy goes through this paper, finally referring to the contrast between the theoretical innovations in the late 2010s and the missing actions to create the real preconditions for the upward convergence.

Again, no doubt that in the nineties this Western fallacy of the harmonious, self-reinforcing economic, social, and political developments worked as some kind of ideological drogue in the populations and intellectuals of the countries concerned. The Western fallacy had an effect of the "symbolical violence" by this simplified and over-promising narrative, hence there was no resistance against this false itinerary, only naïve dreams about the rapid and evolutionary Europeanization, though mainly the emerging comprador domestic elites benefited

4 The Copenhagen criteria contain (1) the political conditionalities: stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; (2) the economic conditionalities: existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; and (3) the acceptance of the Community *acquis*: ability to take on the obligations of membership, including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union.

from it. It would be high time to launch a serious discussion on whether ECE had had an opportunity at all for an alternative solution of the independent and sustainable development in the early years of systemic change. This historical moment passed, the Soviet rule collapsed in all ECE countries and later also in *Wider Europe*, so these defenceless countries received the common treatment of Europeanization through the dictate of Economic Europe, which turned out to be only a mirage of economic freedom.

Thus, the so-called democratic transition in the nineties had a dual face, namely the early Democratization in the nineties was a preparatory Europeanization only on the surface. In the depths of the Europeanization process the "marketization" of socio-economic processes was the return to the traditional dependency situation as some kind of De-Europeanization with its dire social consequences. First, in the nineties, the economic crisis produced only a "silent" and latent social crisis, since there was some kind of popular understanding that the new distortions would only be transitory and the legal-political transformations were in the focus of the popular attention and discourse. The social crisis, however, became "loud" and manifest in the next decade when it turned out that these distortions were not transitory at all, but they proved to be the basic features of the new socio-economic system. No doubt the EU leaders – and EU public opinion – sincerely believed that they had triggered an automatism of genuine Europeanization, yet this was not the case. The socio-economic mechanism was installed in the nineties, but its real nature with the detrimental workings had still not been recognized in the late 2010s by the ruling circles of the EU. They were shocked later by the negative political results of the socio--economic crisis in the 2010s, and still lack the time and energy to discover the original sin of introducing an unsustainable economy. Thus, the pre-accession period can be best characterized by the start of cumulated conflicts between the basic socio-economic, legal-political, and cultural-civilizational changes.[5]

First, as to the *socio-economic* Europeanization through a neoliberal hybrid, Jadwiga Staniszkis (1991) had already described this rising "political capitalism" in the early nineties. It is not just about the continuity of nomenclature with some mixture of old and new rulers, but also by pointing out that the new kinds of rulers were political and business actors at the same time in their tight politico-business networks (see also Stark, 1992, 1996). Similarly, the leading experts of ECE socio-economic history, Bohle and Greskovits (2019: 2–3) have characterized "the EU's neoliberal restructuring" in ECE as follows: "foreign rather than domestic companies were quickly occupying the commanding heights in the new capitalist system. Foreign penetration ran also deeper than in the other regions of the globe… transnational organizations also took over

5 This summary below in three points relies on my book, see e.g. (Ágh 2019a: 214–223), see also on the Tables in Ágh, 2019b, and Tables I–II attached to this paper the about the comparative ECE development.

the banking, energy and retail sectors, and even the media. All in all, what emerged in the East was dependent capitalism that differed significantly from its western counterpart." The ECE neoliberal hybrid emerging in the nineties was very different from the Western market economy and it was strengthened with the EU entry, and even more after the global crisis that has generated authoritarian reflexes in the new ECE elites: "The turbulence after 2008 exposed the drawbacks of dependency and launched a new era of hierarchical economic surveillance in the EU. It is against this background that some governments in the East and beyond have started to revolt against economic and political liberalism and embraced nationalism." Finally, ECE governments made a strict deal in the 2010s with the multinationals, in which the new authoritarian systems accepted the "low wage – low skill economy" in exchange for the support of these business giants in their Western governments in the conflict between ECE governments and EU authorities. This alliance is the "open secret" of the security of the authoritarian governments within the EU despite all the loud conflicts with EU authorities.[6]

In fact, the emergent semi-peripheral "low wage – low skill economy" has only appeared in the modern part of the dual economy with the strong ties to the world economy through the Western – mostly German – firms. The domestic part of the economy – above all the SMEs, small and middle size enterprises – has remained underdeveloped and isolated from the external modernization waves in this non-Western development. Accordingly, ECE society disintegrated in the nineties, and it has been gradually reintegrated later into this polarized economy with a growing gap between winners and losers, in which one third of the society has become much poorer as victims of this De-Europeanization. The social polarization has taken place not only vertically among the social strata, but also – and even deeper – horizontally, since the "West of the East" enjoyed some advantages of this Western economic penetration, while the "East of the East" suffered new disadvantages. Altogether, as an EPC expert analysis has pointed out, some modest quantitative catching up has taken place in GDP-based statistical terms, but no upward convergence can be seen in systemic terms. In general, in the late 2010s the divergence was so big among the old and new member states that "it seems as if Europeans are almost living on different planets" (Emmanouilidis 2018: 16).

Second, as to the *legal-political* Europeanization, after the rise of democratic order the weak and chaotic democracy was followed by illiberal, fake, or facade democracy, since the contrast between the Europeanization narrative and the naked reality has been even bigger in the ensuing political system than in the

6 Here I describe this first basic feature briefly relying on the theoretical essay of Bohle and Greskovits (2019), reflecting the lessons of 30/15 years. I focus later on the short presentation of the two other features, returning to them in the analysis of the recent developments in the 2010s.

new socio-economic structures described above. The normative power of the EU was still big in the nineties and the EU image was the center of gravity in all matters. Actually, when Economic Europe defeated Political Europe, the normative power of the EU eroded, since it works only if the official statements are followed with proper actions, otherwise it turns out to be empty rhetoric. From both the hardware side of political institutions and the software side of political culture, ECE citizens react to this contrast drastically that resulted in the systemic distrust in the "Europeanization for all" project and it led to a serious credibility crisis. This widening gap explains the political transformation in ECE from the software side, and the electoral success of the authoritarian forces in the early 2010s created a new autocratic institutional system from the hardware side. Accordingly, EU membership basically has two different periods, not only by the change of governments and/or the political course, but first of all in the relationship to the Europeanization and Democratization as the convergence with – or divergence from – the EU mainstream. It can be seen most clearly in the political transformations that Europeanization and Democratization has turned more and more to De-Europeanization and De-Democratization. Therefore, there are high expectations in ECE for the EU reforms towards Cohesive/Converging Europe in the new institutional cycle that could facilitate the deep domestic transformation as the return to Europeanization and Democratization based on the lessons of 30 years of failed systemic change and 15 years of half-made and conflictual EU integration.

Third, as to the *civilizational* Europeanization, the cultural-ideological change can be shown with the confrontation of two value system in the dominant – the Europe-centric Modernization and the Nation-centric Traditionalization – narratives. The first narrative was a simplified evolutionary or "linear transition" model of Westernization (Palonen 2018: 310) promising an easy Europeanization process with increasing democracy and welfare combined, but in fact with neoliberal modernization set in motion in the background with its distorted socio-political system building. The second one was an old domestic narrative in strong continuity with the resistance against Soviet rule oppressing national sovereignty and cultural traditions, and focusing on the restoration of national sovereignty-identity after the external "Easternization." The pro-EU Westernization narrative was based on combining general legal-political Europeanization with welfare-oriented socio-economic expectations. The Western fallacy meant an easy dream about copying the model of the developed countries by catching up quickly to the EU average. The nation-centric traditional narrative was based on the priority of national sovereignty in combination with restoring some kind of the historical continuity with its traditional value system. The historical trajectory of these dominant narratives shows that originally there was an elite consent and popular support behind the Europeanization project with a pro-European rhetoric, since the European narrative had high expectations and optimism, in which democracy was combined with welfare. However, in

the 2000s social security was put under strain and popular disappointment increased. Thus, the EU narrative declined gradually and evaporated in the 2010s, and finally it was replaced as the dominant narrative with the nation-centric, sovereigntist approach. This paper tries to show that the final result of the first 30 years of systemic change has been a cultural/civilizational Easternization or De-Europeanization of ECE populations.

The Bumpy Road from the EU accession to the global crisis (2004–2010)

The description of EU membership between 2004 and 2010 needs only be given a cursory view, since this analysis focuses on the present period between 2010 and 2019. The historical overview of membership has to start with the outlines of the external conditions because it is important to note that the 15 years of the pre-accession period (1989–2004) took place under much more favorable external conditions within the world system than the 15 years' period of membership (2004–2019), especially after the late 2000s when the disintegrating world order was overburdened with serious tensions and convulsions. Therefore, despite the cumulated problems discussed below, the early years of EU membership were still a relatively optimistic era in contemporary ECE history, although they were followed rather rapidly from the late 2000s by the painful years of global crisis with the ensuing domestic socio-economic and political crisis. Accordingly, the cycles of the Prodi Commission (1999–2004) during the accession negotiations and the Barroso I. Commission (2004–2009) in the first membership period were together an optimistic era, which switched suddenly to the era of increasing pessimism due to the radical crisis management. In the decomposition process of the former world order the EU leadership and the Core countries have neglected the special ECE crisis, resulting in the marginalization of ECE within the enlarged EU. Thus, the second membership period starting in the early 2010s has been under the conditions of the EU polycrisis in a changing world system and it has also been a period of deepening confrontation between ECE and EU authorities.

In the domestic processes, therefore, there has also been a clear contrast between the first period of membership with an intensive – but awkward – adjustment to the EU rules and the second period with a partial – but conflictual – adjustment. It gives a clear distinction between the Bumpy Road and the Rocky Road of Europeanization and Democratization that will be discussed in its main outlines. The entry in May 2004 was preceded by a referendum and followed immediately by the first EP election. This formal accession was vital from a legal vantage point, but in fact the actual accession as an adjustment process was long and gradual in all fields and it took place to some extent before the legal accession. Although the legal and political adjustment process was in-

deed intensive, the socio-economic process became more and more overloaded with the contradictions between the legal forms and their social content, or between the "official layer" of Europeanization on the surface and that of the real "everyday life" in the depths of society with increasing De-Europeanization. The ECE region in competitiveness terms was not really prepared for the EU membership, and the Copenhagen criteria have not been helpful to enhance the EU capacity either, therefore ECE during the 2000s reproduced its former historical peripheral status in a new form.

The ECE development trajectory showed from the very beginning that ECE did not really "return to Europe," but in fact it diverged in many ways from mainstream Europe. Although this serious divergence was realized on both sides of the political spectrum only belatedly as the "Fault Lines" of the EU have deepened (Wöhl et al. 2019). Even Habermas (1990a, 1990b) has argued that the historical events in ECE have been some kind of "repeating revolutions," i.e. covering the same Western road somewhat later. Similarly, both the EU leadership and ECE governments were flying blind, since the new member states remained a blind spot for the EU as to the regional specificities of their convergence process. Therefore, the internal challenge of the development could be described by overcoming this overgeneralized "liberalization" within the EU, in which the strong old and the weak new member states were supposed to compete under the same conditions as a "mission impossible." These fake equal conditions – called by Fritz Scharpf (2015) as a simple "judicial integration" by common legalities on the surface – have led to a Fragmented Europe (Emmanouilidis 2018) with a divergent social and political landscape. Indeed, this fetish of legal formalities, by neglecting their social preconditions and consequences, has produced many collateral damages and unwanted results, so this adjustment process worked for a while and has finally blown up under the pressure of the cumulated tensions.[7]

The basic fact is that in ECE in the 2000s – beneath the democratic surface of the legal-political institutions – the neoliberal socio-economic system was completed and consolidated. The new system was a dual economy with a polarized society that resulted by 2006 in a social deconsolidation and the eruption of political discontent, which has continued after 2010 in a gradual backsliding of democracy. In the 2000s there was already a growing gap between the modernized "big" economy, almost completely controlled by the multinationals, and the traditional "small" economy of SMEs, without any organic contact between them or having the tendency for the harmonization into one system of national economy. Similarly, the same growing gap as a "continental drift" appeared in the polarized society between the winners and losers. Paradoxically this dualism of two main strata of the rich upper third and the poor lower third of the

7 About the discussion of convergence process (see for instance Andor 2019; Bargaoanu and Volintiru 2019; Darvas 2019; Darvas et al. 2019).

population was reinforced by the "islands" of precariat in-between, moving up and down in full uncertainty. In the 2000s there was already a sharp contrast between the consolidation of the new dominant neoliberal economic system and the deconsolidation of the new polarized socio-political system with the ensuing volatile social policy of the weakening governments. In the "official" political system this produced a chaotic democracy with the increasing influence of the "informal" politico-business patronage networks beneath the surface, due to the missing separation between the sectors of economy and politics, i.e. between the private actors in business and the public actors in politics.

The deviation from the EU mainstream was considerable already in the 2000s as an unwanted and largely unnoticed divergence in terms of economic competitiveness and socio-political sustainability. The main test of divergence from the EU mainstream was legally joining the EU as a purely judicial integration, though not joining the new EU type of socio-economic development based on a knowledge society, since ECE was still focusing on the GDP-based quantitative development of the outgoing industrial society. The dual economy excluded the possibility of switching to qualitative development, since even the modernized part of the ECE economy tended towards the "low skill – low cost" dependent economy of multinationals. This peripheral development pattern did not demand structurally high social investments in education and health care, quite to the contrary, and, in addition, even the low-level human investments were radically reduced twice by the crisis management measures.

Hence, while *External* Europeanization as the legal face of all sectors was advancing through the institutional transfer with the basic constitutional changes and legal harmonization, *Internal* Europeanization as their social content was more and more in trouble due to declining social investment and political participation. In such a way the Europeanized political culture also lagged behind the formal-legal, institutional changes and the new democracy was already gradually emptied in the 2000s. The participation was low in all other respects of civic and public activities. Although at the formal-legal level there were some efforts for building a multilevel governance, but these weak structures became mere formalities, therefore the performance of governments was low and without meaningful public participation. A chaotic, weak democratic polity emerged, in which the new ruling class was sunken into an early socio-political senility, not realizing the radical changes in the world economy in the 2000s. They kept the outdated model of GDP-based development with the old type of economic growth and welfare instead of a model based on well-being and human investment. There was no effort to strategically plan for sustainability, since both the good governance in general and human or social investment in particular needs complexity management, well beyond the ruling capacity of this new polity.

Nevertheless, following the transformation crisis of the nineties, the economic growth returned in the early 2000s when EU accession took place. Af-

terwards, the latent accession crisis turned to the open post-accession crisis even before the eruption of the global crisis. Conversely, no solid Europeanized social structure emerged with a wide and stable middle class to serve as a social and civilizational base for the new democracy. Moreover, due to the global crisis the most painful crisis management program came in 2009–2010, in which the new fragile social structure suffered further decomposition and so did the democratic order. The subsequent austerity programs exhausted the population, causing wide disappointment and deep resentment, resulting in a fateful credibility crisis. In the fight of the two dominant narratives, the traditionalist-nativist narrative defeated the simplified, evolutionary, and linear Europeanization narrative. The ongoing desecuritization of society and the victory of the traditionalist narrative made the citizens defenceless against the aggressive neopopulism. As a result, the Bumpy Road of Europeanization and Democratization turned into a Rocky Road around 2010, and there was a sharp turn from Europeanization and Democratization to De-Europeanization and De-Democratization (see e.g. Daly 2019; Krastev and Holmes 2018; Lührmann and Lindberg 2019; Solska et al. 2018).

The Rocky Road of ECE from democracy to autocracy (2010–2019)

In the Europeanization as the accommodation to the "ever closer Union" or to the process of EU federalization, there are two opposite periods in ECE, and the turning point in the historical trajectory was in the early 2010s. Previously, the ECE governments and the political elites made large efforts to follow the adjustment process, although they underperformed to a great extent in this role and passively accepted the "policy taker" position in the EU. The new governments in turn basically diverted from the EU mainstream in the 2010s and have been deliberately looking for a confrontation with the EU in order to build up a new authoritarian system. They have opposed further federalization and propagated the idea of "Europe of the strong nation states" as their main slogan of De-Europeanization. In general, even if they cannot change the position of "policy taker" in the "freedom fight against Brussels," they have appeared more and more in the role of the "negative policy maker" by fervently opposing the policy reforms in the EU. Therefore, this adjustment path has turned from the former latent and unwanted divergence to the manifest and conscious divergence through a series of open conflicts. The short description of this ongoing *process* is an overview of the present *situation* in the EU-ECE relationship with the analysis of the priority issues.

The ranking institutes like V-Dem have applied "systemic perspective on democracy" (V-Dem 2019b: 4) by elaborating a comprehensive system of indicators. Hence, the overview of the de-Europeanized ECE needs a short analysis in its three key dimensions, covering the present political, socio-economic, and cultural-civilizational situation. It has to start with the politics, since politics

has been the main factor in all other transformations. A modern "cast-system" has emerged from above within a politically re-organized society. This distorted, deeply polarized socio-economic structure has led finally to a civilizational crisis, or a backsliding of civilization as the deprivation of the citizens from a proper European way of life. Basically, the qualitative catching up scenario has failed because the main factors of global competitiveness – the level of education and health care, R & D and innovation – have plummeted in ECE (WEF 2018, 2019).[8]

First, as the recent literature also argues (Mattlak et al. eds 2018), when analyzing the De-Europeanization of the *political* system, we have to change the vocabulary from the Western type of political science to the language of façade democracy, autocracy, or velvet dictatorship, given the fact that the original terms in the EU institutional transfer have lost their original meaning in ECE. This transformation of the key legal institutions into a democratic facade concerns all constitutional institutions (Bogdandy and Sonnevend 2015 and CoE 2018). The De-Europeanized political-administrative structure has also gradually embraced the meso-level institutions and actors. In most cases the leading representatives of interest organizations represent the interests of government versus their members, and the increasing part of the staff in state administration has been made similar to an army of loyal humanoid robots. The tringle of corruption, increasing socio-political inequality, and political overreach are the main characteristics of the new autocracy. Namely, there is state supported corruption from above, a politically arranged deep socio-economic polarization between winners and losers and a constant effort to occupy the entire political space to oppress the autonomy of all social and cultural fields. In the distortion of political system, the social desecuritization and/or fight against the external and internal "enemies" has been an important factor in the electoral success of neopopulist parties (see in general, Bernhard et al. 2019). The survival of the autocratic regimes in ECE has also been secured by conquering the communicative space in the 2010s with "a skewed media landscape where publicly funded media produce a discourse that paints the government as the guarantor of the national sovereignty and the opposition as the country's enemies" (Krakovsky 2019: XI). In the media capture the "private" property of oligarchs has been used for the "public" interests of the authoritarian government. Thus, the velvet dictatorship that has been supported and maintained to a great extent by the soft power of the media. The new authoritarian regimes have completed the colonization of citizens' everyday life by controlling the public space.[9]

8 See OECD (2019a, b), WJP (2019), and also (Darvas, 2019 and Darvas et al. 2019). Concerning the global competitiveness, the WEF data (WEF 2018, 2019) are the most indicative, but one has to note that WEF changed its scoring system in 2018, so the scores before 2018 give better overview.

9 See WJP, 2019 and EIU, 2019, also EC, 2019d with the EU Justice Scoreboard. The World Justice Report was published first in 2012 and its index structure was finally elaborated in the mid-2010s.

According to the World Justice Project the rule of law index has dropped in ECE. WJP has elaborated 8 specific indexes: (1) Constrains on Government Powers, (2) Absence of Corruption, (3) Open Government, (4) Fundamental Rights, (5) Order and Security, (6) Regulatory Enforcement, (7) Civil Justice and (8) Criminal Justice – and the composite index gives their summary, which reflects the decline of democracy in detail. The main issue is, however, the deepening confrontation between the EU and ECE due to the rule of law violations by the ECE governments. The worsening RL violations in Hungary and Poland have resulted in a political pressure on the EU and the demand has risen in EP to introduce an annual Democracy Report about all member states that has recently come back as a vital task for the new Commission. In a series of conflictual meetings, after the European Parliament and the Commission also the Council began to discuss the rule of law violations by the Hungarian and Polish governments. It has only been the first phase of a long procedure, so it will be on the EU agenda for a long time.[10]

Second, analyzing the De-Europeanization in the socio-economic development trajectory, it is important to switch from the Western model of sustainable economy and society to the vocabulary of an outdated and dependent post-industrial society. The ECE case has been based on a compromise of the neoliberal multinationals and domestic oligarchs producing a huge contrast between the quantitative and qualitative catching-up process, therefore the socio-economic processes have been closely interwoven with the cultural-civilizational decay discussed below. In the late 2010s there was a painful return to “normalcy” of economic growth after ten years of global crisis management with some kind of fragile socio-economic consolidation. But ECE nowadays is in a worse situation than it was a decade ago to alter its course from quantitative to qualitative catching up. This is due to the deterioration in the vital fields of investment in human and social capital and in R & D as innovation driven development (Eurofound 2018, 2019a, 2019b). The last decade presents a serious decline in the input side of the social investments of education, research, and health care because they have been chronically underfinanced. Moreover, they have been overburdened with the increasing governmental centralization, but even more on the output side of the decreasing performance level of human capacity and skills, cumulated as an educational decline. This presentation can be easily based on the Commission’s evaluation of the 2019 National Reform Programmes and 2019 Convergence Programmes of the ECE countries (see e.g. EC, 2019a), or on the latest OECD Reports (2019a, b). These EU and OECD documents directly uncover the painful reality, since the EU institutions are

10 In the long and open history of the rule of law violations it will be high on the agenda in the coming years. The rule of law violations have been the show case of the De-Europeanization and De-Democratization process, therefore a lot of attention has been paid to it within the EU (see e.g. some key documents EC, 2019a, 2019b; EP, 2020b and Helsinki Foundation 2019) and also in the international political science (see e.g. Bozóki and Hegedűs 2018, 2019a, b; Halmai 2019a, b; Muis and Troost 2018).

very cautious in their political assessments, but are rather open in criticizing the socio-economic issues due to the increasing social disinvestment in public services. All in all, the Core-Periphery Divide has increased in the last decade owing to the social disinvestment that has become the biggest obstacle to a sustainable economy, and the EU authorities have not been busy at all to discover its reasons and to elaborate a strategy to overcome it (Gorzelak 2019).

The Economist (2019) has strongly criticized not only "the patchy record on political reform" in ECE, but it has also pointed out the special external conditions of the relatively rapid economic growth referring also to the incoming limitations of the quantitative catching up process: "Four main external forces have driven the remarkable successes of the four extremely open V4 economies. The first is their access to generous subsidies from the EU, which make up a sizeable chunk of their respective national incomes. Second is the munificent flow of remittances from millions of expat V4 citizens who now live and work in the EU, especially in Germany, Austria or Britain. A benevolent recent economic environment has also helped, especially the success of the German economy, by far their most important trading partner and the biggest or second-biggest investor in each country. And lastly, the four all started from a low base, enabling them to serve as cheap workshops for more developed economies. The danger is that all four of these factors are now petering out." The recent analyses have underlined, indeed, the controversial character of the dependent development in ECE. In ECE there has been a widespread debate on the dubious German role in the "low wage – low skill" economy and the liaison between their multinationals and the domestic regimes. In the dependent, dual economy a polarized society has emerged between the political winners and losers, with the politico-business networks united into a patronage system of the ruling party. The political ties permeated all socio-economic relations and changed their internal logic when the "free" marked turned into a state-controlled market, therefore, the entire society has been permeated by hypocrisy. The latest YouGov survey gives a composite picture about the "doom and gloom" in ECE (see Bui-Wrzosinska 2019).[11]

Third, as to the ensuing civilizational-cultural development trajectory, we have to change the vocabulary again to contrast the description of the Western "post-materialist" well-being-type with that of the outdated ECE "materialist" welfare-type of universe to properly describe the huge gap between East and West in the way of life, public service systems, and patterns of political culture. The ECE governments have followed some kind of a "welfare strategy" instead of a "well-being strategy," since in the last years the personal income of the population has modestly increased, but since the early 2010s the resources for the public services in the GDP terms have drastically decreased. It can be contrasted as the "private" income versus the "social" income, or even as

11 On the German role see e.g. Book (2018), Kováts and Smejkalova (2019), Ozsvath (2019) and Fabry (2019).

"material" consumption versus "non-material," public or social consumption. Namely, in the socio-economic strategy people have been organized into a low-level consumption society by purchasing slightly more things "privately" on the market, but they have been mistreated more and more "publicly" by being deprived of public services – like education, health care, and social services (child care, old care and all kinds of social redistribution) – as social beings. As a result, the missing/declining public services have also become "privatized," i.e. proper services can only be reached from the private service firms. In this way the social polarization has been completed, since the large part of society could no longer afford these "normal" services in health care and education, not even in a "private" way. So on the surface there has been some kind of pseudo-Europeanization with a modest increase in the material consumption for the "private" individuals, but in the depth of the social transformation in the well-being terms there has been a De-Europeanization for the "social" beings. The decreasing level of health care, education, and social services for the majority of the ECE population has been largely documented in the EU and OECD reports.

The Eurofound documents have pointed out the organic links between the quality of society and the public services in the long series of the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) since 2003. The latest flagship report as the fourth EQLS report has emphasized that "the results present an uneven picture regarding service quality," namely "the continuing inequalities between countries and different social groups." Although it is a vital issue for all member states, since "Public services are recognised as a cornerstone of the European Pillar of Social Rights." In fact, the high quality and effective public services are the test for the substantive social inclusion and/or social cohesion instead of the formal-legal social inclusion, given the huge gap between the formal and real citizenship. Especially in the transition from the outgoing post-industrial society there has been an increasing demand for social investment in the human capacity building. Public service is not only as an administrative or moral issue, but "as a key factor in well-being and social cohesion" it is first of all a socio-economic issue of international competitiveness with its political consequences of support for and trust in the democratic system. All in all, "investment in human capital and capabilities throughout of life course is delivered through provision of quality services – childcare, education, preventive healthcare and social services" (Eurofound 2019d: 1, 3).

In this respect ECE is still at the "pre-accession stage," or what has been even worse, it has been backsliding not only in Democratization, but even more in the provision of quality public service by fatally damaging the Europeanization of ECE population (see e.g. Buljan et. al. 2019). This social disinvestment has produced a cultural-civilization crisis because of the drastic deterioration of the everyday lives of citizens in all dimensions. In the last ten years there has been a chaotic, unpredictable, and defective public service system in everyday life, so not only has the democracy been emptied at the macro-level, but the

human universe at the micro-level depriving the common people to develop a European capacity as a real, not only legal citizenship in the EU. Beyond the drastic "pauperization" of public services by offering poor service, the internal organization of public services has also been ineffective. Therefore, in search of a better quality of life, "these countries have been experiencing a mass population exodus. It is often the youngest, most educated, and most enterprising people who leave. Differences in living standards and salaries (which can be increased four- to tenfold just crossing over the border) incite these departures. Throughout Central and Eastern Europe, cumulative net migration over the last thirty years has exceeded 10% of the population" (Krakovsky 2019: III).

At the start of the Europeanization process there was a rather big "absolute" civilizational deficit between the developed Western member states and the new member states. With the EU entry, however, an increasing "relative" civilizational deficit has also emerged, measured in the composite terms way of life, quality of life, or well-being in the EU/OECD concept. There has been a growing gap between East and West as the delay of social and human capital investment compared to the new demands of EU membership can easily be concretized as the "subjective" challenge of international competitiveness. The ECE societies have tried to enhance their EU capacity, but in vain, but this gap has increased more in the last decade due to the systemic pauperization of public services, resulting in the systemic distrust in the "Return to Europe" scenario. Only one third of ECE citizens have crossed the border line between this outdated and defective universe of the late industrial society and the Europeanized way of life with some kind of a knowledge society. Another one third, the precariat, has been "nomadizing," moving back and forth between them or has taken refuge in the West: "if Europe does not come to us, we go to Europe." The lowest one third of the ECE population has been lost "for Europe" during the 30-year journey, and it suffers from several kinds of poverty with deep cultural deprivation that leads in most cases to the absolute civilizational deficit.[12]

All in all, the *relative* civilizational deficit, which has only been applicable for the upper two-thirds of the population, has significantly increased with a huge gap between the EU as "the lifestyle superpower" (Gill and Raiser 2011) and frustrated ECE citizens. Moreover, the cumulated *absolute* civilizational deficit in the one-third of the population is even worse than it was 30 years ago due to the drastic De-Europeanization in the ECE periphery that have been "falling out of Europe." Here the analyses of the socio-economic distortions of dependent development have come back with a vengeance in their heavy cultural consequences that in turn deteriorate the economic development in the era of

12 This controversial and polarized "cultural-educational" Europeanization of manpower has been largely documented by the annual EU and OECD Reports quoted above (see also Dauderstädt and Keltek 2017; Dauderstädt 2019a, b).

knowledge-based societies. All in all, the socio-economic, legal-political, and cultural-civilizational development path shows the deep divide between the External and Internal Europeanization in all fields, resulting in a massive De-Europeanization, i.e. developing only a thin and controversial European façade of ECE society. In fact, after 15 years of membership there is a huge and growing contrast between the half-made Europeanized part on the winner side and the gloomy De-Europeanized one on the loser side, combined into a frustrated and unhappy country. Altogether, in a birds' eye view, the fragmented society has produced cumulated systemic incompatibility into a sustainable society for an upward convergence in the EU. From the governance side it has been the result of the missing complexity management and the counterproductive political measures with collateral damages among the various policy fields.

Conclusion: The "love-hate" relations of ECE with the EU

The historical trajectory of the relationship between ECE and the EU can be best summarized as some kind of often slightly changing love-hate relationship with the EU, since this long-lasting commitment combined with bitter historical resentment has been a much more complicated issue than the level of support for EU membership according the Eurobarometer data. Its basic contradiction can be explained through the Eastonian terms of diffuse versus specific support. Diffuse support is an enduring support for the political regime in general, originating from the socialization and connected with general values and attitudes, whereas specific support depends on the actual performance of the given government and other organizations in their particular policy fields. In the Europeanization and Democratization in the last decades we have witnessed a big gap between diffuse and specific support, namely between the support for Europeanization in general and the dissatisfaction with some specific EU policies in particular, as well as between the support of Democratization in general and the growing distrust in the workings of democratic institutions in particular. The enduring general-symbolic support for the EU has been accompanied on the other side by strong criticisms by ECE citizens about particular EU policies with their ups and downs. Similarly, the support for democracy as a system in general and the dissatisfaction with democratic performance of the given government in particular shows the same dualism. Moreover, in both cases in the ECE populations there is a large variety of cognitive dissonance between/among the support for the different policy fields.[13]

Although this construct of diffuse and-specific support seems to work in the ECE analysis, the twin processes of Europeanization and Democratization

13 I have dealt with this issue much more in details in my recent book, including the Yalta syndrome in ECE, i.e. the feeling being abandoned by the West in the crucial periods of their history, like after the WWII and in the global crisis management (see e.g. Ágh, 2019a: 131–132).

have still a rather different historical trajectory. ”Europe” has been the basic normative concept, being the real anchor for the ECE populations in the last centuries, whereas the building of the democratic order as the full democratization of the entire society is a relatively new historical project. This current image of democracy has been eroded to a great extent by the practice of chaotic democracy before 2010 and even more by façade democracy afterwards. Therefore, even the diffuse support for democratic system has been somewhat weakened due to the cumulated effects of the low democratic performance, when the centuries-long feeling of belonging to Europe cannot be hurt deeply by any special confrontation. Hence, the diffuse support for democracy has only decreased during the troubled history of the last 30 years, but not for Europe, since Europe has remained the sacrosanct value.[14]

Thus, the support for domestic democracy has usually been lower than that for the EU, due to the inherent democracy deficit from the very beginning of systemic change. As a result of the tension between the formal and informal institutions, or between the hard institutional and the soft cultural factors, the original naïve expectations with systemic trust in Democratization has turned into bitter systemic distrust in the political order at the national level. The trust gap between the EU and the national level, or between the EU institutions and domestic institutions can also be explained by Easton’s thesis on diffuse and specific support. Diffuse support or trust in the EU institutions may change slightly from time to time, but it has remained within a constant positive trend. Specific support or trust in the domestic institutions, above all in the governments concerned, however, has been drastically changing in ECE. It has been fallen due to the growing social and civilizational polarization, the poor governance, and the huge gap between the official promises and the dire realities. In general, the perception of population is that there has been no “deep ploughing” as a profound democratization of the political system, just formal changes on the surface, turning from bad to worse in the 2010s. This has caused a deep resentment, therefore “the past defeated the future.” Namely the “Great History that Never Was” narrative elaborated by neopopulist forces defeated the naive European narrative of “Illusory Future that Never Comes,” promised originally by pro-European forces. Thus, the neopopulist project of the search for national identity/sovereignty based on the glorious past has become a refuge for the pains of the present for ECE populations obscuring their future.[15]

14 It can be seen both in the comparative ECE overview (Table I) with the latest Eurobarometer results (EB, Eurobarometer 2019a, b; see also EB, Eurobarometer 2019c, d). The Pew Surveys 2019a, b) have also confirmed the strong attachment of ECE to EU-Europe, despite the controversies in policy matters, above all concerning the refugee crisis.

15 The politics of historical memory has become a common practice of the changing governments in ECE, analysed in a huge literature, but is goes beyond the scope of this paper.

As to the expectations for the next EU institutional cycle (2019–2024) only a very cautious optimism is allowed, since the EU has not yet developed any feeling for the regional or country specifics, and ECE countries have remained a Blind Spot for the Core. The EU workings have been based on the developed countries where the "normalcy" mentality emerged in the post-war "golden" decades building a solid base of welfare, representative democracy, and a strong civil society. In this spirit, "The founding fathers of the European project were convinced that social convergence will arise spontaneously through economic convergence" (Eurofound 2018: 6). Hence, its logic originally tilted very much in favor of Economic Europe with drastic preferences for neoliberalism, accompanied by modest compensations of Social Europe and supported by Political Europe. Although this "normal" world of welfare society has mostly been shaken even in the developed countries in the following decades, but it has been transformed there into a well-being society. Hence, the idea of automatism between the introduction of "market economy" and the emergence of "democratic politics" has still remained evident in the EU circles of the developed member states. In this spirit they have elaborated the conditionalities for the Eastern enlargement and have adjusted the "differentiated integration" from time to time. They have not considered at all that "Some wealthier Member States or regions may benefit more than others from the process of integration – in part due to the effects of specialisation and of centre–periphery dichotomies" (Eurofound 2018: 5). Thus, this false functionalist construction has been extended beyond the Core to the Periphery as an expectation for the rapid democratization of ECE without its socio-economic foundation.

This attitude with the high expectation for the illusory organizing principle of "spill-over" has not changed in the process of Eastern enlargement despite the series of "spill-back" effects. It has not been regionally specified even in the several stages of the Copenhagen learning process with the long debates about the "differentiated integration" (see EP 2018 or e.g. Schimmelfennig and Winzen 2017). The slower steps were allowed in this approach, but the basic automatism between the economic growth in the GDP terms and the sustainable democratization has remained the main expectation despite the lessons learned about the negative spill-over and its collateral damages. The EU strategic thinking has kept its top-down model of the overgeneralized formal-legal rules and models elaborated as an oversimplified functionalism that has caused a failure of cohesion policy not leading to the "upward convergence" at all (Bachtler and Ferry, 2019 and Hunter, 2019). Namely, "Critics underlined the lack of explanation provided by the neo-functionalist literature with regards to the ways and modalities through which the process would take form, and the almost faith-like assumption political spill-overs would eventually take place" (Bevaqua 2019: 21). This may run into the danger of the two-speed EU scenario for the 2020s, putting all ECE into a Deepfreeze because it has always been easy to find important

reasons why not to deal with the specific crisis in ECE due to the permanent urgency of many vital issues for the Core. Nowadays there is indeed a drastic transition from the Old World Order to the New World Order with the deep desecuritization of the international relations on one side and the need which has emerged for the reorientation of the EU funds to the new policy fields to increase the global competitiveness of the EU on the other. This paper has tried to document that there has been a huge and alarming literature on the failure of the upward convergence in ECE in vain because the EU follows its "business as usual" course and has not invited the "audiatur et altera pars" solution.

The continued benign neglectence as a functionalist "modernization" EU strategy is possible in mid-term, since the economic importance of ECE countries is small, they give much less than 10% of the EU GDP. So the new institutional cycle can accelerate the EU economic development at the price of the further polarization within the EU in all respects. This can be legitimized, indeed, by arguing for the populations of the Core countries with the justification that ECE countries have misused the EU transfers. At least they have not used them efficiently and a significant percentage has disappeared in the corruptive politico-business networks as the power pyramids of the ECE governments. In this situation there are two options, either talks by referring to this justified criticism, while neglecting the special regional approach for ECE, or starting strategic actions for reforming the "upward convergence" project in all member states. Moreover, the EU's strong confrontation with the corrupt policies of the autocratic regimes may also give encouragement also to the domestic democratic forces. When the danger of the world economic recession has been widely discussed in the global media, an easy escape has been offered for the new EU leadership to again delay this confrontation with the new authoritarian systems, but only at its own peril because this crisis in the EU periphery will come back with a vengeance after five years in the next institutional cycle at a higher level.[16]

The new EU leadership has obviously recognized that this form of Eastern enlargement so far has been a failure and it cannot be continued as expected in the 2000s, although the EU ruling circles and main powers have not yet recognized that the real solution would be the deep reform of the Core-Periphery relations with a renewed enlargement strategy in ECE based on its regional specificities. However, there is a big historical opportunity, since on 9 May 2020, according to the interinstitutional agreement, a two-year negotiation process starts with the participation of the Council, Commission, and European Parliament at a Conference on the Future of Europe (EP 2020a) that gives some optimism

16 In the late 2019 the crisis around the Eastern enlargement in the West Balkans was high on the political agenda of the EU (see e.g. EC 2019c, or Blockmans 2019 and Góra et al. 2019), but this issue is beyond the scope of this paper.

on the EU side. At the same time, as reported in the international media (see e.g. Hopkins and Shotter 2019 in the Financial Times), the Alliance of the Free Cities between the V4 capitals has been organized against the authoritarian ECE governments that indicates the emerging redemocratization wave on the ECE side. With the incoming new Commission, and with the serious task of the repeated global crisis management after the global financial crisis, a new institutional cycle has also begun in the ECE history in the EU, its analysis with the new hopes in redemocratization is already the job of the next paper.

Table I: EU landscape in a comparative view of the ECE citizens
(positive-negative views in the early 2019 and in the late 2019)

Country	IM	TR	SD	MV	FE	EC	EM
CZ	29–27	36–55	54–38	37–56	54–43	58–41	26–67
HU	52–11	55–40	63–31	55–42	68–28	84–15	57–17
PL	54–7	54–35	70–18	69–24	74–18	84–14	35–55
SI	44–15	45–50	56–39	55–40	69–28	77–23	88–9
SK	36–15	44–46	56–34	61–30	70–27	80–18	77–14
EU28	45–17	44–46	55–36	56–39	61–14	73–26	62–30

Country	IM	TR	SD	MV	FE	EC	EM
CZ	31–24	39–52	56–38	32–63	67–28–	65–35	27–68
HU	53–10	52–39	61–31	51–47	75–21	80–19	60–30
PL	50–9	49–37	67–22	56–38	80–15	81–17	33–51
SI	44–16	46–48	54–41	49–47	62–34	76–24	87–9
SK	33–12	45–44	50–41	49–46	73–20	79–19	81–10
EU28	42–20	43–47	52–40	45–50	70–24	70–29	62–29

IM – image of the EU, TR –trust in the EU, SD – satisfaction with the EU democracy, MV – my voice counts, FE – future of EU (2019a) and Europe voice counts in the world (2019b), EC – European citizenship, EM – Economic and Monetary Union.

EB (2019a) Standard Eurobarometer 91, August 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/index#p=1&instruments=STANDARD

EB (2019b) Standard Eurobarometer 92, November 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/2255

Table II: The rankings of political and policy performance in 7 NMS out of the 41 states in the OECD and EU

Country	Dem	Gov	Acc	Cap	Pcy	Ecp	Sop	Enp
BG	36	36	30	36	32	15	40	34
CZ	20	27	15	30	17	16	22	20
HU	40	37	40	35	34	18	38	37
PL	37	34	31	32	31	34	31	27
RO	38	40	38	40	36	22	39	38
SI	16	31	23	38	20	12	17	31
SK	27	35	32	34	29	19	32	33

Dem – democracy, Gov – governance, Acc – accountability, Cap – executive capacity, Pcy – policy performance in general, Ecp – economic policy, Sop – social policy and Enp – environmental policy

Bertelsmann Foundation (2019b) Policy Performance and Governance Capacities in the OECD and EU: Sustainable Governance Indicators 2018, https://news.sgi-network.org/uploads/tx_amsgistudies/SGI-2018-Englisch.pdf

References

Andor, László (2019): Fifteen Years of Convergence: East-West Imbalance and What the EU Should Do About it, *Intereconomics* 54(1): 18–23: available at https://archive.intereconomics.eu/year/2019/1/fifteen-years-of-convergence-east-west-imbalance-and-what-the-eu-should--do-about-it/ (1 July 2020).

Ágh, Attila (2019a): *Declining Democracy in East-Central Europe: The Divide in the EU and Emerging Hard Populism*, Edward Elgar: Cheltenham UK and Northampton, MA, USA, p. 320.

Ágh, Attila (2019b): Online Appendix Tables for the book of "Declining democracy in East-Central Europe," Research Gate: available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333395224_Agh_Online_Appendix_Tables_for_the_book_of_Declining_democracy_in_East-Central_Europe, DOI: 10.13140/RG.2. 2. 29921.97124 (1 July 2020).

Ágh, Attila (2019c): The neoliberal hybrid in East-Central Europe: The 'treason of intellectuals' and its current re-assessment. *Politics in Central Europe* 15(3): 355–381.

Ágh, Attila (2020): The Bumpy Road of the ECE region in the EU: Successes and failures in the first fifteen years. *Journal of Comparative Politics* 13(1): 23–45.

Bachtler, John and Martin Ferry (2019): Cohesion policy in Central and Eastern Europe: is it fit for purpose? in Gorzelak (ed.) 313–342.

Bargaoanu, Alina and Clara Volintiru (2019): How the EU can prevent an east-west divide between its members, *Social Europe*, 14 May 2019: available at https://www.socialeurope.eu/eu-can-prevent-an-east-west-divide (1 July 2020).

Bernhard, Michael, Amanda Edgell and Staffan Lindberg (2019): Institutionalising electoral uncertainty and authoritarian regime survival. *European Journal of Political Research*, 1–23, Doi: 10.1111/1475-6765.12355: available at https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/1475-6765.12355 (1 July 2020).

Bertelsmann Foundation (2019): Policy Performance and Governance Capacities in the OECD and EU: Sustainable Governance Indicators 2018: available at https://news.sgi-network.org/uploads/tx_amsgistudies/SGI-2018-Englisch.pdf (1 July 2020).

Bevaqua, Davide (2019): Democratic Backsliding in Poland: Domestic and EU implications, Research Gate: available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337186729_Democratic_Backsliding_in_Poland_Domestic_and_EU_Implications/references (1 July 2020).

Bieber, Florian, Magdalena Solska and Dane Taleski (eds) (2019): *Illiberal and authoritarian tendencies in Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe*, Peter Lang Publisher, p. 367. Doi: 10.3726/b10585.

Blockmans, Steven (2019): The Eastern Partnership at 10, CEPS, 9 May 2019: available at https://www.ceps.eu/system/files/SB_Eastern%20Partnership%4010.pdf (1 July 2020).

Bogdandy, Armin von and Pál Sonnevend (2015): *Constitutional Crisis in the European Constitutional Area: Theory, Law and Politics in Hungary and Romania*, Hart Publishing, p. 390.

Bohle, Dorothee and Béla Greskovits (2019): Staring through the mocking glass: three misconceptions of the east-west divide since 1989, *Eurozine*: available at https://www.eurozine.com/staring-through-the-mocking-glass/ (1 July 2020).

Book, Simon (2018): German Mittelstand reaps dividend of Eastern European autocracy, *Handelsblatt*, 9 February 2018: available at https://global.handelsblatt.com/companies/for-german-business-eastern-europe-autocracy-pays-dividends-881082 (1 July 2020).

Bozóki, András and Dániel Hegedűs (2019): Democracy, Dictatorship and Hybrid Regimes: Concept and Approaches, in Bieber et al. (eds), 21–49.

Bui-Wrzosinska, Lan (2019): States of Change: Attitudes in East and Central Europe 30 Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall, *Open Society*: available at https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/publications/states-of-change-attitudes-in-central-and-eastern-europe-30-years-after-the-fall-of-the-berlin-wall (1 July 2020).

Buljan, Antonija et al. (2019): Determinants of public health care, education and administration efficiency in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe, *Croatian and Comparative Public Administration* 19(4): available at https://ccpa-journal.eu/index.php/ccpa/article/view/56/37 (1 July 2020).

CoE, Council of Europe (2018): State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, Report by the Secretary General: available at https://rm.coe.int/state-of-democracy-human-rights-and-the-rule-of-law-role-of-institutio/168086c0c5 (1 July 2020).

Dahrendorf, Ralf (1990): *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe*, London: Chatto & Windus, p. 154.

Daly, Tom Gerald (2019): Democratic Decay: Conceptualising an Emerging Research Field. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law* 11(9): 9–36.

Darvas, Zsolt (2019): EU enlargement 15th anniversary: Upward steps on the income ladder, Bruegel, 30 April 2019: available at http://bruegel.org/2019/04/eu-enlargement-15th-anniversary--upward-steps-on-the-income-ladder/ (1 July 2020).

Darvas, Zsolt, Jan Mazza and Catarina Midoes (2019): How to improve European cohesion policy for the next decade, *Bruegel*: available at http://bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PC-08_2019.pdf (1 July 2020).

Dauderstädt, Michael (2019a): European Cohesion: Progress at a Snail's Pace, *FES*: available at http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/15606.pdf (1 July 2020).

Dauderstädt, Michael (2019b): Inequality in Europe – wider than it looks, *Social Europe*: available at https://www.socialeurope.eu/inequality-in-europe-wider-than-it-looks (1 July 2020).

Dauderstädt, Michael and Cem Keltek (2017): Poverty and Inequality in Europe, *FES*: available at http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id/ipa/14944.pdf (1 July 2020).

EB (2019a): Standard Eurobarometer 91, August 2019: available at https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/index#p=1 & instruments=STANDARD (1 July 2020).

EB (2019b): Standard Eurobarometer 92, November 2019: available at https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKy/2255 (1 July 2020).

EB (2019c): Eurobarometer 91.5, The 2019 post-electoral survey: Have European elections entered a new dimension? available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/hu/be-heard/eurobarometer/2019-european-elections-entered-a-new-dimension (1 July 2020).

EB (2019d): Flash Eurobarometer Emotions and political engagement towards the EU: available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/be-heard/eurobarometer/2019/emotions-and-political-engagement-towards-the-eu/report/en-flash-2019.pdf (1 July 2020).

EC, European Commission (1997): Agenda 2000 – For a stronger and wider Europe: available at https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/sites/agriculture/files/cap-history/agenda-2000/com97-2000_en.pdf (1 July 2020).

EC, European Commission (2019a): *Council Recommendation on the 2019 National Reform Programme of Hungary*, Brussels, 5. 6. 2019, COM(2019)517 final: available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0517 & from=EN (1 July 2020).

EC, European Commission (2019b): Strengthening the rule of law within the Union: available at https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2019/EN/COM-2019-343-F1-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF (1 July 2020).

EC, European Commission (2019c): Communication on EU Enlargement Policy: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-communication--on-eu-enlargement-policy.pdf (1 July 2020).

EC, European Commission (2019d): EU Justice Scoreboard 2019: available at https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/justice_scoreboard_2019_en.pdf (1 July 2020).

EIU, Economist Intelligence Unit (2019) *Democracy Index 2018: Me too? Political participation, protest and democracy*: available at http://www.eiu.com/Handlers/WhitepaperHandler.ashx?fi=Democracy_Index_2018.pdf & mode=wp & campaignid=Democracy2018 (1 July 2020).

Emmanouilidis, Janis (2018): "'The need to 'Re-unite Europe', Post-Summit Analysis," *EPC*: available at http://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_8909_post-summit_analysis.pdf?doc_id=2088 (1 July 2020).

EP, European Parliament (2018): Report on differentiated integration, 27. 11. 2018: available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2018-0402_EN.pdf (1 July 2020).

EP, European Parliament (2020a): European Parliament motion for a resolution on the Conference on the Future of Europe, 9 January 2020: available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/B-9-2020-0036_EN.pdf (1 July 2020).

EP, European Parliament (2020b): European Parliament resolution on 16 January 2020 on ongoing hearings under Article 7(1) regarding Poland and Hungary: available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0014_EN.pdf (1 July 2020).

Eurofound (2018): Upward convergence in the EU: available at https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2018/upward-convergence-in-the-eu-concepts-measurements-and--indicators (1 July 2020).

Eurofound (2019a): Living and working in Europe, 2015–2019: available at https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef19056en.pdf (1 July 2020).

Eurofound (2019b): Life and society in the EU candidate countries: available at https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef18032en.pdf (1 July 2020).

Eurofound (2019c): Challenges and prospects in the EU: Quality of life and public services: available at https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/flagship-report/2019/challenges--and-prospects-in-the-eu-quality-of-life-and-public-services (1 July 2020).

Fabry, Adam (2019): *The Political Economy of Hungary: From State Capitalism to Authoritarian Neoliberalism*, Palgrave-Macmillan, p. 170.

FH, Freedom House (2019): *Freedom in the World 2019, Democracy in Retreat*: available at https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2019 (1 July 2020).

Gill, Indermit and Martin Raiser (2011): *Golden Growth: Restoring the lustre of the European economic model* (Short summary of the WB book): available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265360466_Restoring_the_lustre_of_the_European_economic_model_Overview (1 July 2020).

Góra, Magdalena, Natasza Styczynka and Marcin Zubek (eds) (2019): *Contestation of EU Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy*, Copenhagen: Djøf Forlag, p. 290.

Gorzelak, Grzegorz (ed.) (2019): *Social and Economic Development in Central and Eastern Europe: Stability and Change after 1990*, Routledge, p. 372.

Habermas, Jürgen (1990a): What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left. *New Left Review*, 183 (September–October 1990)

Jürgen Habermas, Jürgen (1990b): *Die Nachholende Revolution,* Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Halmai, Gábor (2019a): Populism, authoritarianism and constitutionalism, *German Law Journal* 20: 296–313, Doi: 10.1017/glj.2019. 23.

Halmai, Gábor (2019b): Illiberalism in East-Central Europe, *EIU Working Papers*: available at https://www.academia.edu/40913223/Illiberalism_in_East-Central_Europe?auto=download (1 July 2020).

Havlik, Vlastimil and Vera Stojarová (2018): Different faces of illiberal party politics in Central and Eastern Europe, 313–342, in Magdalena Solska et al. (eds): available at https://www.academia.edu/40202410/Different_Faces_of_Illiberal_Party_Politics_in_Central_and_Eastern_Europe?auto=download (1 July 2020).

Hegedűs, Daniel (2018): Responding illiberal democracies: shrinking space for human rights in the EU: in Muis and Troost (eds), 57–66.

Hegedűs, Dániel (2019a): What role for EU institutions in confronting Europe's democracy and rule of law crisis, German Marshall Fund: available at http://www.gmfus.org/file/26982/download (1 July 2020).

Hegedűs, Dániel (2019b): Berlin Neglects East-Central Europe at its Own Peril, *German Marshall Fund, 10 July 2019*: available at http://www.gmfus.org/blog/2019/07/10/berlins-neglects-east-central-europe-its-own-peril (1 July 2020).

Helsinki Foundation (2019): Opinion on "Further strengthening the Rule of Law within the Union," Budapest and Warsaw, 4 June 2019: available at https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HFHR-HHC-Response-to-EC-RoL-Comm-7-June-2019_fnl.pdf (1 July 2020).

Hopkins, Valerie and James Shotter (2019): Liberal mayors from Visegrad Four unite to defy own governments, Financial Times, 16 December 2019: available at https://www.ft.com/content/e9128e40-1d72-11ea-97df-cc63de1d73f4 (1 July 2020).

Huguenot-Noel, Robin et al. (2018): Future links between structural reforms and EU cohesion policy, European Parliament, Research for REGI Committee: available at https://wms.flexious.be/editor/plugins/imagemanager/content/2140/PDF/181018_Strengtheningcohesion_EPResearch_FZ.pdf (1 July 2020).

Hunter, Alison (2019): From mission letter to mission impossible: Can a top-down approach to 'Cohesion and Reforms' really deliver? *EPC*: available at https://www.epc.eu/en/Publications/From-mission-letter-to-mission-impossible-Can-a-top-down-approach-to~2990a0 (1 July 2020).

IDEA (2019): The Global State of Democracy 2019 Report: available at https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/the-global-state-of-democracy-2019.pdf (1 July 2020).

Kováts, Eszter and Katerina Smejkalova (2019): The EU's ongoing East-West divide: How the West's economic exploitation and moral arrogance fuel right-wing populism in East-Central Europe, IPS, 03. 07. 2019: available at https://www.ips-journal.eu/regions/europe/article/show/the-eus-ongoing-east-west-divide-3575/ (1 July 2020).

Krakovsky, Roman (2019): "Illiberal democracies in Central Europe, *Études*, No. 4: available at https://www.cairn-int.info/article-E_ETU_4259_0009--illiberal-democracies-in-centraleurope.htm (1 July 2020).

Krastev, Ivan and Steven Holmes (2018): Explaining Eastern Europe: Imitation and Its Discontents. *Journal of Democracy* 29(3): 117–128: available at https://www.journalofdemocracy.org/articles/explaining-eastern-europe-imitation-and-its-discontents-2/ (1 July 2020).

Lührmann, Anna and Staffan I. Lindberg (2019): A third wave of autocratization is here: what is new about it? *Democratization* 26(7): 1095–1113. DOI: 10.1080/13510347.2019.1582029.

Mason, Paul (2020): Leaving Europe, *IPS*, 13. 01. 2020: available at https://www.ips-journal.eu/regions/europe/article/show/leaving-europe-3992/ (1 July 2020).

Matlak, Michal, Frank Schimmelfennig and Tomasz Wozniakowski (eds): (2018) *Europeanization Revisited: Central and Eastern Europe in the European Union*, European University Institute: available at http://www.tepsa.eu/europeanization-revisited-central-and-eastern-europe-in--the-european-union-michal-matlak-frank-schimmelfennig-tomasz-wozniakowski-robert--schuman-centre-for-advanced-studies-european-univers/ (1 July 2020).

Muis, Arne and Lars van Troost (eds) (2018): *Will human rights survive illiberal democracy?* Strategic Studies, Amnesty International Netherlands, p. 97: available at https://www.amnesty.nl/content/uploads/2015/10/illiberal-democracy-PDF-20mrt.pdf (1 July 2020).

OECD (2019a): Under Pressure: The Squeezed Middle Class: available at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/under-pressure-the-squeezed-middle-class_689afed1-en#page1 (1 July 2020).

OECD (2019b): A Broken Social Elevator? How to Promote Social Mobility: available at https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/broken-elevator-how-to-promote-social--mobility_9789264301085-en#page1 (1 July 2020).

OLAF (2019): Anti-fraud report 2018: available at https://ec.europa.eu/anti-fraud/sites/antifraud/files/olaf_report_2018_en.pdf (1 July 2020).

Ozsvath, Stephan (2019): Hungary rolls out red carpet for German carmakers, *Deutsche Welle*, 07. 08. 2018: available at https://www.dw.com/en/hungary-rolls-out-red-carpet-for-german--carmakers/a-44983495 (1 July 2020).

Palonen, Emilia (2018): Performing the nation: the Janus-faced populist foundations of illiberalism in Hungary. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 26(3): 308–321, DOI: 10.1080/14782804.2018.1498776: available at https://www.academia.edu/38143090/Performing_the_nation_the_Janus_faced_populist_foundations_of_illiberalism_in_Hungary?auto=download (1 July 2020).

Papadia, Francesco and Leonardo Cadamuro (2020): Marker versus policy Europeanization: has an imbalance grown over time? *Bruegel, Policy Contribution*: available at https://bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/PC-01_2020-final-Papadia-Cadamuro.pdf (1 July 2020).

Pew Survey by David Kent (2019a): The countries where people are most dissatisfied with how democracy is working, 11 May 2019: available at https://www.pewresearch.org/fact--tank/2019/05/31/the-countries-where-people-are-most-dissatisfied-with-how-democracy--is-working/ (1 July 2020).

Pew Survey by Richard Wike et al. (2019b): European Public Opinion Three Decades After the Fall of Communism: available at https://www.pewresearch.org/global/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/Pew-Research-Center-Value-of-Europe-report-FINAL-UPDATED.pdf (1 July 2020).

Scharpf, Fritz (2015): After the Crash: A perspective on Multilevel European Democracy. *European Law Journal* 21(3): 384–403.

Schimmelfennig, Frank and Thomas Winzen (2017): Eastern enlargement and differentiated integration: towards normalization. *Journal of European Public Policy* 24(2): 239–258.

Schweiger, Christian and Anna Visvizi (eds) (2018): *Central and Eastern Europe in the EU*, London: Routledge, p. 218.

Solska, Magdalena, Florian Bieber and Dane Taleski (eds) (2018): *Illiberal and authoritarian tendencies in Central, Southeastern and Eastern Europe*, Bern: Peter Lang: available at https://www.academia.edu/40202410/Different_Faces_of_Illiberal_Party_Politics_in_Central_and_Eastern_Europe?auto=download (1 July 2020).

Staniszkis, Jadwiga (1991): *The Dynamics of the Breakthrough in Eastern Europe: The Polish Experience*, Berkeley: University of California Press: available at http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft4g50067w/ (1 July 2020).

Stark, David (1992): Path Dependence and Privatization Strategies in East Central Europe, *East European Politics and Society* 6(1): 17–54.

Stark, David (1996): Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism. *American Journal of Sociology* 101(4):. 993–1027.

Tang, Helena (ed.) (2000): *Winners and Losers of EU Integration: Policy Issues for Central and Eastern Europe*, The World Bank, Washington D.C., p. 326.

The Economist (2019): The Visegrad Four: Can the good run of central Europe's economies last?, 24 October 2019: available at https://www.economist.com/europe/2019/10/24/can-the-good-run-of-central-europes-economies-last (1 July 2020).

V-Dem (2019a): Democracy Report 2019: available at https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/99/de/99dedd73-f8bc-484c-8b91-44ba601b6e6b/v-dem_democracy_report_2019.pdf (1 July 2020).

V-Dem (2019b): Annals of Comparative Democratization 2019: available at https://gallery.mailchimp.com/195d6bf7bad75a3ef81189778/files/ (1 July 2020).

WEF, World Economic Forum (2018): Global Competitiveness Report 2017–2018: available at https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2017-2018 (1 July 2020).

WEF, World Economic Forum (2019): Global Competitiveness Report 2019: available at https://www.weforum.org/reports/how-to-end-a-decade-of-lost-productivity-growth (1 July 2020).

WJP, World Justice Project (2019): Rule of Law Index 2019: available at https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/WJP-ROLI-2019-Single%20Page%20View-Reduced.pdf (1 July 2020).

Wöhl, Stefanie et al. (eds) (2019): *The State of the European Union 2019: Fault Lines in European Integration*, Springer VS, p. 274: available at http://digamo.free.fr/stefaniewohl2019.pdf (1 July 2020).

***Attila Ágh** is a Professor Emeritus in the Political Science Department at the Budapest Corvinus University. He was the founder and the former Head of Department of Political Science at this University, the Director of the Research Centre "Together for Europe" and also the President of the Central European Political Science As-*

sociation (CEPSA). He was a visiting professor at many universities from Aarhus to Vienna, and also from New Delhi to Los Angeles. His major research interest is comparative politics with special regard to the EU developments, focusing the Europeanization and Democratization in the New Member States. He has published more than twenty books and dozens of papers in the international journals. Email: attila.agh@chello.hu.

25 years later – Austria's shift to the populist right: national characteristics of a pan-European trend

KARIN LIEBHART

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0024

Abstract: *The year 1995 rather coincidentally tags both the foundation of the Central European Political Science Association and the accedence of Austria, one of its founding members, to the European Union. Austria has particularly benefitted from its membership and the following EU enlargement rounds which also welcomed the other CEPSA members to the club. However, it seems that these advantages have not yet been fully appreciated, neither by a significant part of the political elite nor by the majority of the Austrian population. Increasing Euroscepticism and EU bashing can be observed during the last two and a half decades. The rise of the populist far-right, EU-hostile Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) was simultaneous. Of course, the political success of right-wing populism in combination with strong Euroscepticism has become a pan-European phenomenon since at least the last two decades. It is certainly not purely an Austrian phenomenon. Nevertheless, one can observe national differences. Since a systematic comparison of the development of right-wing populist patterns and related political trends between Austria and other CEPSA member countries would go beyond the scope of this essay, the focus of the paper is on relevant Austrian characteristics pertinent to this phenomenon.*

Keywords: ***Austria, Euroscepticism, right-wing populism, far-right, political parties, political mainstream***

Preface

Back in 1995 when CEPSA was established by six Political Science Associations of the CEE region[1], Austria was the only EU member among the founding countries. The others joined the club about a decade later than Austria, most of them in 2004 with Croatia following in 2012. However, Austria was an EU newcomer in 1995. After having submitted the application for membership to the European Community in 1989 the country started official negotiations in 1993, successfully completed them within two years and joined the European Union together with Finland and Sweden the same year CEPSA was founded. Naturally, this can be seen as a mere coincidence. Nevertheless, the year 2020 does not only mark the 25th anniversary of CEPSA, but also the 25th anniversary of the EU membership of one of its founding members. Thus, it is the right time to look back and to discuss some major characteristics of the country's political development since it became an EU member 25 years ago.

While focusing on the successes of a right-wing populist to extremist party, and the subsequent shift of the Austrian political mainstream to the right during the last decades the essay highlights a still rising phenomenon which is of crucial importance not only for Austria, but for the entire CEE region and, moreover, for the EU and Europe as a whole (Cabada 2020). The political phenomenon of right-wing populism and extremism has emerged as a core concern in the (Central) European political sphere.[2] The (extreme) populist right has, however, not only challenged the previous transition countries, it has also troubled well consolidated, 'traditional' democracies such as those in Western Europe, given the electoral success of respective parties on both the national and the supranational level.

As regards Austria, the far-right Freedom Party has rather collapsed in the wake of the Ibiza scandal in May 2019. However, this does not mean that the country got rid of right-wing populism as a major factor influencing politics. On the contrary, some political stances of the FPÖ and to some degree the typical FPÖ political rhetoric have been adopted by the Austrian People's Party, which is currently leading a coalition government including the Greens as junior partner.

1 CEPSA was founded by political science associations from Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia. Croatia and Lithuania joined shortly after.

2 Populism is a rather vague term referring to a variety of phenomena. However, it always points at a constructed confrontation between 'the people' (conceived as a morally good force) and 'the establishment/the elites' (seen as morally bad and self-serving). It is anti-elitist and suggests that powerful minorities are working against the will of the common people and the 'nation' (Kaltwasser – Mudde 2012b). Populism appears in a twofold manner, as an ideological construct (cf. Heinisch – Holtz-Bacha – Mazzoleni 2017; Judis 2016; Kaltwasser – Mudde 2012a and 2012b; Mudde – Kaltwasser 2018) and as a distinct political style (cf. Moffitt 2016).

From positive attitudes towards the EU to populist Euroscepticism and EU bashing

Austria's EU membership can, overall, certainly be considered a success story. It began with a 66.58% vote by the Austrian population in favour of accession to the EU (Austrian Embassy Washington 2015) and continued with increased opportunities for Austria's economy. Twenty years after the country's accession to the EU a significant number of relevant studies evidenced that the Austrian economy 'profits significantly from its involvement in the growing internal market which is also reflected in the creation of jobs' (ibid.). More than two third of Austria's foreign trade in 2015 was with EU member states and exports to EU countries had tripled since 1995 (ibid.). Especially the 2004 enlargement was to the advantage of Austria, as the following quotation illustrates: 'Austrian direct investments in the region have increased from 0.5 billion Euros in 1990 to 66 billion Euros in 2012.' The latter sum represents about half of Austrian foreign direct investment (https://www.austria.org/eu-enlargement). Though the so-called Eastern enlargement has been particularly beneficial to Austria one needs to recall that the country had not been very supportive of this process. Though during Austria's first EU presidency in the second half of 1998 the government presented its agenda for the presidency with a clear commitment to the enlargement of the European Union (Wodak et al. 2009: 234), it eventually did not turn its verbal commitment into political reality. The essayist Karl Markus Gauss commented on this issue as follows: 'We could have been the benevolent relative in the integration of the reform states of Eastern Europe; instead, we have shortsightedly endeavoured to style ourselves as the nay-saying guards' (Gauss 1999: 177ff.) Political scientist Anton Pelinka characterised this attitude as 'being a brakeman' instead of 'being a promotor' (cf. Wodak et al. 2009: 234). The government, for example, demanded long transitional periods for the opening of the Austrian labour market, which can be seen as a populist signal principally targeted at domestic politics (Brechelmacher 2001: 155). With the exception of Hungary, the former socialist single-party states of Central Europe were not really welcome as new EU members in the opinion of the majority of Austrians (cf. Hintermann et al. 2001). Anyway, the 2007 enlargement round was also an asset in terms of economic growth: 'According to the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKÖ), the EU enlargements of 2004 and 2007 contribute to a yearly growth of real GDP in Austria by +0.4%' (https://www.austria.org/eu-enlargement). Exports from Austria to countries of the CEE region tripled between 2005 and 2015, those to the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia quadrupled between 1995 and 2012 (ibid.). Apparently, during the last two and a half decades, the country has greatly benefitted from both its membership in and the further enlargement of the European Union. Despite the several crises the EU and its members have faced since the turn of

the millennium, from a macroeconomic perspective Austrian EU membership and the following enlargement rounds have had mainly positive effects on the national economy (Breuss 2020).[3]

Notwithstanding these favourable developments, the initially very positive attitudes of a remarkable number of both Austrian politicians and citizens towards the EU shifted rather quickly to Euroscepticism, EU-bashing and scapegoating. This process occurred in parallel to the rise of the right-wing populist, if not extremist, Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ). It has to be underscored that the FPÖ is certainly not the only national populist party in the CEE region or elsewhere in Europe which has constantly opposed European Union policies (Wodak et al. 2009: vii). In fact, 'Brussels' has served as a strategically useful scapegoat for right-wing populists and right-wing extremists throughout Europe. The rise of right-wing populism in combination with Euroscepticism or EU hostility has become a pan-European phenomenon over the last 25 years. Nevertheless, one can observe both national and regional differences concerning this matter. Since a systematic comparison of respective commonalities and differences in the development of populist patterns and related political trends between Austria and other CEPSA member countries would go beyond the scope of the essay, the focus of this paper is on the specifica of the Austrian-style right-wing populism and its characteristics. In the first decade of the 21st century, the successful Austrian right-wing populist movement had also 'served as a model for other right-wing populist parties across Europe' (Wodak et al. 2009: 203). The label 'Haiderisation' (which refers to the family name of a former party leader) was used for describing protest movements 'which endorse nationalism, chauvinism, revisionism, EU-scepticism and racist, xenophobic beliefs' (ibid.).

As regards Eurosecpticism it is striking that from the outset most Austrian parties' campaigns for the European Parliament elections were characterised by featuring domestic issues instead of European concerns. Moreover, Austrian interests were often pitted against European ones, and alleged threats to Austria or Austrian identity due to European policies were constructed and used as arguments by candidates (cf. Hadj-Abdou – Liebhart – Pribersky 2006). Such strategies worked well since they were (and still are) in line with some tabloid media which blamed (and still blame) 'the EU' for unpopular reforms or political measures. Such scapegoating reinforces a constructed conflict between Austrian interests and EU interests in a broad field of policies. What is more, it serves populist rhetoric strategies which continuously characterise the EU as overly bureaucratic, unresponsive and far away from the needs of citizens.

In Austria, especially the parliamentary election in fall 1999 flags the beginning of a particular period of right-wing national populism directed against the European Union. The far-right Austrian Freedom Party gained the second-

3 The respective policy paper had been written before the outbreak of the Covid-19 crisis.

-highest number of votes (nearly 27%, http://www.bmi.gv.at/412) and eventually became junior partner in a coalition government with the third-ranked conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). This was the first time in the EC/EU history that a party with ties to the National Socialist past was accepted as a coalition partner on the national level. In reaction to this break of taboo, the other fourteen EU member states fiercely protested. Between February and September 2000, they imposed political measures on bilateral bases, such as no official contact with a government that included the FPÖ, no support for Austrian applicants to international organisations, and Austrian ambassadors only to be received for technical (not for political) deliberations (Kopeinig – Kotanko 2000: 21; cf. also Happold 2000). It was the first time that political 'measures' were taken against a member state which seemed to have not behaved according to basic EU political values (Wodak et al. 2009, 231). This first direct intervention in the internal affairs of a member state in the history of the European Community/European Union were in Austria falsely reframed as so-called 'EU-sanctions'.[4]

Representatives of the ÖVP/FPÖ coalition government reacted with populist appeals to the citizens. Those appeals referred to national unity in view of an alleged unjustified wrong that came from abroad (Wodak et al. 2009: 222): 'This nationalist attitude, which in Austria is strongly connected with right-wing populism, is expressed and played upon by appealing to the "people as a nation" in the sense of a homogeneous, essentialised point of reference for political legitimisation and justification' (ibid.: 223). As a reaction, 'a nationalist, chauvinist discourse evolved, drawing on a patriotic "fatherland rhetoric" claiming that the "EU" was "attacking Austria" and demanding a "national closing of ranks"' (ibid.: 242, cf. also Wodak – Pelinka 2002).[5]

Using populist resentment against the EU has indeed not been limited to the years of the first ÖVP/FPÖ coalition government (2000–2006). The Socialdemocratic Party (SPÖ) which led the subsequent coalition with the ÖVP, made a U-turn in 2008 with respect to its party line on European politics. The pro-EU leadership of the party 'suddenly and unexpectedly supported a referendum on the EU reform treaty, should this be resurrected after the Irish no vote' (Wodak et al. 2009: 242). Furthermore, leading SPÖ politicians demanded a referendum on Turkey's possible EU accession. They wrote an open letter to

4 Political scientist Robert M. Entman (1993: 51ff.) suggested that frames 'select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described'. Frames foreground particular aspects of issues, encourage certain interpretations and discourage others.

5 This type of political rhetoric also included the construction of an 'internal enemy' (the opposition party SPÖ) for whom derogatory metaphors, such as 'Vaterlandsverräter' ('traitors to the fatherland'), 'Nestbeschmutzer' ('nest foulers') or 'Österreichvernaderer' ('informers betraying Austria') were used (Wodak et al. 2009: 225, 229).

the publisher of the Kronen Zeitung, the Austrian tabloid newspaper with the highest circulation, an outspoken critic of the Treaty of Lisbon, and stated that '(t)he SPÖ took these concerns seriously (...) and would attempt "to ensure that the EU responded actively to the criticisms" and "that future changes to treaties which affected Austrian interests would be decided by means of a referendum in Austria"' (Der Standard 2008, quoted in Wodak et al. 2009: 242). It can be assumed that survey results which showed that only a minority of Austrian voters considered Austria's EU membership a good thing at that time (cf. Der Standard 2008) had an impact on this political change. Moreover, it can be seen as an indicator that more than a decade after Austria's EU accession a considerable number of members of the political elite had still not really arrived in Europe (Wodak et al. 2009: 243). The populist turn was apparently intended to win back voters from the EU hostile FPÖ, but ended up rather unsuccessfully for the Social Democrats. The ÖVP took the initiative as an occasion to dissolve the coalition which had already previously suffered from internal conflicts and disputes.

Bashing Europe is still a popular game in Austria, as is the case in several EU member states. Challenges such as the financial and economic crisis in the wake of 2008, the so-called refugee crisis in 2015, Brexit and its potential consequences and last but not least the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences for European societies and economies have mainly been discussed within a nationalist frame and, hence, have fueled Eurosceptic discourses. Populist politicians including those from mainstream parties have frequently blamed 'Brussels' while attributing political responsibility for crises and related problems to the EU and evoking stereotyped resentments to mobilise voters (https://www.ihs.ac.at/ru/european-governance-and-public-finance/projects/euroscepticsm-austria/).

Framework conditions: the constant rise of right-wing populism in Austria

National-populist party politics have a decades-long tradition in Austria, though the Freedom Party, which later became the epitome of far-right populism, played a rather minor role in Austrian politics until the mid 1980s. Compared to many other successful far-right parties in Europe (such as the Swiss Peoples' Party/SVP, the AfD/Alternative for Germany, the French National Rally, the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), the Hungarian Fidesz or the Polish PiS, which have no direct tradition lines to fascist or National Socialist predecessors, the Austrian Freedom Party is different. The party, established in 1955/1956 is a successor to the Federation of Independents (VdU, founded in 1949), among the founders of the latter were some former National Socialists, the first two chairmen were former SS officers. An exception are the years 1983 to 1986 when the FPÖ

put forward more liberal stances and served as a junior partner in an SPÖ led coalition government.

The short liberal period ended abruptly in 1986 when Jörg Haider became party leader by achieving a landslide victory at the national party convention. This resulted in the revocation of the coalition by the Social Democratic chancellor Franz Vranitzky and a snap election. The FPÖ from that moment onwards became a significant actor in Austrian politics. Jörg Haider permanently shaped the party's explicitly right-wing populist and nationalist image. He instantly initiated an ideological turn (Wodak – Pelinka 2002). Haider centred his rhetoric around immigration and integration issues, subsequently around anti-Muslim and anti-Islam sentiments, on the one hand, and harsh criticism of the political establishment on the other. Such rhetoric was based on the promotion of an ethnically defined, discrete Austrian national identity instead of a superordinate German nation, which was apparently liked by a relevant part of the Austrian electorate (Kritzinger – Liebhart 2015: 381f.).

In the Carinthia state election in 1989 the FPÖ won 29% of the vote, and Jörg Haider became Governor of Carinthia and led a coalition government with the ÖVP. The FPÖ further fueled the migration issue which over the years advanced to become the most heatedly debated topic in Austrian political discourse and successfully served as the campaign focus of the FPÖ in the 1990 legislative election (ibid.). In 1993, the FPÖ initiated the referendum 'Austria First!' that called for a more restrictive immigration policy. As a consequence, five FPÖ MPs, who opposed such political ideas, left the party and founded the Liberal Forum LIF which would more than two decades later merge with the NEOS, a liberally/neoliberally oriented party. By the end of the 1990s, the FPÖ put forward a focus on an alleged threat of the 'Islamization' of Austria and Europe, and linked the topic with the debate on Turkey's potential EU membership. Over the years the FPÖ became more and more far-right, aggressively used stereotypical images that mingled Islamic religion, national/ethnic identity constructions and politics, and portrayed Islam as a religion-based, violent and extremist ideology and Muslims as alien to Europe (cf. Krzyzanowski 2013). Furthermore, the party began attacking the EU, especially Brussel's alleged oversized bureaucracy, and blaming it for every bad. This mixture of anti-Islam/anti-Muslim rhetoric, backed by anti-immigration stances, and hostility towards the EU led the party to remarkable electoral successes both at the local and national level (Kritzinger – Liebhart: 2015). Eventually – as has already been mentioned – the FPÖ became the second strongest party after the SPÖ in the 1999 general elections with nearly 27% of the vote, which brought the party into government.

This aforementioned coalition government which was built in 2000 broke with the FPÖ's pariah status (Liebhart 2018). However, the shift from an anti--establishment party in opposition to a party in power, which suddenly also supported neo-liberal economic reforms, led to severe inter-party conflicts,

subsequent party instability and significant decrease in electoral support. Their ruling policy apparently contradicted previous political claims. In the 2002 general elections the party lost nearly two-thirds of the votes compared to 1999 (Heinisch 2004). Nevertheless, the party decided to continue the coalition with the ÖVP. In 2005 the FPÖ split, when all their ministers including the deputy chancellor followed former party leader Jörg Haider and founded the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ) which substituted the FPÖ in the coalition government. The new party again significantly lost electoral support after the unexpected death of its chairman Jörg Haider in a car accident in 2008. The BZÖ did not pass the 4% threshold in the 2013 general election (http://www.bmi.gv.at/412/).

After the split, the FPÖ elected Heinz-Christian Strache as new chairman, who further radicalised the party while intensifying anti-immigration stances and anti-Muslimism, and fostering Euroscepticism. This strategy paid off at the polls in regional, federal and European elections. The FPÖ reached, for example, 25.8% and the second place in Austria's capital Vienna in 2010 (https://www.wien.gv.at/wahl/NET/GR101/GR101-109.htm), and even 30.8% in 2015 (http://www.bmi.gv.at/412). It further won 19,7% in the 2014 European Parliament elections (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-at-2014.html). The main campaign topics remained the same in every election: anti-immigration, anti-Muslimism and Euroscepticism. Between 2006 and 2013 the FPÖ and the BZÖ were both represented in the Austrian parliament. At the 2008 general election, FPÖ and BZÖ together reached 28.2% (FPÖ 17.5%, BZÖ 10.7% (cf. Kritzinger – Liebhart 2015). Furthermore, the FPÖ reached 20.5% in the 2013 general election. The success story continued In the years to follow in several state elections (http://www.bmi.gv.at/412), notwithstanding the Hypo Alpe-Adria scandal, Austria's worst post-war financial scandal in which high profile FPÖ politicians were involved and several scandals related to national-socialist reactivation ('Wiederbetätigung') performed by leading party representatives (cf. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/25/austrias-far-right-fraternities-brace-for-protests-at-annual-ball). The election results also enabled the FPÖ in Burgenland and Upper Austria to enter SPÖ- or ÖVP-led governments, which finally contributed to the end of the so-called 'cordon sanitaire' (Liebhart 2018).

Political representatives of the Freedom Party consistently and successfully communicated the same message. They suggested that they were the only ones who were willing to protect the 'native Austrians' against both illegal immigrants (especially from Muslim countries) and 'Brussels' and defend the ethnically defined Austrian identity. In almost every election campaign (local, regional, national, European) the FPÖ regularly used xenophobic, in particular anti-Islam, slogans and images (cf. Krzyzanowski 2013). Heinz-Christian Strache frequently also claimed that Muslims would attempt to create an Islamic 'parallel

society' in Austria. All of this happened years before the so-called refugee crisis unfolded in 2015 and fostered relevant discourses.

However, the FPÖ's biggest victory to date was Norbert Hofer's 31.1% in the first round of the 2016 presidential election (Troianovski 2016). Notwithstanding Hofer was eventually defeated by his opponent, the independent, Green-backed candidate Alexander Van der Bellen. Hofer scored 49.7% and 46.2% respectively in the two run-off elections (https://www.bmi.gv.at/412/Bundespraesidentenwahlen/Bundespraesidentenwahl_2016/start.aspx#pk_01). Political leaders throughout Europe and abroad reacted gladly to Alexander Van der Bellen's victory. They considered his election a 'defeat of nationalism and anti-European, backward-looking populism' and a sign of Austrian people's 'open-mindedness'. The Guardian saw 'some hope for Europe' and underscored the fact that 'Austria interrupted the march of right-wing populism', and showed 'that the victory of the radical right is not inevitable' (https://www.dw.com/en/eu-leaders-rejoice-at-alexander-van-der-bellen-in-austrian-election/a-36651022; Cato 2016; Jones 2016). Nevertheless, Cas Mudde (2016) recalled 'that Hofer achieved the best result of any populist radical right candidate in an established European democracy'.

From 'Time for something new' to 'Ibizagate' – the collapse of the FPÖ, but not of right-wing populist politics

The FPÖ's electoral success continued. Given that general elections in which different parties compete naturally cannot be compared to run-off elections for the federal presidency with only two candidates, the Freedom Party recorded its next big achievement in 2017 when the party won 26% of the vote, which meant third place and a result close to that of the Socialdemocrats (26.9%) (https://orf.at/wahlergebnisse/nr17/). The Austrian People's Party clearly came out ahead with 31.5% (ibid.). Both the ÖVP and the FPÖ had focused their election campaigns on anti-immigration policy and rhetoric, a strategy that had been well-established within the Freedom Party for decades, but was rather new for the People's Party. According to Anton Pelinka, the People's Party's built its successful election campaign on 'stealing talking points from the FPÖ and presenting them in more moderate garments and with better manners' (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/sebastian-kurz-could-31-year-olds-audacious-bid-to-lead-austria-pay-off). The quote highlights the recent process of convergence between the far-right populist FPÖ and the centre-right ÖVP, at least in regard to the nationalist-populist framing of migration and asylum policy. Moreover, it draws attention to the fact that right-wing populist appeals to nationalist sentiments have certainly reached the political mainstream in Austria. Especially under Kurz's leadership, the mainstream party ÖVP has admittedly altered both its policy positions and its political communication

style to meet the populist challenge. Sebastian Kurz, who had taken leadership of the People's Party only about six months before the election, successfully rebranded the party into a political 'movement for Austria', completely focused on him as a person. He renamed it 'Sebastian Kurz List – the New People's Party', and changed the color from black to turquoise. The brand 'Sebastian Kurz' proved strong, and support among potential voters increased dramatically, from around 20% to 31.5% (https://wahl17.bmi.gv.at/). Kurz called a snap election and ran a populist campaign, completely focused on him as a person, and under the heading of change. A slogan suggested that it is 'Time for something new', notwithstanding that he himself had served as a member of the previous government for more than three years. Kurz, however, cultivated an image as a political outsider and also used slogans like 'Now or never!' (ibid.) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/sebastian-kurz-could-31-year-olds--audacious-bid-to-lead-austria-pay-off). He emphasised the word 'movement' following a trend, which takes into consideration that voters have long become disillusioned with conventional political parties. Kurz 'won on a populist-lite platform' (Gady 2018). Except a 'tough stance on illegal migration' his campaign 'lacked both depth and scope' (ibid.). The chairman of the rebranded Austrian People's Party, and long-time member of the previous SPÖ/ÖVP coalition governments (as State Secretary for Integration Affairs, and later Foreign Minister) successfully made immigration his signature issue while pursuing a right-wing populist strategy, which also appealed to xenophobic feelings. He repeatedly claimed that it was he who had closed down to refugees the 'Balkan route' to Europe, called for even tougher border controls and fiercely spoke out against alleged activities of 'political Islam' as a threat against both Austrian democracy and European values (ibid.). The 'polished, anti-immigration millennial' (https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/austria--immigration-sebastian-kurz/542964/) used the widespread anti-refugee sentiment in Austria to direct the Austrian People's Party sharply to the right, and managed 'to co-opt the political space previously monopolized by the Freedom Party' (ibid.). Such a message was very welcomed by a significant part of the electorate. The Austrian Freedom Party, which had mostly ranked first in the polls since 2014, also polled strongly in Austria's general election in late 2017, and the latter eventually resulted in the formation of an overall right-wing populist coalition government, led by Sebastian Kurz, with the far-right FPÖ as a junior partner. Kurz became Europe's youngest head of government. The FPÖ's party leader, Heinz-Christian Strache, became deputy chancellor in the new coalition government, and the Freedom Party controlled the key departments of foreign affairs, defense and internal affairs.

The inauguration of the ÖVP – FPÖ government at the end of 2017 was the second time the FPÖ came to power since 2000. The weekly Economist (https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21732834-austria-edging-closer-nationalist-

-governments-eastern-europe-new-coalition. 19 December 2017) commented as follows: 'Vienna Calling. A new coalition in Austria brings the far-right in from the cold'. The fact that the announcement of the establishment of the coalition between the rebranded People's Party and the far-right Austrian Freedom Party hardly caused any protests by EU member states can be seen as an indicator that the acceptance and inclusion of far-right parties has become so normal over the years in Europe that the Austrian case was no longer perceived as exceptional. This stands in sharp contrast to the year 2000, when diplomatic reactions were quick, but also reflects 'the general move to the right of the European political electorate' (Gady 2018). After the 2017 legislatiure election, Austria was simply seen as a symbol of a wider trend. However, it was also discussed whether the integration of the far-right Freedom Party and its representatives in key political positions in the government has turned Austria into a more Eurosceptic and anti-immigration country, aligning more closely to countries such as Poland and Hungary (ibid.).

The fact that the People's Party, the senior coalition partner, had significantly shifted to the right definitely made life easier for the FPÖ.[6] For about one and a half year it seemed that the coalition government operated overall in harmony. Moreover, it also seemed that the Freedom Party performed better this time in balancing the requirements of participating in government and the expectations of their supporters.

Anyway, there were a number of so-called 'isolated cases' as the coalition partners euphemistically named frequent anti-Semitic, anti-Islam and xenophobic remarks by FPÖ party members (Gady 2019). The important role which members of far-right students' fraternities (Burschenschaften) played in government and parliament and other institutions of the Republic of Austria gave further reason for justified concern.[7] Many of these far-right fraternities still uphold anti-Semitic and xenophobic attitudes, deny that Austria is a nation of its own and claim a sense of belonging to a 'Greater Germany'.[8] In most cases of far-right utterances from FPÖ members deputy chancellor Strache has aimed to remediate and present the party as more moderate and certainly democratic. He also asserted several times that anti-Semitism and racism have no place in the FPÖ. Nevertheless, a leading FPÖ politician, Johann Gudenus, has even

6 Markus Wagner and Thomas Meyer have shown that the ÖVP has steadily been moving to the right since 1986, the year Jörg Haider took leadership of the FPÖ and, hence, made the party more competitive (https://manifesto-roject.wzb.eu/, Wagner – Meyer2018).

7 These student organisations are for men only. They propagate an outdated, sexist understanding of maleness, organise fencing duels among members and show their dueling scars openly. Wearing a uniform unique to the fraternity on official occasions completes the picture (http://www.dw.com/en/inside-the-secretive-fraternities-of-germany-and-austria/a-42447338).

8 High numbers of FPÖ-politicians have close bonds with far-right student fraternities. In 2017, out of the party's 51 members of parliament, more than a third (18) were active members of right-wing to extreme right fraternities.

openly endorsed anti-Semitic Soros-conspiracy 'theories' (https://diepresse.com/home/innenpolitik/5409914/Gudenus-und-die-Soros-Verschwoerungen). Almost no contradictory political views of coalition partners could be observed in regard to the topical issue of migration. Recently, the two parties agreed on further restricting access to asylum seekers in the Austrian labor market, on cutting funds for integration initiatives such as German-language courses and on accelerating the expulsion of undocumented immigrants. The decision to follow Hungary and the United States in rejecting the global migration pact underlined relevant political stances (https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKCN1N5111-OZATP). There were also almost no differences in the field of family policy as both parties shared a conservative approach to this policy field. The government also managed Austria's third EU presidency in the second half of 2018 without major problems, though the commitment to the European Union in the case of the Freedom Party was never fully credible, given the party's particularly Eurosceptic course for years and its close alignment with other Eurosceptic parties on the European level, such as Alternative for Germany and French National Rally. One of the core political topics of the Freedom Party, the strengthening of direct democracy tools such as plebiscites in order to weaken representative democracy, was postponed by the senior coalition partner to the end of the legislative period (https://derstandard.at/2000070508180/regierungsprogramm-oevp-fpoe-kurz-strache-direkte-demokratie). Eventually, though Strache and other party members attacked the public service broadcaster ORF and critical journalists, they did not succeed in reorganising the ORF fundamentally (https://www.srf.ch/news/international/fpoe-angriffe-auf--orf-es-geht-um-die-pressefreiheit-in-oesterreich). Probably the most critical occurrence was the incident which concerned the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and Counterterrorism, Austria's domestic intelligence agency, and the illegal seizure of agency intelligence on right-wing extremist groups in Austria (supposedly including FPÖ members) during an illegal police raid initiated by party members. This has to be seen against the background of the FPÖ Minister of Interior Herbert Kickl's attempts to appoint a new head of the organisation by discrediting the incumbent one (https://www.nachrichten.at/nachrichten/politik/innenpolitik/BVT-Affaere-Goldgrubers-schwieriges--Verhaeltnis-zur-Extremismus-Ermittlerin).

Hence, overall, the coalition looked stable until May 2019 when the so-called Ibiza affair or Ibiza-gate blew up the partnership between ÖVP and FPÖ, and subsequently led to the dismissal of the government and a further split of the FPÖ. Ibiza-gate is a political scandal (which is currently – July 2020 – being investigated by a fact-finding committee of the Austrian parliament) that involved former deputy chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache and former deputy major of Vienna and deputy leader of the Freedom Party Johann Gudenus. On 17 May 2019 two German print media outlets (Süddeutsche, Der Spiegel) pub-

lished a secretly recorded video of a meeting in Ibiza in July 2017 which they had received from a deep throat and checked several times for authenticity. The video showed the then opposition politicians Strache and Gudenus apparently discussing their intentions to make some deals with a woman whom they believed is a niece of a Russian oligarch. They would be ready to offer government contracts and sell Austrian water in return for the provision of positive news coverage. The 'vodka –and-Red-Bull-fueled night on the Spanish island' (Gady 2019) caused the biggest political crisis in Austria since 1945 (ibid.) and eventually a snap election. In a no-confidence-vote the government Kurz was voted out of office and a caretaker government led by Austria's first female federal chancellor, Brigitte Bierlein, was appointed (https://orf.at/stories/3125471/).

As the political developments since then have clearly demonstrated, the FPÖ was not able to convincingly become a responsible governmental party. The FPÖ suspended Heinz-Christian Strache in December 2019 (https://orf.at/stories/3147497/) due to Ibizagate and several financial irregularities. Strache in turn founded a new party 'Team HC Strache – Alliance for Austria' (https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000117506066/straches-neue-partei-heisst-offenbar-team-hc-strache-allianz-fuer) and announced a run for the Viennese local election in fall 2020. The FPÖ also severely struggled on the state level of party organisation (https://www.derstandard.at/story/2006274/fpoe-chaos-breitet-sich-aus-landesgruppen-zerfallen). Moreover, FPÖ representatives continued using hate speech: the secretary general recommended the use of 'herbicide' against uncontrolled immigration (https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000118624127/hofer-verteidigt-schnedlitz-mit-unkraut-waren-nicht-menschen-gemeint) and the chairman of the party, former presidential candidate and minister in the ÖVP/FPÖ coalition government from 2017 to 2019, Norbert Hofer called the Koran more dangerous than the coronavirus (https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000118151481/koran-sager-hofer-sieht-sich-nach-morddrohungen-bestaetigt). Apparently, nothing has changed concerning such 'party traditions'.

Strangely, Sebastian Kurz, who had invited the FPÖ to build a coalition with the People's Party, has not been damaged at all by the unethical and awful performance of his coalition partner. He remained Austria's most popular politician and the ÖVP succeeded anew in the legislative election in 2019 by earning over 37% of the votes (Gady 2019). Subsequently Kurz built a coalition with the Green Party.

If the inauguration of the second ÖVP-FPÖ government in 2017 indicated a significant shift to the right in Austria, does the new ÖVP/Greens coalition indicate a reverse trend? Unfortunately, this question cannot be affirmed clearly.

The most sustainable achievement of the Austrian Freedom Party is certainly that its leading politicians have succeeded in changing the political discourse and reframing the political debate in the country. The legislative election of

2017 has already shown that right-wing populist views are no longer limited to the fringes of the political landscape, they have directly reached the political mainstream (Murphy 2017). While the FPÖ and its offspring 'Team HC Strache – Alliance for Austria' may still be called the epitome of racist, anti-immigrant and especially anti-Muslim populist-national rhetoric the latter has by now become so normalised that representatives of other parties also make use of it. Hence, it can be underscored that the FPÖ has first and foremost achieved an ideological victory. Both mainstream parties, the ÖVP under the leadership of Sebastian Kurz and also some groups within the SPÖ have significantly turned to the right, use FPÖ-like rhetoric style and promote ideas originally introduced by the Freedom Party. Discursive constructions that characterise ongoing political debates about 'islamic parallel societies' and 'imported threats' – to mention just two examples – testify to this assumption. In general, anti-pluralistic tendencies have become more and more apparent in Austrian society, while pluralistic political concepts that aim at establishing frames for discussing and managing differences are to an increasing degree subject to criticism.

However, this has to be seen within the context of wider European developments: Ruth Wodak pointed to the consequences of the Europe-wide swing towards anti-establishment parties which has normalised right-wing populist political stances, especially in regard to more restrictive immigration policies and correspondent offensive rhetoric: 'Some of the policies that right-wing populists have endorsed have already been taken over and implemented. (...) Certain taboos have been broken and now it's seemingly okay to say certain very discriminatory things, even without a big scandal'. Wodak continues: 'The levels have lowered of taboos and conventions, normalization is on its way' (http://www.euronews.com/2018/03/15/explained-the-rise-and-rise-of-populism-in-europe).

Postface

The development depicted in the previous section can be observed rather throughout Europe. Meanwhile, the political mainstream has gone populist, with nationalist tendencies. This can be considered a success of the far-right, which has impacted on both the political discourse and factual politics. Markus Wagner and Thomas Meyer have already drawn attention to the 'right turn in the ideological makeup of European party systems over the past 30 years' (Wagner – Meyer 2018).

Apart from this phenomenon, the far-right is still very alive in almost all European regions. The election to the European Parliament 2014 was termed a 'Eurosceptic "earthquake"' by the BBC to highlight that especially '(a)nti-immigration parties hostile to the EU' have succeeded (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27559714). Apparently economic issues were by far not the

only reason (cf. Mudde 2014), since far-right parties achieved the best electoral results in countries that had been only moderately affected by the economic crisis; among them Austria, and some Northern European countries (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-at-2014.html.). Against the background of recent political developments in Europe (including the so-called refugee crisis, terrorist attacks and Brexit) it was expected that the EP 2019 elections would foster this trend. Surprisingly they did not bring about the further rise of populism in Europe. Notwithstanding some wins for far-right populists, it was not a dramatic win throughout Europe. Right-wing populists fell short of expectations in Austria (shortly after Ibizagate), Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. They came out as clear winner only in Poland, Hungary, France, Italy and the UK. Also Marine le Pen's National Rally, which became the strongest party in France, did not reach the result of 2014. Nevertheless, the elections also showed that far-right populism has to be considered as an important political force on the European level that will stay for the years to come (cf. Smith 2019). It is also certainly not impossible that a far-right party will again rise in Austria, notwithstanding the recent terrible performance of the FPÖ and its leading political representatives.

References

Austrian Embassy Washington (2015): 20 years Austrian EU membership. https://www.austria.org/austria-in-the-eu (1 July 2020).

Brechelmacher, Angelika (2001): Zur Konstruktion 'Europäischer Identität' in der östereichischen Presse: eine diskursanalytische und sozialanthropologische Untersuchung des Mediendiskurses zur Zeit des österreichischen Ratsvorsitzes in der Europäischen Union. Unpublished MA thesis, University of Vienna.

Breuss, Fritz 25 Jahre EU-Mitgliedschaft Österreichs – eine makroökonomische Bewertung, https://oegfe.at/2020/01/25-jahre-mitglied-makrooekonomie/ (8 June 2020).

Cabada, Ladislav (2020): Central Europe between the West and East: Independent Region, the Bridge, Buffer Zone or 'eternal' Semi-Periphery? *Politics in Central Europe* 16(2). Doi: 10.2478/pce-2020-0018.

Carpenter, Michael (2020): Tribalism Is Killing Liberalism. Why We Are Succumbing to the Politics of Division. 5 March, 2020: available at https//www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-03-05/tribalism-killing-liberalism (2 July 2020).

Cato, Molly Scott (2016): Austria's quiet Green victory, trading in the politics of hope not fear. 7 December, 2016: available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/07/austria-green-victory-president-elect-alexander-van-der-bellen (2 July 2020).

Der Standard (2008). 26 June.

Entman, Robert M. (1993): Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43(4): 51–58.

Gady, Franz-Stefan (2018): Has Austria Found the Answer to Right-Wing Populism? Why Center--Right Parties Are the Establishment's Best Bet. 11 September: available at https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/austria/2018-09-11/has-austria-found-answer-right-wing-populism. 11 September, 2018 (2 July 2020).

Gady, Franz-Stefan (2019): The Fall of Sebastian Kurz? After a Shocking Scandal, Austria's Conservative Wunderkind Is Down but Not Out. 18 June, 2019: available at https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/austria/2019-06-18/fall-sebastian-kurz (2 July 2020).

Gauss, Karl Markus (1999): Warum Österreich die Osterweiterung verschlafen musste. *Europäische Rundschau* 27: 117–21.

Hadj-Abdou, Leila – Liebhart, Karin – Pribersky, Andreas (2006). Europawahlkampagnen. Unveröffentlichter Projektbericht des Projektes Public Construction of Europe, BM:BWK Forschungsprogramm New Orientations for Democracy in Europe/NODE. Vienna.

Happold, Matthew (2000): Fourteen against One: The EU Member States' Response to Freedom Party Participation in the Austrian Government. *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 49(4): 953–963.

Heinisch, Reinhard (2016): Austria's populist Puzzle. Why One of Europe's Most Stable States Hosts a Thriving Radical Right. 9 December 2016: available at https://www.foreign affairs.com/print/node/1119055 (2 July 2020).

Heinisch, Reinhard C. (2004): Die FPÖ – Ein Phänomen im internationalen Vergleich. Erfolg und Misserfolg des identitären Rechtspopulismus. In: Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft 3/2004. 247–261.

Heinisch, Reinhard – Holtz-Bacha, Christina – Mazzoleni, Oscar (eds.) (2017): *Political Populism. A Handbook*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Hintermann, Christiane – Liebhart, Karin – Pribersky, Andreas – Weixlbaumer, Norbert (2001). The Austro-Hungarian border-region. Results of recent field studies concerning the bilateral patterns in perception of cross-border spaces and development perspectives'. Annales. Ser. Hist. Sociol. 11/2001/ 2(26): 267–74.

Jones, Owen (2016): It's not game over. Austria stopped rightwing populism in its tracks. 31, December 2016: available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/31/not-game-over-austria-stopped-rightwing-populism-election (2 July 2020).

Judis, John B. (2016): *The Populist Explosion. How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics*. Columbia Global Reports. New York.

Kaltwasser, Cristobal R./ Mudde, Cas (eds.) (2012a): *Populism in Europe and the Americas. Threat or Corrective for Democracy?* Cambridge University Press.

Kaltwasser, Cristobal R./Mudde, Cas(2012b): *Populism. A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Kopeinig, Margaretha – Kotanko, Christoph (2000): *Eine europäische Affäre. Der Weisen-Bericht und die Sanktionen gegen Österreich*. Vienna.

Kritzinger, Sylvia – Liebhart, Karin (2015): Austria, in Viola, Donatella M. (ed.): *Routledge Handbook of European Elections*. London: Taylor and Francis. 377–395.

Krzyzanowski, Michal (2013): From Anti-Immigration and Nationalist Revisionism to Islamophobia: Continuities and Shifts in Recent Discourses and Patterns of Political Communication of the Freedom Party of Austria, in Wodak, Ruth – KhosraviNik, Majid – Mral, Brigitte (eds.): *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse*. Bloomsbury London-New York. 133–148.

Liebhart, Karin (2020): The Normalization of Right-Wing Populist Discourses and Politics in Austria, in Wöhl, Stefanie/Springler, · Elisabeth/Pachel, Martin/Zeilinger Bernhard (eds.): *The State of the European Union – Fault Lines in European Integration*. Springer. Wiesbaden. 79–100.

Liebhart, Karin (2018): The Unsettling Shadow of the Past: National-Populism in Austria, in. Martinelli, Alberto (ed.) (2018): *When Populism meets Natioanalism. Reflections on Parties in Power*. ISPI. Milano. 95–110: available at https://www.ispionline.it/sites/default/files/pubblicazioni/ispi_report_populism_meets_nationalism_-_martinelli_2018.pdf.

Moffitt, Benjamin (2016): *The Global Rise of Populism. Performances, Political Style, and Representation*. Stanford University Press.

Mudde, Cas (2016): Liberalism need not be on the retreat – rightwing populism is beatable. 7 December, 2018: available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/07/liberalism-austria-clinton-us-populist (2 July 2020).

Mudde, Cas (ed.) (2014): *Political Extremism*. 4 Volumes. London et al. SAGE.

Mudde, Cas/Kaltwasser, Cristobal R. (2018): Studying Populism in Comparative Perspective: Reflections on the Contemporary and Future Research Agenda, in Comparative Political Studies 00(0) 2018. 1–27: available at sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav. DOI: 10.1177/0010414018789490.

Murphy, Francois (2017): Win or Lose, Austrian Far Right's Views Have Entered Government". Reuters 16 07.2017: available at https://www.reuters.com/article/us-austria-politics-farright-analysis/win-or-lose-austrian-far-rights-views-have-entered-government-idUSKBN1A107V (12 May 2020).Smith, Alexander (27 May 2019). "European Parliament elections: 5 takeaways from the results". NBC News: available at https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/european-parliament-elections-5-takeaways-results-n1010491 (27 March 2019).

Troianovski, Anton (2016): European Right Gets Boost From Austrian Freedom Party Victory. The Wall Street Journal. 25. 04. 2016.

Wagner, Markus – Meyer, Thomas (2018): Decades Under the Influence. How Europe's Parties Have Been Shifting Right. 4 April, 2018: available at https://foreignaffairs.com/print/mode/1122165 (2 July 2020).

Wodak, Ruth – De Cillia, Rudolph – Reisigl, Martin – Liebhart, Karin (2009): *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*. Edinburg University Press.

Wodak, Ruth – Pelinka, Anton (2002): *The Haider Phenomenon in Austria*. New Brunswick. Transaction Publishers.

Internet sources

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27559714 (22 April, 2019).

http://www.bmi.gv.at/412 (5 November, 2018).

http://www.dw.com/en/eu-leaders-rejoice-at-alexander-van-der-bellen-in-austrian--election/a-36651022 (2 July, 2020).

http://www.dw.com/en/inside-the-secretive-fraternities-of-germany-and-austria/a-42447338 (5 November, 2019).

http://www.euronews.com/2018/03/15/explained-the-rise-and-rise-of-populism-in-europe (12 May, 2018).

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-at-2014.html (4 April, 2018).

https://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKCN1N5111-OZATP (22 March, 2020).

https://derstandard.at/2000070508180/regierungsprogramm-ÖVP-FPÖ-kurz-strache-direkte--demokratie (5 April, 2020).

https://diepresse.com/home/innenpolitik/5409914/Gudenus-und-die-SorosVerschwoerungen (4 December 2019).

https://manifesto-roject.wzb.eu/ (4 September, 2020).

https://orf.at/stories/3125471/ (26 June, 2020).

https://orf.at/stories/3147497/ (2 July, 2020).

https://orf.at/wahlergebnisse/nr17/ (2 July 2020).

https://wahl17.bmi.gv.at/ (8 August, 2019).

https://www.austria.org/eu-enlargement (1 July, 2020).

https://www.austria.org/eupresidency-2018 (1 July, 2020).

https://www.bmi.gv.at/412/Bundespraesidentenwahlen/Bundespraesidentenwahl_2016/start.aspx#pk_01.

https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000117506066/straches-neue-partei-heisst-offenbar-team--hc-strache-allianz-fuer (2 July, 2020).

https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000118151481/koran-sager-hofer-sieht-sich-nach--morddrohungen-bestaetigt (26 June, 2020).

https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000118624127/hofer-verteidigt-schnedlitz-mit-unkraut--waren-nicht-menschen-gemeint (14 July, 2020).

https://www.derstandard.at/story/2006274/FPÖ-chaos-breitet-sich-aus-landesgruppen--zerfallen (2 July 2020).

https://www.economist.com/news/europe/21732834-austria-edging-closer-nationalist--governments-eastern-europe-new-coalition. 19 December 2017 (2 July 2020).

https://www.ihs.ac.at/ru/european-governance-and-public-finance/projects/euroscepticsm--austria/ (11 July, 2020).

https://www.nachrichten.at/nachrichten/politik/innenpolitik/BVT-Affaere-Goldgrubers--schwieriges-Verhaeltnis-zur-Extremismus-Ermittlerin (3 May, 2020).

https://www.srf.ch/news/international/FPÖ-angriffe-auf-orf-es-geht-um-die-pressefreiheit-in--oesterreich (5 February, 2020).

https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/austria-immigration-sebastian--kurz/542964/ (7 July, 2019).

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/oct/15/sebastian-kurz-could-31-year-olds-audacious--bid-to-lead-austria-pay-off.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/25/austrias-far-right-fraternities-brace-for--protests-at-annual-ball (11 July 2020).

https://www.wien.gv.at/politik/wahlen/grbv/2015/ (14 March, 2018).

https://www.wien.gv.at/wahl/NET/GR101/GR101-109.htm (8 May, 2018).

Karin Liebhart *is Senior Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Vienna; Sociology Associate Professor at the University of Trnava; 2018 Fulbright Visiting Professor at the University of Minnesota; 2014–2015 Visiting Professor and Marshall Plan Anniversary Chair at the University of New Orleans; Vice Chair of the IPSA Research Committee 47 "Local-Global Relations" (since 2017), Senior President of CEPSA (since 2012), CEPSA President 2009–2012. Her research interests include visual political communication, discursive and visual representations of politics, right-wing populism and right-wing extremism; memory politics and remembrance cultures. E-mail: karin.liebhart@univie.ac.at*

Central Europe between the West and East: Independent Region, the Bridge, Buffer Zone or ‘eternal’ Semi-Periphery?[1]

LADISLAV CABADA

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0018

Abstract: *The development of new East-Central European (ECE) democracies after 1989 might be separated into two different parts regarding the external, but in many ways also the internal evaluation. While the first fifteen years, crowned the ‘big bang’ EU-enlargement in 2004, might be evaluated generally as a successful story of socialisation into the Western structures, i.e. democratisation and Europeanisation, the next fifteen years are often evaluated as the period of getting sober. Paradoxically, instead of a continuation of the Europeanisation of values, memory and identity in many ECE nations we can observe the strengthening of anti-EU and anti-European attitudes. As Ágh stressed in his latest works, as early as the 2008 financial crisis outbreak we have had to deal with the polycrisis situation accompanied with de-Europeanisation, failure in the catching up process, the strengthening of the Core-Periphery divide in the EU/Europe and the decline of democracy in East-Central Europe. Even the migration crisis in 2015 and beyond strengthened the mental gaps between so-called ‘old’ and ‘new’ Europe. In the article I focus on reasons for the semi-peripheral position of ECE, long durée processes in the creation of European macro-regions, and specific features of ECE nations’ identity. I reject the black-and-white division of Europe into two regions, stressing the positive examples from ECE as well as many problems of democratic governance the EU – including the ‘West’ – faces.*

Keywords: ***East-Central Europe; macro-regions; identity; history; legacy; modernity***

---

1 This article is the result of Metropolitan University Prague research project no. 74-01 “Political Sciences, Culture, Language” (2020) based on a grant from the Institutional Fund for the Long-term Strategic Development of Research. Some ideas presented in this article were already presented in my previous work (Cabada 2019) and are distinctively developed in the upcoming book chapter (Cabada 2020).

Introduction

The development of new East-Central European (ECE) democracies after 1989 might be differentiated into at least two periods. While the first fifteen years, finalised with the NATO and EU-membership, might be evaluated as the successful story of socialisation into the Western structures, the next fifteen years are often evaluated as the period of de-democratisation, de-Europeanisation, or democratic backsliding. Many scholars are convinced, yet, that the group of new democracies in ECE did not internalise the same characteristics and values as the European 'West' and/or that the ECE nations even decided to abandon the EU's mainstream and create a mind-different region (cf. Ágh 2019a; Ágh 2019b; Ágh 2020; Cabada 2019; Krastev and Holmes 2019; Ther 2015; Wiatr 2020). Paradoxically, instead of continuing a Europeanisation of values, memory, and identity in many East-Central European nations we observe a strengthening of anti-EU and anti-European attitudes. As the Hungarian political scientist A. Ágh (cf. Ágh 2019a; Ágh 2019b; Ágh 2020) stressed in his latest works, as early as the 2008 financial crisis outbreak we have had to deal with the polycrisis situation accompanied with de-Europeanisation, failure in the catching up process, a strengthening of the core-periphery divide in the EU/Europe, and a decline in democracy in East-Central Europe. Even the migration crisis in 2015 and beyond strengthened the mental gaps between so-called 'old' and 'new' Europe within the New World Order (Ágh 2019a) and "by its explosive nature it generated an atmosphere of mass alarm and thereby hurled into the political arena an emotional wave of patriotism, nationalism and xenophobia" (Klíma 2020: 152).

In the last decade, not only in ECE, but in several political parties and social groups in so called 'Old Europe', we observe demands for 'another Europe' – traditional, more authoritarian, and with a clear preference for national identity and specific solutions. These voices are calling again for Europe as a fortress. A new danger might be located beyond the European borders and these voices are calling again for Europe as a fortress. Many ECE politicians promptly and effectively used this issue, and stress the jeopardy that the politicians from 'Brussels' (equalised with the 'liberal' EU's West or core) do not seriously reflect such danger. Such behaviour should be further evidence of ECE's disinterest or ignorance, including the (great) power and/or colonial attributes (e.g. lack of discussion, one-sided decisions, relocation quotas). For the ECE populists this is development of new evidence of double standards and the unequal position of the EU's East *vis-á-vis* the West. Namely, that ECE should again be the object of history and great power politics, the instrument or victim of West European interests.

In my short essay, structured more as a set of short contemplations, I will reflect the main issues we observe in the contemporary EU-architecture with a specific focus on ECE and the Visegrad Group as the 'core' of this region. One

of my main goals is to falsify this black-and-white narrative about the 'Good West' and the 'Bad East' and reflect the challenges we face in ECE as the general European/Western problem. I will also ask for the reasons for the continued or newly established dividing lines and dissimilarities between or among the European macro-regions. Again, I anticipate that the internal slashes and differences rooted in competing political cultures and value sets might be detected not only in the new EU-member states, but in ECE they evince more distinctive intensity.

East(-Central) Europe as the (semi-)periphery

Analysing the history of ECE, we will find above all the history of uncertainty and insecurity. Since the Middle Ages and Renaissance, we observe the periods of upswing and boom in the region repeatedly, but such success usually remained limited to small urbanised areas and population groups. For long centuries closing the gap on the West – or catching-up, as we often label the development after 1989 – became the most important narrative. In the 19th century, Germany challenged France as the new/alternative role model of the rapidly modernising nation. All the more was the disappointment of the ECE nations when this civilisational mission was transformed into colonial takeover. Also, this disappointment probably produced the situation in which some of these nations directed their hopes towards another external great power: Russia/USSR. The behaviour of both nations – Russia and Germany – but maybe also the geopolitically-rooted activities of other European powers (France, Italy) led the East-Central European nations towards a specific victim-syndrome and inferiority complex. In my opinion, this syndrome still presents an important part of the collective mentality in the East-Central Europe region. Not only because of Yalta-syndrome and the great power division of post-WWII Europe, but in individual cases because of many other 'separate' betrayals such as 'Trianon', 'Munich', 'Ribbentrop-Molotov' etc., the ECE nations internalised the conviction that they might be as well developed as the West, but were repeatedly betrayed, abandoned, occupied and exploited.

As the result of such narratives we observe the mixture of admiration, envy and hate towards the West that is embedded in the centre–periphery opposite. Many ECE nations developed in the modern times into underdeveloped peripheries. 'In consequence, the national movements in these countries articulated the national identity rather as the mobilization of the tradition and primordial community against the threats of modernity. The definition of national identity occurred parallelly with the cleavage between the tradition and modernity. As the result, such cleavage became even more distinctive... The importance of the cleavage between the modernization and traditionalism, between the Westernization and protection of the autochthonous national culture corresponds with the way how is the European identity constructed and required' (Brusis 2003: 261).

In ECE, a strong tradition of positive auto stereotypes has developed in the past, which means that ECE nations often consider themselves morally better than those in other European regions – the East and also the West. Let me acknowledge at this point the disappointment of Milan Kundera or Václav Havel from the consumptive and intellectually declining West and their conviction that Central Europe specifically might play a positive role in European revitalisation. Nowadays, the nativist and populist leaders in the region follow in stressing the difference of ECE, while also stressing other legacies and mental backgrounds.

The fear from the negative influence of external powers, making ECE rather passive subjects of political development, brought the thinkers and politicians in the region to the attempts to prevent such external influence with integration and cooperation. Until 1918 the Habsburg Empire tried to play such a role, but as early as 1867 it was clear that the ethnonational powers were stronger than the integrative one. After WWI many integrative ideas and projects were proposed. These included the imperial project of *Intermarium* with Poland in the leading role, Masaryk's idea of *the Europe in-between* created as a belt of small nations from Finland to Greece, as well as many externally based projects (with France, Italy or Nazi Germany in the leading role). All these projects had already collapsed before the beginning of WWII.

During the EU-enlargement process ECE was usually prepared to develop regional cooperation only within the EU's framework, i.e. to abandon the position of European (semi-)periphery and join the European 'core'. Nevertheless, in the recent period we observe important changes. The regional cooperation in ECE is presented and understood as the opposition and alternative towards the EU, or better said the EU-mainstream. Why do we have to deal with the situation of important differences between the European 'West' and 'East'? Is this difference 'real' or rather the constructed media-picture and public discourse? In my opinion, the main reason lies in deformed modernity in ECE as well as in many historical turns that complicate the long-term stabilisation of values and identity.

Deformed modernity as the challenge for the ECE region and Europe

The backwardness and modernisation gap compared with the European West is not only related to the Communist legacy in ECE. On the contrary, since the Early Middle Ages the areas eastwards from the Elbe river were understood as the less developed European regions striving to catch up with the West. The modernity commencement in the 19th century presented a new form of this old challenge. The response given by the Habsburg court and the reformulated national societies was colourful and in many ways contradictory.

P. Wandycz (1992: 3–12) stresses that Central Europe, religiously and culturally belonging to the West, was ascribed to the East, regarding economic, tech-

nological and general civilisation development. Indeed, the border between the West and the East was not very clear in Central Europe; as the most important reason he mentions the unclearness of this border within *Germania* and later Germany. Last but not least he stresses the relatively low population density in ECE. In his opinion all of this made this region the European semi-periphery with visible internal differences – Bohemia was situated close to the centre while the eastern Polish or Hungarian provinces presented the periphery.

Similarly, many other scholars and observers stress the development/modernity issue regarding the formation and identity of different European regions. H. von Hofmannsthal labelled the population of the Habsburg monarchy as 'semi-European and semi-Asian nations' (Kożuchowski 2013: 86). A similar position we can observe in the concept of *Ruritania* presented at the end of the 19th century by the British writer Anthony Hope. *Ruritania* is a German-speaking, Catholic land in Central Europe, the absolute monarchy containing deep social conflicts. The most important tension exists between the (almost) western urban elites and the rural ethnics settled at the (semi-)peripheries. Hope's book presents the persiflage of the 'exotic Central Europe that bordered the Balkans and was populated by wolves, Count Dracula, Gypsies, illiterate peasants, orthodox Jews, and notorious Polish and Hungarian nobles' (Kożuchowski 2013: 177). Similarly, E. Gellner presents the Habsburg monarchy as the epicentre of the decisive modernisation conflict between the cosmopolite liberals ('the Viennese') and the representatives of the 'post-feudal obscurantism and authoritarianism' (Gellner 1998: 32–33). And today, Ágh (2019: 40) aptly mentioned that the 'Central European region has produced well-developed "European" cities and an "Asian" backward countryside, being two worlds apart with different worldviews' (cf. also Ther 2015).

During the 19th century, the initial idea of shared Austrian transnational/state identity within the Habsburg Empire was deconstructed not only because of nationalist movements, but also regarding the different approaches towards the modernity challenges. An extremely poisoned mixture presented the combination of both approaches, equalising the modernity or traditionalism with the entire nations or ethnic groups. The traditional prejudice against the *Ostleute*, originating in the great European narrative of the reconciliation of the old Latin-German world with the new European World of Slavs in the 8th and 9th centuries was transformed within Austria and such prejudice was used by the pan-Germans (perceiving themselves as the group that has to modernise the other ethnical groups –– maybe with the exception of the Hungarians) as well as other liberal-national movements. In this sense, the German-speaking, as well as the Czech, Slovenian or Hungarian liberal-national intellectual perceived themselves as fighters against the anti-modern actors (Kożuchowski 2013: 86–87). In the period between the great wars, such prejudices and distinguishing of nations was very strong and often became part of national myths. Beneš labelled Poland and

Hungary as 'feudal nations', Masaryk proclaimed the process of de-Austricisation, Hungarian, Polish or Slovenian conservative leaders often labelled Masarykian democracy as depraved and equalised liberalism with Communism, etc. Also, during the Communist period these prejudices were protected in popular tradition and after 1989 they again became an important part of public discourse. On one hand, we can mention the 'separation' and auto-stereotype of Austria towards ECE; on the other the internal divisions within the post-Communist area. One of the most visible is the self-evaluation of the Visegrad Group as the nations that dispose of better preconditions for EU-membership than the other post-Communist states (Cabada – Walsch 2017: 41–47).

For sure, historical experience and historical prejudice on both sides of the former Iron Curtain played an important role in such an optimistic vision. A quintessential example reflected from inside as well as by external actors is that the Visegrad Group were the group of nations disposed for faster democratisation and Westernisation than the other ECE nations. An important reason for such an auto- and a hetero-perspective were the intellectual debates that took place from the 1960s to the 1980s (and also beyond), in which intellectuals such as Havel, Kundera, Konrád, Michnik and Vodopivec played important roles in portraying Central Europe as 'kidnapped' West. Maybe we should also search here for the reasons for the 'disappointment' in the development in ECE, as far as the clearly privileged nations are at the moment judged as the biggest 'trouble makers'.

All of the above-mentioned stresses that the Communist legacy is an important shared feature of ECE nations, but that many important legacies are rooted in older periods. L. Rensmann (2012) stresses the salient counter-cosmopolitan preferences, A. Pirro (2014) clericalism, social national economics and anti--Communism (which was and is often equalised with liberalism). In the scientific analysis and debate we cannot fully accept the 'regional holism', before we point out important distinctions. Among the most important distinctions are that in the late 1990s Slovenia and Estonia might be listed – Slovenia as a Euro--optimistic society hoping to merge with the EU-core (Cabada – Waisová 2010); Estonia then with the tendency to 'abandon' the ECE and join the European North (Cabada 2020).

Nevertheless, it was also clear that the post-Communist reality and legacy is unique. In 2003, shortly before the EU-enlargement, M. Brusis (2003: 259) wrote: 'From the EU perspective the candidate states evince much more common characteristics as some candidate states and the EU-member states or nations from other East European regions'. Z. Krasnodębski highlights the complicated reversal in the utopic models in ECE's societies – from the Communist utopia the region jumped directly into the Kantian utopia of European identity and civil society. Thus, we observe in ECE 'the hopes (but also fear) in three differently undergoing processes occurring within the EU – the globalization, Europeanization and Regionalization' (Orłowski 2003).

Describing the societies in ECE countries before 1989, P. Sztompka (1993) uses the term *fake modernity*. He places 'deformed modernity' in contrast with the 'authentic modernity' in Western societies. Similarly, I. Bernik (1997) describes the (post-)Communist societies as 'sub-modern'. In his opinion, we have to deal with the societies that underwent partial modernisation during the Communist period, but also preserved important parts of traditional political institutions. The most important particularity of the Communist states is the top-down modernisation, the dictate of modernist intellectual and partly also political elites (Bernik 2000). As Ágh (2019: 6) summarised, ECE as a historical periphery, dependent on the development in the West and East and mobbing historically in cycles of Westernisation and Easternisation occurs in a state of permanent semi-modernisation.

Asymmetry between the European macro-regions

Returning to the victim-paradigm strongly influencing the internal political and societal discourse in ECE, we can also better understand how – based on this paradigm – the EU perceived it. Before the revolution, ECE states were fully subordinated to Soviet interests, and they are often convinced of a similar subordination and/or unequal position within the EU. We can mention a plethora of political decisions or political behaviour examples, such as the unilateral decisions of Germany in the refugee crisis, or decisions on the *Energiewende*, including an important energy security dimension – the gas pipelines Nord Stream I and II between Russia and Germany, which passes by the ECE and which is strongly criticised in the region. Similarly we can mention the dismissive behaviour of French presidents towards the ECE – J. Chirac criticised the ECE politicians in February 2003 for their positive reflection on the US Iraqi invasion with the famous sentence *They missed a good opportunity to shut up*; Nicolas Sarkozy repeatedly questioned the upcoming Czech EU-Presidency in the second half of 2008 and even ignored it during the new round of the Near East crisis in January 2009; Emanuel Macron repeatedly uses the phrase about the 'wall between the old and new EU-member states'. Co-responsible for such feelings of inequality – and let us stress that feelings are an important part of politics and strongly influence the discourse – is the incorrect rhetoric of some EU-representatives. For example, Jean-Claude Juncker greeted the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán at the EU-Summit in Riga in May 2015 with the words *Servus, Diktator*. Let us stress that such words and paroles are presented from institutions that in other cases rank political correctness as one of most important European values.

P. Ther describes the 'obvious asymmetry between the West and East Europe' (Ther 2015: 229). The West reflected the enlargement issue timidly and many steps of EU-15 towards the ECE nations strongly violated one of the basic European values – equality. It is not only the issue of fear of uncontrolled immigra-

tion from ECE and the transition periods implemented in many EU-15 states. As Fehr stresses the issue was much more complex. The EU-15 fear was connected with three factors: 'insufficient participation in the revolution from 1989, fear from the concurrence at the labour market, and fear to share the own welfare with new members' (Ther 2015: 330).

The West European political elites tried to avert the negative, above all, economic effects of East-enlargement, unfortunately based on unequal treatment of which a typical example is agrarian subventions. 'Instead of essential reform of this policy (that failed primarily because of French agrarian lobby) could the farmers in new EU-member states, compared with the West, use only small piece of these subventions… Such unequal treatment left a bad taste' (Ther 2015: 331). Among the newest examples of double-standards we might mention the double-standards of eatables, playing an important role in domestic debate and electoral campaigns in the Czech Republic and Poland.

On the other hand, we have to stress that the populist anti-EU rhetoric in many ECE countries is often incorrect. Popular became the equalisation of the EU with the USSR (V. Klaus, V. Orbán, J. Kaczyński; cf. Fehr 2016: 68). Nevertheless, I find much more problematic the anti-modern rhetoric often produced by Hungarian, Polish or Croatian politicians enjoying the decisive support of strong societal groups. H. Fehr refers again to the anti-modern nature of these political actors. The populist movement parties instrumentalise the problems related to coping with history and use it in the struggle for cultural sovereignty and dominance (Fehr 2017: 1). The anti-modern positions and statements from ECE populists are directed against 'liberal scholars, "foreign" politicians, a secular way of life imported from West Europe'. We can observe the specific appeal to 'normality' – 'traditions, historical awareness, patriotism, trust in God, the normal family life between man and woman' (Fehr 2016: 141). Fehr calls such an anti-modern position as 'plebeianism' making an appeal 'above all on the way of life of former rurally shaped masses'. Strengthening and generalising the argument, Fehr quotes the parole of Viktor Orbán from 2014 about Hungary: 'We are the rurally shaped nation' (Fehr 2016: 148).

The mobilisation patterns are rooted in a permanent search for enemies. Among the most popular enemies belong the minorities, neighbours, Great Powers (including the European Union and Germany), cosmopolites, liberals, Jews, George Soros etc. 'The label "liberal" in Hungary became a synonym for "alienated" and the liberal camp as the group that harm Hungary in command of "foreign interests". "Liberal" is used as the term for "collaboration". In Poland Jaroslaw Kaczyński and other members of PiS prefer the terms "false elite" and "rabble liberalism" in the polemic with their political opponents, especially against the critical publicists and cultural counter-elites' (Fehr 2017: 10).

As Ágh (2019: 146–147) notes, we are living in the Orwellian world where 'we, Central Europeans represent genuine Europeanness against the declining West'

and 'the honest new domestic elites protect the European population against external and internal enemies instead of the impotent and parasitic Brussels elite'. Naturally, above all the situation in Poland after October 2015, many problematic steps of the Hungarian government and Prime Minister Orbán and the weak state in Romania seem to confirm the doubts in ECE positive development in this region. We can also mention many other problematic tendencies, issues and actors, such as anti-liberal tendencies in Croatia, visible populist politicians such as B. Borisov, R. Fico, J. Janša, V. Ponta or M. Zeman or the danger of state capture in the Czech Republic after 2017 with the Oligarch A. Babiš as the Prime Minister (Klíma 2020; Cianetti – Dawson – Hanley, eds. 2019).

On the other hand, we have to stress again that different problematic issues and manifestations in the politics of ECE nations could be at least partially observed in the old EU-member states (Liebhart 2020). Mediocracy came with S. Berlusconi to the EU and the personalisation of politics including the populist rhetoric we must not associate only with radical or even extremist politicians such as U. Bossi, the Le Pen family or P. Fortuyn, but also with the mainstream politicians such as T. Blair, G. Schröder, N. Sarkozy from the past (Cabada – Tomšič 2016), or B. Johnson, S. Kurtz or the still growing group of leading Italian populist politicians; D. Trump presents probably the worst example of the combination of populist and nativist rhetoric and personalised politics. The political parties and party systems in ECE are often evaluated as unstable. Nevertheless, very visible marks of important changes towards instability can also be found in Greece, Spain, France, Austria or Germany. Additionally, the radicalisation of important and big societal groups might be observed not only in ECE, but also in many nations usually understood and presented as stable Western democracies – next to Italy we can mention the stable position of *Vlaams Belang* in Belgium, as well as the successes of the French National Front, G. Wilders or the True Finns (Cabada 2019).

There exist many examples of promising consolidation of democracy, Europeanisation and socialisation in ECE. Many ECE nations fulfilled very strict preconditions and adopted the Euro-currency, many demonstrated fiscal responsibility and (re)established stable economies after long decades of Communist devastation. The unemployment rates in many ECE states is considerably under the EU-average, and many governments from ECE have already successfully experienced the EU-Presidency tasks. But all of this had already happened before we witnessed the building of 'illiberal democracies in Hungary and Poland, following the national populism from the period between the wars' (Fehr 2016: 7). In this sense Ágh's scepticism is understandable, especially if we consider that two states where the transition started primarily – Poland and Hungary – 'have changed from promising models of liberal democracy into illiberal, conspiracy-minded majoritarian regimes' (Krastev 2019).

Nevertheless, we have to distinguish not only in Europe (macro-regions, ideal types of political culture), but also within the ECE. In my opinion the

lamentation that 'ECE democracy finally collapsed in the 2010s' does not distinguish the very problematic cases such as Hungary from the still promising and stable cases (Estonia, Slovenia and in many ways also Slovakia) and the group of ECE nations 'in between'. I definitely do not accept a simple presentation of politicians such as J. Kaczyński as a sociotype of an ECE-politician, as we can observe in the Western mainstream media. Such labelling of politics in ECE is completely incorrect regarding any democratic political actors in the region.

The EU's socialisation role nowadays is even more important than fifteen (and more) years ago, but must not be utilised as one of the conditionality components. The ECE nations must enjoy the full rights of EU-membership. If not, the wall will be constructed between the new and old member states. West Europe also has to accept the matter of fact that the European identity is much more complicated with the new member states and that the EU is not an identical institution to Europe. Brusis differentiates between two ideal and typical relationships between the EU-member identity and European identity, and two concepts of 'Europeanness' – synonymic and synecdochical. The synonymic concept presents the EU and EU-membership as the only possible way the nation and society can partake in the European identity. The synecdochical concept understands the European identity as something that must not necessarily be developed and constructed within the EU. During the process of approaching the EU the synonymic concept was usually accepted, naturally also for the pragmatic reasons: 'The internal vagueness in mutual relation of both identity definitions allowed the internal critics of East enlargement to use the synonymic relation, while they in the reality preferred the synecdochical relation' (Brusis 2003: 268).

In other words, the opinion of the EU-15 that the candidate states must fully adapt in all spheres to become European, was accepted in the group of candidates for a simple reason – to reach EU-membership. Once the nation entered the EU, the balancing process between the both ideal typical positions started: 'The EU-membership is strongly singled out from the Europeanness and the definition of European identity' (Brusis 2003: 25). Such changes happen partly also because the new member states face a system of exceptions and softened rules, mostly regarding the old member states. Important examples include the issue of a common European currency and the position of the United Kingdom and Denmark compared with the ECE states, the violation of fiscal rules not only in the case of Greece, but also by other nations including Germany, Italy and France, the *opt-outs* etc.

Shortly before the EU-enlargement in 2004, Brusis stressed that all Auto- and Hetero-stereotypes regarding the East–West cleavage still survive in Europe and were re-formulated regarding the conditions where the modernisation narrative was transformed into Europeanisation. Again, he observes two important – and completely different – antipodes, namely the liberal modernists supporting Eu-

ropeanisation as the last phase of Westernisation, and the traditionalist stressing the need to protect the autochthonous national cultures (Brusis 2003: 261). Again, such evaluation presents East-Central Europe as the transitive region between the West and East and – as the nations defined themselves after joining the EU – also the role model and 'bridge' between the West and the remaining candidates from the Balkans and Eastern Europe.

From 'last bastion of Europe' again 'back to Europe'

Polish, Hungarian and Croatian politics and historiography often stresses the important role of these nations in protecting Europe against non-European invaders (Russians/Soviets, Ottomans). When we observe the contemporary discourse in ECE, this historical role is often stressed and combined with the criticism towards the 'ultraliberal' Western Europe/EU and presented as 'overall disillusionment with European values' (Aleksić 2013: 70). This brings us back to the Ruritania concept and the conflict of two different cultures and societal groups in the region(s). In my opinion, ECE has the tendency to accept only the 'technical' part of modernisation (industrialisation, welfare), but not the 'ideological' – the liberal democracy. The proponents of such limited modernisation often stress that ECE evince better characteristics and is morally superior in the comparison with the West. As Ágh (2019: 142) mentions, the loser-nation syndrome was reinforced in the last decade and supplemented with the mythicisation of the 'golden age' of national history as the 'glorious past that never was'.

Expectations that only part of the Western/European modernisation style might be implemented into ECE presents the agenda of national-conservative actors in the region and also brings them closer to the extra-European actors such as Russian leader V. Putin and Turkish President R.T. Erdogan. In the perspective of V. Orbán or L. Kyczyński, ECE presents itself (again) the protector of Europe, this time against the West European nations that are supposedly abandoning 'European values'.

In the last two centuries, the ECE has gone thorough innumerable changes regarding the polity construction, demographic structure and depopulation/repopulation fluidity (Bianchini 2017: 39) and socio-economic conditions. Naturally, all of these changes also presented a permanent challenge for the identity discussion. 'Under the framework of the time-space compression characteristic of modern times, the relationship between political systems, state borders, identities and security has taken on a new appearance, particularly for the people living in Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans during the arch of the twentieth century' (Bianchini 2017: 1–3). As Bianchini stresses, to belong to the European East means to experience the 'permanent' insecurity given by geographical proximity. To escape such pressure means joining the West (or the North, as Wæver proposes for the Baltic part of East-Central Europe; Wæver

1992). Such opportunity is especially interconnected with Central Europe as semi-periphery, while Eastern Europe and the Balkans as the peripheries usually do not have such opportunity.

Small Central European countries, 'although many of them were packed in the Habsburg empire for several centuries, suffered from the pressures of Western modernised and industrialised states on one side and the Eastern empires (Russian and Ottoman) on the other. They have been swinging through history between long waves of Westernisation and Easternisation' (Ágh 1991: 84–85). The 'year of miracles', 1989, opened again the perspective of Westernisation before these nations. Many of these nations used this new opportunity window and overcame the unfavourable geographical proximity and unfinished modernity. Despite the fact that some important actors in ECE still prefer the posture of 'proud periphery' before the Westernisation in the sense of modernisation and liberalisation, I am convinced that ECE as a region continually progresses towards full inclusion into Europe. Nevertheless, for such inclusion West Europe is necessary as a partner and not (only) as a mentor. Furthermore, the real menace for the democracy consolidation in ECE demonstrates not only the democratic decline in the region, but also the possible de-democratisation in the (European) West. In this sense, West Europe must reflect the processes of democracy de-consolidation in some ECE nations as its own distorted mirror. In this sense, the real democrats in both European macro-regions face the same challenge.

References

Ágh, A. (1991): After the Revolution: A Return to Europe. In *Towards a Future European Peace Order?,* edited by K.E. Birnbaum, J.B. Binter and S.K. Badzik, London: Pinter, 83–97.

Ágh, A. (2019): *Declining Democracy in East-Central Europe. The Divide in the EU and Emerging Hard Populism.* Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Ágh, A. (2019b): The neoliberal hybrid in East-Central Europe. The 'treason of intellectuals' and its current re-assessment. *Politics in Central Europe*, 15 (3): 355–381. Doi 10.2478/pce-2019-0021.

Ágh, A. (2020): Rethinking the historical trajectory of ECE: From the "original sin" in democratization to redemocratization. *Politics in Central Europe*, 16(2). Doi 10.2478/pce-2020-0017.

Aleksić, T. (2013): *The Sacrificed Body. Balkan Community Building and the Fear of Freedom*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Bernik, I. (1997): *Dvojno odčaranje politike*. Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences.

Bernik, I. (2000): *Political Culture in Post-socialist Transition. Radical Cultural Change or Adaptation on the Basis of Old Cultural Patterns?* Frankfurt/Oder.

Bianchini, S. (2017): *Liquid Nationalism and State Partitions in Europe*. Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Brusis, M. (2003): Zwischen europäischer und nationaler Identität – Zum Diskurs über die Osterweiterung der EU. In *Europäische Öffentlichkeit – Bürgergesellschaft – Demokratie.* Ansgar Klein: Opladen, 255–272.

Cabada, L. (2019): Ein Europa oder mehrere? Ostmitteleuropa auf der Suche nach den (europäischen) Werten. In: P. Nitschke (ed.), *Gemeinsame Werte in Europa? Stärken und Schwächen im normativen Selbstverständnis der Europäischen Integration.* Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 29–50.

Cabada, L. (2020): East-Central Europe searching for (European) values. How to be more than the 'proud periphery'?, In T. Kavaliauskas (ed.), *Europe Thirty Years After 1989: Transformations of Values, Memory and Identity.* Leiden: Brill (in print).

Cabada, Ladislav – Tomšič, Matevž (2016): The Rise of Person-based Politics in the New Democracies – The Czech Republic and Slovenia. In: *Politics in Central Europe* 12 (2): 29–50.

Cabada, L. – Waisová, Š. (2010): Slovenia as an EU-member – a Euroenthusiastic Society and Political Elite. In P. Drulák and Z. Šabič, eds., *The Czech and EU Presidencies in a Comparative Perspective*. Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 37–54.

Cabada, L. – Walsch, Ch. (2017): *Od Dunajské federace k Visegrádu… a zpět? Tradiční a nové formáty středoevropské spolupráce*. Prague: Libri and MUP Press.

Cianetti, L. – Dawson, J. – Hanley, S. (eds.) (2019): *Rethinking 'Democratic Backsliding' in Central and Eastern Europe.* London and New York: Routledge.

Fehr, H. (2016): *Vergeltende Gerechtigkeit – Populismus und Vergangenheitspolitik nach 1989.* Opladen, Berlin and Toronto: B. Budrich Verlag.

Fehr, H. (2017): Populismus und Aufarbeitung des Kommunismus in Europa. *Erinnern, 2017/1*, Rundbrief der Stiftung Gedenkstätten Sachsen-Anhalt.

Gellner, E. (1998): *Language and Solitude. Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Habsburg Dilemma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Klíma, M. (2020): *Informal Politics in Post-Communist Europe. Political Parties, Clientelism and State Capture.* London and New York: Routledge.

Kożuchowski, A. (2013): *The Afterlife of Austria-Hungary. The Image of the Habsburg Monarchy in the Interwar Europe*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Krastev, I. (2019): The metamorphosis of Central Europe. *Project Syndicate,* 21 January 2019, available at https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/the-metamorphosis-of-central-europe-by--ivan-krastev-2019-01?barrier=accesspaylog (30 June 2020).

Krastev, I. – Holmes, S. (2019): *The Light That Failed: A Reckonking.* Allan Lane.

Liebhart, K. (2020): 25 years later – Austria's shift to the populist right: national characteristics of a pan-European trend. *Politics in Central Europe*, 16(2). Doi: 10.2478/pce-2020-0024.

Orłowski, H. (2003): Literatur und nationale Identität (heute). *Brücke zu einem vereinten Europa. Literatur, Werte und Europäische Identität*. edited B. Lermen and M. Tvrdík, eds. Prague: Konrad-Adenauer_Stiftung, 51–80.

Pirro, Andrea L.P. (2014): Populist Radical Right Parties in Central and Eastern Europe. *Government and Opposition* 49 (4): 599–628.

Rensmann, L. (2012): Volatile Counter-Cosmopolitans: Explaining the Electoral Performance of Radical Right Parties in Poland and Eastern Germany. *German Politics & Society* 30 (3): 64–102.

Sztompka, P. (1993): Civilisational Incompetence – The Trap of Post-communist Societies. In: *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 22 (2): 85–95.

Ther, Philipp. (2015): *Die neue Ordnung auf dem alten Kontinent. Eine Geschichte des neoliberalen Europas, 3. Auflage*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Wæver, O. (1992): Nordic Nostalgia: Northern Europe after the Cold War. *International Affairs* 68 (1): 77–102.

Wandycz, P. S. (1992): *The Price of Freedom. A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the present*. London and New York: Routledge.

Wiatr, J.J. (2020): The Crisis of Democracy: An East-Central European Perspective. *Politics in Central Europe*, 16(2). Doi 10.2478/pce-2020-0016.

***Ladislav Cabada** is Associated Professor in political science at Department of Political Science and Humanities of the Metropolitan University Prague. At this academic institution he also works as the Vice-Rector for the Research, Quality and Development. Next to this, between February and July 2020 he was also Visiting Research Fellow at the Andrássy Universität Budapest with the support of Pallas Athéné Domus Educationis Foundation. In 2005 he co-founded the international scientific review Politics in Central Europe and has been working as the editor of this journal. In 2006–2012 he served as the Chair of Czech Political Science Association, in 2012–2018 was the President of Central European Political Science Association. He focuses mainly on comparative politics of East Central Europe, regionalism and development studies, Europeanisation, Euroscepticism and political anthropology. E-mail: ladislav.cabada@mup.cz.*

Online Political Communication Research Methods[1]

OLGA BRUNNEROVÁ AND JAKUB CHARVÁT

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0019

Abstract: *The authors explored the research methods of the manifold studies on online political communication published in nine selected scientific journals over an 8-year period stretching from the beginning of 2009 to March 2017 and systematized the results into a comprehensive, methodological, "state-of-the-art" report. The main findings are that the most frequent method of researching online political communication is the quantitative or qualitative content analysis. Still, recurrent is the combination of methodological approaches, where the quantitative and qualitative techniques complement each other. Moreover, the research of political communication in general, but online especially, has become more an interdisciplinary field. Yet the collection and analysis of data from new media and social networks requires more and more advanced expert skills.*

Keywords: ***political communication, new media, research methods, social networks, web 2.0***

Introduction

Political communication research has had a prominent position in the academic fields of both communication studies and political science. In recent years the field has changed significantly as continued technological advancements have contributed to the expanding boundaries of political communication. The

1 This paper is the result of Metropolitan University Prague research project no. 74-01 "Political Sciences, Culture, Language" (2020) based on a grant from the Institutional Fund for the Long-term Strategic Development of Research Organizations.

onset of the internet as a common communication channel may be seen as a "transformational moment in media technology, with implications for the practice of politics" (Mirer – Bode 2015: 454); or simply an "online revolution" (Johnson 2011) that has begun a new era in political communication, the so-called "digital age," in which we are moving rapidly from candidate-centred to citizen-centred campaigns and from mediated to "electric communication" (Gronbeck 2009: 229).

Vast advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been major stimuli for, and one of the most influential driving forces behind, the development of political communication research and methods. ICTs have raised the fundamental issue of the necessity of rethinking what we study and how we do research on political communication in the context of the new media. While scholarly research exploring the use and the role of ICTs has expanded since 2004, especially in the past few years, there is a growing body of scholarly research focusing on the role and use of social media platforms, especially social network sites (particularly Facebook) and microblogging applications (particularly Twitter), in political communication.

Objectives, methods, and research sample

This study builds on the tradition of essays reflecting the state of knowledge and striving to systematize the trends within a specific research field (see Tomasello et al. 2010: 532). However, although we can encounter several inspiring conceptual-theory studies on political communication in the new media environment (which we will refer to as "online political communication"), orientation towards the methodological aspects of the examined topics is infrequent. Thus, the overarching goal of this paper has been threefold: to analyze the latest advances in the methods and analytical techniques in the contemporary online political communication research, to discuss new trends and tools equipped, and to systematize the results into a comprehensive methodological "state-of-the-art" report. To this end, the analysis is guided by the following research question:

RQ: *What are the dominant research methods of online political communication (articulated in selected journals)*?

We built this study on an extensive article review to explore the research methods used in selected scholarly articles on online political communication being published both in American and European journals. The preliminary analysis was conducted by employing Google Scholar which led us to include nine relevant scientific journals in our research (see Table 1); encompassed were both primary journals for political communication (like *Political Communication* or *The International Journal of Press/Politics*) and journals dealing with the issue within their broader thematic focus (e.g. *Party Politics* or *New Media & Society*).

Table 1: Journals included in the research sample

Journal	No. of issues per year	IF_{5years}	IF_{2016}	SJR
European Journal of Communication	2009–2012: 4 issues, since 2013: 6 issues	2.000	1.408	1.398
Information, Communication & Society	2009–2011: 8 issues, 2012–2014: 10 issues, since 2015: 12 issues	3.617	2.692	1.802
Journal of Information Technology & Politics	4 issues	*ESCI*	*ESCI*	1.212
Journal of Political Marketing	4 issues	*ESCI*	*ESCI*	0.247
New Media & Society	2009–2014: 8 issues, since 2015: 11 issues	4.978	4.180	2.084
Party Politics	6 issues	2.418	1.846	1.754
Policy & Internet	4 issues	*ESCI*	*ESCI*	1.067
Political Communication	4 issues	2.893	2.467	2.211
The International Journal of Press/Politics	4 issues	2.870	1.523	1.982

Because scholars have increasingly focused on online campaigning since 2008 (Vergeer 2012: 11), we concentrated our attention on examining the selected journals over an 8-year time frame stretching from 2009 to March 2017. Such a period enables us to capture the most recent development of the discipline. Based on manual keyword analysis, we chose a total of 175 studies (see the Appendix) corresponding to the objectives of this paper. Subsequently, we analyzed each article in the sample for its research methods. Each article was counted only once, although numerous scholars combined two or more research methods.

Table 2: Distribution of the number of articles in the sample over time and journals

Journal	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
European Journal of Communication	0	1	2	0	2	2	2	3	0	**12**
Information, Communication & Society	1	0	3	0	9	5	4	2	3	**27**
Journal of Information Technology & Politics	5	7	2	4	7	7	10	7	0	**49**
Journal of Political Marketing	0	0	4	2	2	1	2	3	0	**14**
New Media & Society	2	2	1	4	8	4	3	9	0	**33**
Party Politics	0	1	0	0	3	0	1	3	1	**9**
Policy & Internet	0	1	3	1	3	0	1	2	0	**11**
Political Communication	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	5	**11**
The International Journal of Press/Politics	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	5	1	**9**
Total	**8**	**14**	**17**	**11**	**36**	**20**	**24**	**35**	**10**	**175**

Figure 1: Distribution of the total number of articles in the sample over time

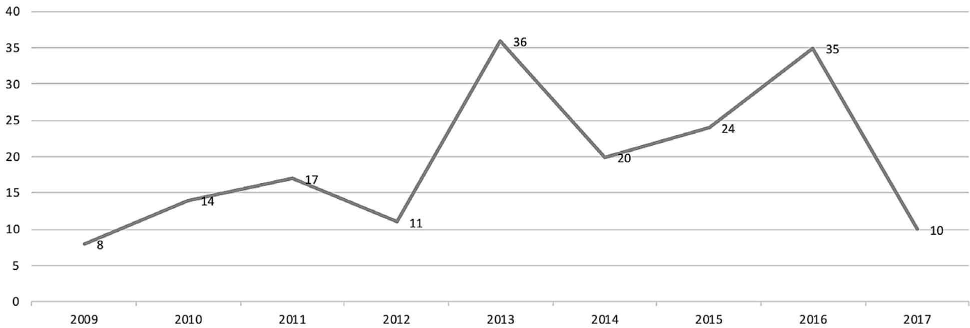
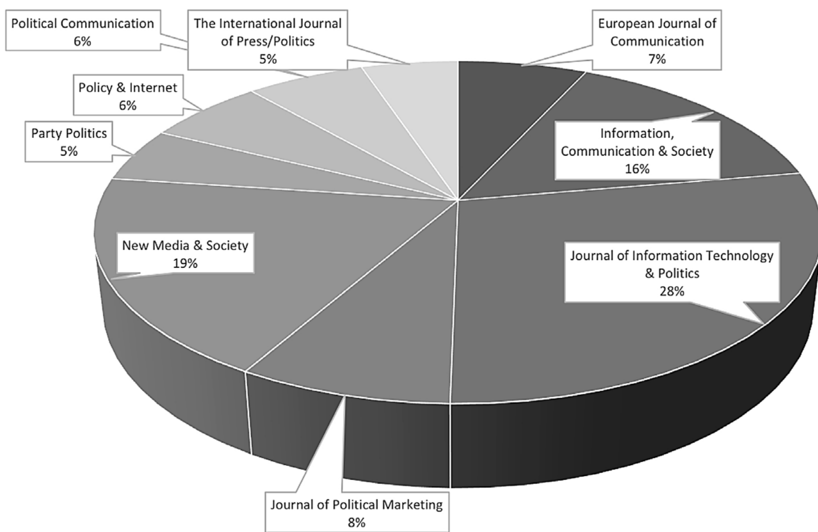


Figure 2: A composition of the research sample regarding the shares of articles in particular journals



Studies are, for the sake of clarity, classified according to the prevailing research method. Although the research methods are frequently combined, organizing the scrutinized studies according to the predominant concepts appears to allow for better systematization. Following segmentation is thus a supportive aspect, arranging examined articles with regard to which researched methods are preferred, what topics are researched and whether the studies are working with an existing dataset or are creating new ones.

The rest of the text is structured as follows. First, the new media under review are briefly introduced. The subsequent section presents and discusses the main findings of our research, including both a concise outline of the most frequent methodological approaches and techniques of online political communication research and specific software tools enabling analysis of data from websites, social network sites, weblogs etc. In discussion, attention is also paid to the limitations of the research of online political communication in general. The paper concludes with an outlook for further research.

New media under review

Within the field of political communication research, the term "new media" is being applied to various media based on digital coding, and characterized by its interactivity, hypertextuality, and communication taking place in a virtually simulated environment of the internet (see Lister et al. 2009: 13). Although there is a plethora of these media, the research of political communication focuses primarily on the following media (ordered alphabetically):

1) blogs, "the twenty-first-century version of a diary" (Hendricks – Denton Jr. 2010, 9), dating back to the 1990s; their purpose is mainly to share content, most commonly in a text form of journal entries, usually written by one author and with the addition of pictures and hyperlinks; they allow for the implementation of interactive and connective functions, the most important being commentaries posted below the articles;
2) Facebook, founded in 2004 as an internet platform with a private membership for Harvard University students (and from 2006 for the general public), is the social network with the most active users – more than 1,87 billion (Statista.com 2017); Facebook allows users to share a variety of content including unlimited text posts, photos, videos and links; additionally, it offers many different tools and applications such as online mini-games, fund-raising tools or targeted advertisement;
3) Twitter, originated in 2006, is an online news and social network allowing users to post and share short messages (originally limited to 140 characters and from November 2017 to 280 characters), which is used by approximately 317 million users (Statista.com 2017); in contrary to Facebook, Twitter allows following any users, if the account is not protected;
4) YouTube, founded in 2005, enables users to watch videos whose wide range of content includes everything from music to television to debates and even political and educational topics; although it is necessary to register to post videos, watching them is practically unregulated; since YouTube is connected to commercial activities of Google, posting content may be a profitable activity;
5) web pages, through which political parties can present themselves, do not serve only as informational sources anymore, they facilitate microblogging,

opinion polling, organization of gatherings and presentation of audio-visual content, parties can create members-only sections, interconnect their web pages with social media sites and allow for newsfeed subscription.

Although it could be argued whether blogs and internet pages should be considered "new media," for this study we have included them in our research sample as the authors of the examined studies treated them specifically as new media or focused on features linked with new media and web 2.0 (commentaries, links, audio-visual content, linkage with social media etc.). The reasoning behind this is that textual content on blogs or informative aspects of web pages are more associated with "traditional media." Nevertheless, the discussions in the comment sections, employment of web 2.0 features, and the interactive and connective aspects of this platform are definitely part of the new media.

Methods of researching online political communication: findings

Our research confirmed the earlier conclusion of Graber (2004) that, despite the technological advancements and the gradual changing of research tools, the focal point of political communication research is still about what Lasswell (1927) put in ninety years ago, i.e. who says what, in which channel, to whom and with what effect (Graber 2004, 46). Apparently, not even the arrival and more extensive use of new communication channels, in the form of new media, could change that.

What follows is a brief introduction of the most frequently employed research methods when analyzing online political communication. The most frequent method is the content analysis (in many variations and both in its qualitative and quantitative form). However, the methodology has begun a transformation towards the employment of combined approaches and utilizing complex analytical software tools, especially in the last couple of years.

Content analysis

Content analysis focuses mainly on the exploration of the content aspect of communication through the identification of specific characteristics of messages. It allows for the depiction of the transformation of media content over time. This method is widespread, especially when researching the way in which the new media are being used for political communication and the frequency and intensity of their utilization during political campaigns. By means of content analysis, it is possible to analyze a wide array of topics, from the impact of the new media on political participation, through the democratization aspects of online communication, to issues connected with the exploration of the influence of political communication, political leadership and the flow of political communication itself.

Quite often, content analysis is applied to the research of political communication on social media platforms, especially Facebook (Geber – Schrer 2015; Larson 2015; Borah 2016) and Twitter (see e.g. Graham et al. 2013; McKelvey et al. 2014; Ceron 2017). With Twitter, the study of a certain *hashtag* (#) is also prominent (see e.g. Small 2011; Christensen 2013; Raynauld – Greenberg 2014). Content analysis is also applied when researching the web pages (see, e.g. Jackson – Lilleker 2009; Vaccari 2013) and their interactive aspects (van Noort et al. 2016) or political blogs (see e.g. Meraz 2015). However, the research of the content, which has been published on web pages and in the commentaries on blogs, is less frequent.

Overall, researchers apply content analysis above all the textual messages on social media networks, while research focusing on audio-visual content is less prevalent. Gerodimos and Justinussen (2015) included visual posts, but they analyzed only the text part of the visual content (titles or word messages in pictures, sketches, or drawings etc.) and some explicit visual aspects (e.g. the appearance of specific figures in pictures). Edgerly et al. (2013) took into consideration more detailed characteristics of visual content; they conducted an in-depth analysis of visual posts, including photos, charts and infographics, videos, links and posters with text. Lee and Cambell (2016) carried out a long--term analysis of the organizational and persuasive appeals of online digital posters in the UK. Audio-visual content is in most cases studied when it comes to the analysis of YouTube (see, e.g. Church 2010; Klotz 2010; Vesnic-Alujevic – Van Bauwel 2014), although this does not apply absolutely. Nevertheless, only a few of the studies focused on the structural aspects of this type of political communication.

While researching the online political communication, it is important to analyze not only how many users will read the content, but also how powerful these messages are, or how many users will share it with their followers. To this end, Bode and Epstein (2015) employed a sophisticated and daily updated platform *Klout* that ranks social media users according to their online social influence.

Most frequently, scholars choose to explore and compare a smaller number of cases in the context of one country or region. The analysis of a more significant number of countries is less common since more extensive content analysis can be technically challenging as well as time-consuming. Nevertheless, some studies do compare a larger number of cases or states (see, e.g. Ceron and Curini 2016).

As an objectionable aspect of content analysis, we could point out the tendency to focus extensively on the individual content, instead of the context in which the political messages are delivered. Moreover, the possibilities for automatized processes and implementation of specific software tools are still somewhat sporadic. More extensive employment is being complicated as such software is tailored for the English language, making the possibility of research

conducted in other languages limited to manual or more qualitative-oriented analyses or technically challenging and expertly demanding.

Surveys and interviews

The second most frequent research method is through interviews and surveys, which allows for the exploration of not only active political participants but also individuals with a more passive approach to political communications ("consumers"). Crucial for this kind of research is the use of internet surveys, which is a very effective method of data collection.

In particular, interviews make it possible to explore the motives, experiences, and thought processes of the participants in political communication. Direct questioning through interviews enables the researchers to understand the deeper meanings, opinions, and beliefs of the participants. Verbal communication between the researchers and the respondents, however, depends on their need to share not only a common language but the same understanding of terms that are being used as well. Nevertheless, this qualitative approach makes it possible to understand the researched topic in more depth, including unveiling the motivations for online political communication, as well as its impacts (Johnson et al. 2008: 340). Another useful approach in this line of research is the employment of focus groups (see, e.g. Gustafsson 2012)

Very often, the data from surveys and questionnaires complement the outcomes from the interviews, since they allow researchers to acquire information through standardized sets of questions to explore the reactions of a selected sample of a population. Surveys can be conducted online, on the telephone, or in person, as well as delivered via e-mail (Johnson et al. 2008, 302). While many scholars use previously conducted surveys, for instance, Skovsgaard and Van Dalen (2013) created their own sample survey. Sample surveys like these are then commonly combined with other research methods (see, e.g. Druckman et al. 2010; Ceron – Curini 2016; Karlsen – Enjolras 2016). Questionnaires are also employed frequently while conducting experiments or as a preliminary source of information for future research. Researchers, most frequently, then process the data collected through these analyses by employing some form of a regression analysis.

Network analysis method

Less often, we encounter network analysis of data (see, e.g. Larsson – Moe 2012; Ausserhofer – Maireder 2013; Himelboim et al. 2013; Bentivegna – Marchetti 2015), although this approach has gained more attention lately since it makes it possible to identify the key participants and clusters within a more extensive number of strategic locations through graphic visualization. This type of analy-

sis focuses mostly on the relationships between the researched units; it explores the connections between individual actors and their mutual relationships in the context of new media (especially social networks).

This type of analysis aims to point out the interconnections of users or published content. The relations between actors are then typically depicted with visualization tools, showing different nodes and their connections (edges). This method is significant for research on both inter-party and system-wide relationships, as well as for the research on the impact of political messages on the social networks or the mutual relationships between actors (see Garrett et al. 2012: 215).

Statistical analysis method

To research the adaptation of political parties to online communication, statistical analysis focusing on the quantitative exploration of the structures of the new media (i.e. the web 2.0 features on web pages), is the most frequently used method. This approach, often misleadingly called the *structural analysis*[2], is based on the collection, examination, and presentation of a larger portion of data with the aim of pointing out specific prevailing trends or patterns. When it comes to the research on the online political communication, this approach is often applied when conducting quantitative research on structural aspects, which is not concerned with the message itself, its content, or the mutual relationships between researched units.

Russmann (2011) analyzed the web pages of political parties from the structural standpoint and from the user perspective and identified almost 100 functions for online campaigning. Schweitzer (2011) examined web pages over more extended periods, focusing on quantitative structural (but also some content) aspects of the web pages of German political parties, addressing the utilization of web 2.0 tools and functions by individual parties, as well as the levels of personalization and negative campaigning. In addition, Schweitzer researched structural aspects also in the context of formal and function design, i.e. informational, mobilizing, participatory and presentation functions.

Time series analysis

For prediction purposes, the analysis of time series is the most often encountered method, as the prevalent logic of the research lies in the analysis of characteristics development over time. Time series analysis thus represents a way to analyze data with the purpose of the extraction of statistics, characteristics, and trends. This examination allows for the prediction of future developments, in the case

2 This term however refers properly to an engineering analysis of structures such as bridges, buildings etc.

of online political communication, for example, the prediction of election results. Although this method focuses more on the analysis of data that has been collected beforehand, it constitutes an essential line of research, since it covers a diverse spread of methodological concepts that these time series can analyze.

Time series analysis has been employed for example by Vergeer and Franses (2016) to study in real-time reactions on Twitter concerning a TV debate broadcasted by a Danish TV channel and examine how a set of analyzed phenomena (in this case political issues) develop over time. Authors themselves point out certain limitations of this research though, for instance, the risk of subjective results, as the audience of these political debates as well as the users that comment on these debates on Twitter is somewhat specific demographically. Time series analysis was also used by Nahon et al. (2011) who researched the dynamics of viral information in the blogosphere, or Franch (2013) when researching the prediction of election results in the 2010 UK parliamentary elections.

Experiments

Although quite rare, experiments are also being conducted to explore online political communication. Experiments certainly do have their merit, since they make it possible to test different effects and impacts of various forms of communication as well as examine the influences and effects of particular controlled aspects of political communication towards selected participants, their immediate reactions and preferences.

The experimental approach was employed by Park (2015) when studying the effects of negative political messages on the behaviour and emotional-cognitive reactions of Twitter users during the 2015 local elections in South Korea. Householder and La Marre (2014) conducted an experiment when researching homophily in relation to the connection between the personal perception of trustworthiness of a candidate's resources and the intention to take part in the political support for this candidate. Parkin (2012) researched how the presentation of information with multimedia components influences the perception of content and voting preferences of selected users who visited a web page of a fictional candidate. Towner and Duolio (2011) applied the experimental method to research how web 2.0 functions and tools affect political opinions (the trustworthiness of selected media and the probability of election attendance relating to different types of political communication to which the user is exposed).

Automated Sentiment Analysis

An interesting and innovative approach to the analysis of political communication is automated sentiment analysis. Although quite frequently applied (see, e.g. Aragón et al. 2013; Dang-Xuan et al. 2013), this research method is still in

its infancy (Vergeer 2012: 15). However, we will most likely see its development over the next few years.

Sentiment analysis adopts automatized procedures based on predefined ontological dictionaries. This, however, is a cause for some limitations too. This analysis can have issues while identifying ironic or paradoxical statements; it can also fail when distinguishing strategic thinking or when working with specific language nuances, like the usage of jargon or neologisms (Ceron et al. 2014: 343). On the other hand, the currently employed algorithms are sufficiently able to distinguish the strength of positive or negative emotions in short and informal texts. They can adequately reflect word negations, words that strengthen a meaning, amplifications, typos or other potentially problematic aspects (Dang-Xuan et al. 2013: 802).

One possibility for overcoming the still present shortcomings of this method of sentiment analysis is a semi-automated two-step method; so-called supervised aggregated sentiment analysis (SASA). In the first step human coders, who can easily filter spam messages and evaluate subtle language nuances, read and code a small research sample, from which a training set is created. In the second step, the SASA algorithm can factor in the information delivered by human coders and analyze the remaining data (Ceron – d'Adda 2016: 7).

Multi-method approach

A recurrent trend in the research of online political communication is the combination of several methodological approaches, where the scholars choose to employ quantitative and qualitative techniques in a complementary way. Combining methodological approaches allows for mutual comparisons of data, and it can help to verify the results or to supplement the quantitative results with qualitative examples. While the more substantial portion of the research is primarily based on one methodological concept, to which a complementary technique of data collection and/or analysis is chosen, more and more often we encounter studies that are *a priori* conceptualized as multi-method. A wide array of these studies assumes that the study of "hybrid media" calls for the employment of "hybrid methods" (Freelon – Karpf 2015: 391).

These studies strive to overcome certain hindrances of particular research methods by combining various quantitative and qualitative techniques. Since it is necessary to take into consideration the inter- and intra-platform discrepancies between different types of new media, choosing appropriate methodological approaches concerning the structures, function, and types of shared content across these new media, consciously combining distinct techniques while conducting a multi-method is, therefore, imperative.

Magin et al. (2017) combined the quantitative content analysis of Facebook profiles of German and Austrian political parties with qualitative semi-

-structured expert interviews with party secretaries and communication strategy, to explore how and why parties use Facebook (if they utilize it for mobilization, interactive, or informative purposes). Enli and Skogerbø (2013) combined the method of content analysis with interviews when they conducted an explorative qualitative study researching the employment of Facebook and Twitter in political communication during Norwegian elections. A broad array of methods was utilized by Chen and Smith (2011), when exploring the patterns in the adoption of new media by individual party candidates. They combined the content analysis of web pages of political parties with the analysis of campaign videos, as well as a quantification of mentions of party leaders on blogs, and a structural online questionnaire for individual candidates covering their employment of new media in campaigns. They also conducted semi-structured interviews with party personnel to elaborate on the logic behind the selection of media channels and campaign strategies. Koc-Michalska et al. (2014) used quantitative content analysis of candidate webs and pre-election questionnaires and then employed the Poisson regression model to analyze the data when exploring both the supply and the demand in the communication process.

Utilization of the specific software tools

Since social media and the functions of web 2.0 became a standard tool of political campaigning, specific software has become indispensable for scholars focused on the topic of online political communication, particularly for conducting quantitative-oriented research. Modern technologies allowed for processing and analysis of large quantities of data, which are produced by the new media and broaden the thematic possibilities of political communication happening online.

One crucial part of the studies mentioned above are undoubtedly the tools that enable the collection of data from social networks, blogs, and webpages according to specific criteria; so-called *crawlers* or *mining applications* facilitate the obtainment of the content and the relevant metadata as well. To download data from Twitter or Facebook, the Application Programming Interface is most commonly used, as well as programs like *TwapperKeeper*, *Tweepy,* or *Netvizz.* To gain data from YouTube, applications such as *TubeKit* or *ContextMiner* are suitable. More than just collecting and downloading the metadata, analysis is also possible through multifunction programs, such as the monitoring and analytical platform *Crimson Hexagon* (which can be used for both text and visual analysis), Twitter oriented software *DiscoverText*, which allows the clustering of data (posts) with identical content, or *The Archivist*, open-source software for sorting, classifying, and organizing the collected data.

The advancement of both the quantitative and qualitative content analysis is facilitated by the ICTs. For instance, programs like *QDA Miner* allow ana-

lyzing the transcripts of interviews or focus groups, documents, articles and even visual content like pictures or photos and features integrated tools for analysis of statistical data and quantitative content analysis as well. Patterns in the communicative behaviour of participants in a specific online community can be analyzed and visualized by the automated textual analysis through platforms like the online software *Netlytic*. The ICTs also play a vital role in the sentiment analyses and automated text analyses, *SentiStrength*, enables, for instance, automated analysis of up to 16,000 texts in one second. In contrast, *Wordfish*, dedicated to extracting political positions from text documents via word frequencies analysis, makes it possible to access the degree of ideological heterogeneity. Advanced visualization software is also being used with an increased frequency; tools like *Nephi* or *NodeXL* are a crucial part of the network analysis, making graphic demonstration and representation possible not only for the researched data but for their mutual connections as well.

Discussion of findings

The generalized conclusions must be balanced with the general limitations of the dataset. First, we need to point out that the presented study is based on the analysis of "only" 175 studies published across 9 journals since 2009. There are, of course, many other journals within the broader field of media, communication, and political studies publishing articles on this issue. Second, the dataset consists "only" of journal articles, which might be more suited to empirically oriented publications over an elaborate theoretical discussion than other kinds of publications, such as monographs. Even though the authors of this study believe that the research sample adequately represents the current trends in the research of online political communication, depicting the most important techniques and methods used by the scholars, it must be noted that any possible generalizations emerging from this study would mainly be applicable to this research sample and must be drawn with caution.

Besides, when accessing the methodological aspects of the research of online political communication, it is crucial to pay attention to the possible limitations and drawbacks, which are linked to this research and which should be taken into consideration when choosing suitable research methods. Above all, it is necessary to take into consideration the technical and the factual differences between specific new media platforms that are being researched (i.e. the *inter-platform* dissimilarity). These platforms have distinct characteristics; they allow for different connective, communicative, and expressive functions and they differ in the provided information about its users and profile details, as well as in the form and structure of shareable content. As a result, possibilities for research also vary and not all the new media are mutually comparable due to their structure, content, and/or the data they provide. Simultaneously, it is

also crucial to factor the structural and content differences within one specific platform (i.e. the *intra-platform* discrepancies) into the research design. For instance, on Facebook, it is possible to create private as well as public profiles, different group and community pages, but each of them is endowed with different settings and specific functions, making the comparison between them arduous (Mascheroni – Mattoni 2013: 226).

The limitations of research also emerge from specific aspects of new media. In the case of Facebook, the research is being limited by privacy settings, as the private accounts allow users to block off specific posts, photos, and other content features from the public. Although the public profiles usually do not employ such privacy settings, this can still profoundly affect the collection of data about commenting users. Generalization of the research result is therefore very limited, if not impossible. Although audio-visual posts (mainly photos and videos) are an integral part of political communication in general, this diversity of shareable content may also constitute a possible complication, due to the associated technical difficulties. For this reason, most researches focus primarily on text-based content (Larsson 2015: 470).

On the other hand, in the case of Twitter, the security and privacy settings are not as much of a complication, even though on Twitter it is possible to restrain people from following an account with an authorization requirement. Yet, generalizing the research outcomes is equally challenging due to the particular demographic structure of Twitter users. In addition, the level and context of analysis of Twitter posts can be problematic, since possible interactions on Twitter vary from @-answers, re-tweets, and re-tweets with comment to different types of audio-visual content that can be shared. If the data is collected through Twitter API, specific information about the type of the posts do not have to be ascertained, and the content can be researched as individual posts as well as in the context of threads.

The issue of selecting data and choosing the level of analysis could become apparent when analyzing weblogs as well. Since there is no universal or central registry of blogs, when selecting relevant cases, the researchers must use one of many databases, whose ranking of the blogs could be based on different criterion. For analyzing the interactive functions of blogs and web pages, it is also necessary to take into consideration that the discussion and comment sections could be subjected to the approval of the author and the comments could be monitored and filtered.

In the case of YouTube, a possible drawback arises from the anonymous setting of this platform, since all the usernames are *de facto* pseudonyms, whose usage is not restricted in any way. Thus, it could be difficult to identify (particularly when researching cases with which the researcher is not acquainted in much detail) which account is the official channel of the researched political subject (even more so when it is not uncommon for parties to have local branches with

their channels or specific channels dedicated to different campaign purposes). Nevertheless, it is usually possible to distinguish the official accounts on YouTube as well as on Facebook and Twitter through the links shared on the official web pages of the political subject under review. Simultaneously, YouTube is quite an ephemeral channel of communication, since without third-party tools it is not possible to download YouTube videos, and these can be taken down any time as well, which complicates efforts for systematic data collection (Church 2010: 140).

This ephemeral aspect of new media is relevant for other platforms as well though, for instance, with a retrospective exploration of political communication (e.g. when researching political campaigns of already finished elections). The process of downloading posts could affect the number and the content of downloaded posts, commentaries, and sharing of metadata. Yet, because of the quick pace and fluidity of online communication, it is safe to assume that the publication of posts related to a specific political event (i.e. one election, political discussion etc.) will cease shortly afterwards (see Magin et al. 2017).

Alongside this, we should mention another critical hindrance to the research of political communication. Together with the expanding exploration of the new media, the researchers must cope with many technical difficulties; the primary one being the extent of data which are downloadable for the analyses. Although the anonymously aggregated data from the new media, especially the social networks, provide a unique possibility for analyses of structural, multilevel, macro and microanalysis, the availability of this data represents one of the most significant constraints for social science research. Aside from the demand for the expert programmer skills required for the collection of data from the social networks, individual platforms increase their protection of proprietary data for preserving the privacy of their users, making obtainment of the data more and more demanding (see Garrett et al. 2012).

Conclusion

Online political communication has become an essential part of modern political campaigning. Analysis of the new media, therefore, enables us to research the complex dynamics of political communication, including its offline aspects, as it reflects the overall communication strategy of a given political actor. It captures the key aspects of political communication, mirroring what the political actors deem as crucial to share with the electorate, how open they are to feedback and to more extensive dialogue with the public and how efficiently they communicate with it. Although the primary circle of people who follow political actors is somewhat narrow, these users themselves quite often have a large crowd of followers. Through this two-step flow of communication, the political messages reach even the passive consumers of political communication and the broad public.

The research of new media, reacting to the fact that the internet has become an inseparable part of the public's everyday life, carried out with a specific set of methodological procedures, is a highly relevant and still developing sub-field. Even more so, when taking into consideration that communication from politicians, with politicians, and about politicians is happening more and more online. At the same time, this research also faces an increasing level of technical limitations and difficulties related to obtaining and examining private and protected data about social network and new media users, and the research itself puts high demands on the expert knowledge of the scholarly public, the interdisciplinary becoming an inseparable part of this research. For these reasons, the process of selecting and implementing appropriate research methods of collection and analysis of data is a crucial aspect, worthy of attention in the future.

In this study, we have strived to comprehensively outline which methods and techniques are being used for the research of online political communication, and to which purposes these methods are applied. We also explored the new media itself, focusing on which new media are most commonly examined and what limitations are connected to this research.

Although the methodology of the published research has started to transform towards the employment of combined methodological approaches and the approaches utilizing sophisticated analytical software tools, the most frequent method of researching online political communication is the quantitative or qualitative content analysis. Most frequently, a smaller number of cases are being compared in the context of one country or region, since more extensive content analysis can be technically challenging and time-consuming as well. The second most frequent method of research is through interviews or surveys; less often we encounter the network analysis of data or statistical analysis. On the other hand, for prediction purposes, we mainly utilize the analysis of time series. Although quite rare, experiments are also being conducted to explore online political communication as they allow researchers to examine influences and effects of particular controlled aspects of political communication towards selected participants, their immediate reactions and preferences.

Quite recurrent in the research of online political communication is the combination of methodological approaches, where the quantitative and qualitative techniques complement each other in order to overcome certain hindrances of particular research techniques. Since it is necessary to take into some consideration the inter- and intra-platform discrepancies between various types of new media, choosing appropriate methodological approaches with regard to the structures, function, and types of shared content across these new media, consciously combining distinct techniques while conducting a multi-method is, therefore, imperative.

However, with the multi-method approach gaining popularity and the more frequent implementation of ICTs, it is becoming apparent that the character

of published studies is slowly transforming as well. The research of political communication in general, but especially in the context of new media has become more and more an interdisciplinary field. Yet the collection and analysis of data from new media and social networks, in particular, requires more and more advanced expert skills. For instance, as the pressure to keep user data private and safe increases, obtaining the relevant metadata is becoming more challenging. Moreover, with the implementation of a wide array of techniques from different research fields, scholars with different sets of assets are being called for. As a result, the requirements for expert knowledge in the fields of mathematics, programming, as well as statistical analysis and economics, have grown considerably over past years. Correct implementation of the research as mentioned earlier methods and the subsequent reflection and replication of these studies may prove challenging for the wider interested scholarly public. In its consequence, the complexity of the research and the employment of advanced software tools can limit the size of the "audience" that scholars can address with their research, and it can even reduce the published research to its conclusions, since the understanding of applied methodology and the research process itself could be dependent on whether the readers have the specific technical knowledge, often reaching far beyond their primary research fields.

It must be said though that the increasing interdisciplinarity and requirements for expert knowledge from the more technically oriented fields do not represent *a priori* a negative direction of development. On the contrary, they enrich the social science research with new methods and techniques and broaden the expertise of scholars focused on social sciences and humanities, whether in the political science, sociology, psychology, media studies or other disciplines. We can assume that in the years to come, it will become progressively necessary to expand and strengthen the cooperation between the social-sciences and mathematical-technical fields, for instance, to improve the possibilities of automated analyses, such as the sentiment analysis, to allow for exploration of political communication taking place online in the new media, in the regional languages.

On the other hand, we would like to point out that the research that does not employ new methods and techniques (as the ICTs and advanced software tools or methods inherent to the other science fields do not) are in no way inferior. The fact that some scholars do not opt for these advanced analytical, visualization, or statistical software, or choose topics that do not require the employment of such tools, does not make their research in any way less important or relevant for the scholarly public.

References

Aragón, Pablo et al. (2013): Communication Dynamics in Twitter During Political Campaigns: The Case of the 2011 Spanish National Election. *Policy & Internet* 5(2): 183–206. DOI: 10.1002/1944-2866.POI327.

Ausserhofer, Julian – Axel Maireder (2013): National politics on twitter Twitter. Structures and topics of a networked public sphere. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(3): 291–314. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2012.756050.

Bentivegna, Sara – Rita Marchetti (2015): Live tweeting a political debate: The case of the 'Italia bene comune'. *European Journal of Communication* 30(6): 631–647. DOI: 10.1177/0267323115595526.

Bode, Leticia – Ben Epstein (2015): Campaign Klout: Measuring Online Influence During the 2012 Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 12(2): 133–148. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.994157.

Borah, Porismita (2016): Political Facebook Use: Campaign Strategies Used in 2008 and 2012 Presidential Elections. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 13(4): 362–338. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2016.1163519.

Ceron, Andrea (2017), Intra-party politics in 140 characters. *Party Politics* 23(1): 7–17. DOI: 10.1177/1354068816654325.

Ceron, Andrea – Luigi Curini (2016): e-Campaigning in the 2014 European elections: The emphasis on valence issues in a two-dimensional multiparty system. *Party Politics*. DOI: 10.1177/1354068816642807.

Ceron, Andrea – Giovanna, d'Adda (2016): E-campaigning on Twitter: The effectiveness of distributive promises and negative campaign in the 2013 Italian election. *New Media & Society* 18(9): 1935–1955. DOI: 10.1177/1461444815571915.

Ceron, Andrea et al. (2014): Every tweet counts? How sentiment analysis of social media can improve our knowledge of citizens' political preferences with an application to Italy and France. *New Media & Society* 16(2): 340–358. DOI: 10.1177/1461444813480466.

Chen, Peter John – Peter Jay Smith (2011): Digital Media in the 2008 Canadian Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 8(4): 399–417. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2011.559734.

Christensen, Christian (2013): Wave-riding and hashtag-jumping: Twitter, minority 'third parties' and the 2012 US elections. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(5): 646–666. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.783609.

Church, Scott H (2010): YouTube Politics: YouChoose and Leadership Rhetoric During the 2008 Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 7(2–3): 124–142. DOI: 10.1080/19331681003748933.

Dang-Xuan, Linh et al. (2013): An investigation of influentials and the role of sentiment in political communication on twitter during election periods. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(5): 795–825. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.783608.

Druckman, James N. – Martin J. Kifer – Michael Parkin (2010): Timeless Strategy Meets New Medium: Going Negative on Congressional Campaign Web Sites, 2002–2006. *Political Communication* 27(1): 88–103. DOI: 10.1080/10584600903502607.

Edgerly, Stephanie et al. (2016): Posting about politics: Media as resources for political expression on Facebook. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 13(2): 108–125. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2016.1160267.

Enli, Gunn Sara – Eli Skogerbø (2013): Personalized campaigns in party-centred politics. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(5): 757–774. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.782330.

Franch, Fabio (2013): (Wisdom of the Crowds): 2010 UK Election Prediction with Social Media. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 10(1): 57–71. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2012.705080.

Freelon, Deen – David Karpf (2015): Of big birds and bayonets: hybrid Twitter interactivity in the 2012 Presidential debates *Information, Communication & Society* 18(4): 390–406. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2014.952659.

Garrett, R. Kelly et al. (2012): New ICTs and the Study of Political Communication. *International Journal of Communication* 6: 214–231.

Geber, Sarah – Helmut Scherer (2015): My Voter, My Party, and Me. American and German Parliamentarians on Facebook. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 12(4): 360–377. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2015.1101037.

Gerodimos, Roman – Jákup Justinussen (2015): Obama's 2012 Facebook Campaign: Political Communication in the Age of the Like Button. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 12(2): 113–132. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.982266.

Graber, Doris A. (2004): Methodological Developments in Political Communication Research, in *Kaid*, Lynda Lee (Ed.), Handbook of Political Communication Research, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 45–67.

Graham, Todd et al. (2013): Between Broadcasting Political Messages and Interacting with Voters. The use of Twitter during the 2010 UK general election campaign. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(5): 692–716. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.785581.

Gronbeck, Bruce E. (2009): The Web, Campaign 07–08, and Engaged Citizens: Political, Social, and Moral Consequences, in *Denton* Robert E. Jr. (Ed.), The 2008 Presidential Campaign, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 228–243.

Gustafsson, Nils (2012): The subtle nature of Facebook politics: Swedish social network site users and political participation. *New Media & Society* 14(7): 1111–1127. DOI: 10.1177/1461444812439551.

Hendricks, John Allen – Robert E. Denton Jr. (2010): Political Campaigns and Communicating with the Electorate in the Twenty-First Century, in Hendricks, John Allen/ Robert E. Denton Jr. (Eds.), *Communicator-in-Chief: How Barack Obama Used New Media Technology to Win the White House*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1–18.

Himelboim, Itai – Derek Hansen – Anne Bowser (2013): Playing in the Same Twitter Network. Political information seeking in the 2010 US gubernatorial elections. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(9): 1373–1396. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2012.706316.

Householder, Elizabeth E. – Heather L. LaMarre (2014): Facebook Politics: Toward a Process Model for Achieving Political Source Credibility Through Social Media. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 11(4): 368–382. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.951753.

Jackson, Nigel A. – Darren G. Lilleker (2009): Building an Architecture of Participation? Political Parties and Web 2.0 in Britain. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 6(3–4): 232–250. DOI: 10.1080/19331680903028438.

Johnson, Janet Buttolph – H. T. Reynolds – Jason D. Mycoff (2008): Political science research methods. 6th edition, Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Johnson, Dennis W. (2011): *Campaigning in the Twenty-First Century: A Whole New Ballgame?* New York, NY: Routledge.

Karlsen, Rune – Bernard Enjolras (2016): Styles of Social Media Campaigning and Influence in a Hybrid Political Communication System: Linking Candidate Survey Data with Twitter Data. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 21(3): 338–357. DOI: 10.1177/1940161216645335.

Klotz, Robert J. (2010): The Sidetracked 2008 YouTube Senate Campaign. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 7(2–3): 110–123. DOI: 10.1080/19331681003748917.

Koc-Michalska, Karolina – Rachel Gibson/Thierry Vedel (2014): Online Campaigning in France, 2007–2012: Political Actors and Citizens in the Aftermath of the Web.2.0 Evolution. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 11(2): 220–244. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.903217.

Larsson, Anders Olof (2015): Pandering, protesting, engaging. Norwegian party leaders on Facebook during the 2013 'Short campaign'. *Information, Communication & Society* 18(4): 459–473. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2014.967269.

Larsson, Anders Olof – Hallvard *Moe* (2012): Studying political microblogging: Twitter users in the 2010 Swedish election campaign, *New Media & Society* 14 (5): 729–747. DOI: 10.1177/1461444811422894.

Lasswell, Harold D. (1927): Propaganda Techniques in the World War, New York, NY: Knopf.

Lee, Benjamin – Vincent Campbell (2016), Looking Out or Turning in? Organizational Ramifications of Online Political Posters on Facebook. *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 21(3): 313–337. DOI: 10.1177/1940161216645928.

Lister, Martin et al. (2009): *New Media: a critical introduction*. 2nd edition, Abingdon: Routledge.

Magin, Melanie et al. (2017): Campaigning in the fourth age of political communication. A multi--method study on the use of Facebook by German and Austrian parties in the 2013 national election campaigns. *Information, Communication & Society* 20(11): 1698–1719. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2016.1254269.

Mascheroni, Giovanna – Alice Mattoni (2013): Electoral Campaigning 2.0 – the Case of Italian Regional Elections, *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 10 (2): 223–240. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2012.758073.

McKelvey, Karissa – Joseph DiGrazia – Fabio Rojas (2014): Twitter publics: how online political communities signaled electoral outcomes in the 2010 US house election. *Information, Communication & Society* 17(4): 436–450. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2014.892149.

Meraz, Sharon (2015): Quantifying Partisan Selective Exposure Through Network Text Analysis of Elite Political Blog Networks During the U.S. 2012 Presidential Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 12(1): 37–53. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.974119.

Mirer, Michael L. – Leticia Bode (2015): Tweeting in defeat: How candidates concede and claim victory in 140 characters. *New Media & Society* 17(3): 453–469. DOI: 10.1177/1461444813505364.

Nahon, Karine et al. (2011): Fifteen Minutes of Fame: The Power of Blogs in the Lifecycle of Viral Political Information. *Policy & Internet* 3(1): 1–28. DOI: 10.2202/1944-2866.1108.

Park, Chang Sup (2015): Applying "Negativity Bias" to Twitter: Negative News on Twitter, Emotions, and Political Learning. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 12(4): 342–359. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2015.1100225.

Parkin, Michael (2012): The Impact of Multimedia Technology on Candidate Website Visitors. *Journal of Political Marketing* 11(3): 143–164. DOI: 10.1080/15377857.2012.699414.

Raynauld, Vincent – Josh Greenberg (2014): Tweet, Click, Vote: Twitter and the 2010 Ottawa Municipal Election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 11(4): 412–434. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2014.935840.

Russmann, Uta (2011): Targeting Voters via the Web – A Comparative Structural Analysis of Austrian and German Party Websites. *Policy & Internet* 3(3): 1–23. DOI: 10.2202/1944-2866.1085.

Schweitzer, Eva Johanna (2011): Normalization 2.0: A longitudinal analysis of German online campaigns in the national elections 2002–9. *European Journal of Communication* 26(4): 310–327. DOI: 10.1177/0267323111423378.

Skovsgaard, Morten – Arjen Van Dalen (2013): Dodging the Gatekeepers? Social media in the campaign mix during the 2011 Danish elections. *Information, Communication & Society* 16(5): 737–756. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2013.783876.

Small, Tamara A. (2011): What the Hashtag? A content analysis of Canadian politics on Twitter. *Information, Communication & Society* 14(6): 872–895. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2011.554572.

Statista.com (2017): Most famous social network sites worldwide as of January 2017, ranked by number of active users (in millions) [online], *The Statistics Portal* [cit. 2017-03-29]: available at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number--of-users/>.

Tomasello, Tami K. – Youngwon Lee – April B. Baer (2010): 'New media' research publication trends and outlets in communication, 1990–2006. *New Media & Society* 12(4): 531–548. DOI: 10.1177/1461444809342762.

Towner, Terri L. – David A. Duolio (2011): An experiment of campaign effects during the YouTube election. *New Media & Society* 13 (4): 626–644. DOI: 10.1177/1461444810377917.

Vaccari, Cristian (2013): A tale of two e-parties: Candidate websites in the 2008 US presidential primaries. *Party Politics* 19(1): 19–40. DOI: 10.1177/1354068810391287.

Van Noort, Guda – Rens Vliegenhart – Sanne Kruikemeier (2016): Return on interactivity? The characteristics and effectiveness of Web sites during the 2010 Dutch local elections. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 13(4): 325–364. DOI: 10.1080/19331681.2016.1230921.

Vergeer, Maurice (2012): Politics, elections and online campaigning: Past, present… and a peek into the future. *New Media & Society* 15(1): 9–17. DOI: 10.1177/1461444812457327.

Vergeer, Maurice/Philip Hans Franses (2016): Live audience responses to live televised election debates: time series analysis of issue salience and party salience on audience behaviour. *Information, Communication & Society* 19(10): 1390–1410. DOI: 10.1080/1369118X.2015.1093526.

Vesnic-Alujevic, Lucia/Sofie *Van Bauwel* (2014), YouTube: A Political Advertising Tool? A Case Study of the Use of YouTube in the Campaign for the European Parliament Elections 2009. *Journal of Political Marketing* 13(3): 195–212. DOI: 10.1080/15377857.2014.929886.

Olga Brunnerová *is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Humanities and Political Science, Metropolitan University Prague. In her research, she focuses on new political parties, their electoral success and process of their institutionalisation, especially in the area of the EU. She also deals with the topic of online political communication and electoral campaigns happening online through new media platform.*

Jakub Charvát *is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science and Humanities, Metropolitan University Prague, and Department of Political Science and Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, J. E. Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem. He serves as the Editor-in-Chief of Czech Political Science Review. His research focuses on the politics of electoral reform, elections and political communication. He is the author of several books, studies and articles in the field. Email: jakub.charvat@mup.cz.*

How is Expert Knowledge Diffused in International Politics and What Makes It Actionable? Epistemic Infrastructure: a new Framework for Analysis[1]

ŠÁRKA WAISOVÁ

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0020

Abstract: *The central focus of this article has been expert knowledge diffusion in international politics, particularly questions such as "how does expert knowledge move from its origin position to international politics and begin to influence it?", "what decides that specific expert knowledge will diffuse within international politics and be actionable, and another expert knowledge will not?", and "how do we research expert knowledge diffusion in international politics?". Here an interdisciplinary study is presented and suggests an innovative approach to how to study expert knowledge diffusion in international politics: 1. The concept of epistemic infrastructure, where epistemic infrastructure is understood as the spatio-temporal hybrid entity with the agency which makes expert knowledge diffusion in international politics possible and which essentially structures this environment; and 2. Epistemic infrastructure as the framework for analysis, which offers a way to research the connections between science, technology, politics and society in the processes of expert knowledge diffusion in international politics.*

Keywords: ***expert knowledge, diffusion, epistemic infrastructure, international politics***

1 The research was supported by Czech Science Foundation, Grant No. 19-09443S "Expert Knowledge Diffusion in International Politics".

Introduction

When in the 1960s scientists discovered micro plastics (plastic parts smaller than 0.5 mm) in the oceans and their negative impact on living organisms, they discussed the issue in laboratories. Ten years later the issue was already being discussed in academic journals and at academic conferences (Ryan 2015). During the last decade micro plastics have emerged as an issue in general journals such as National Geographic and in international environmental campaigns. After all, the issue has penetrated domestic and international political debate, which has resulted in the setting up of standards for the use of micro plastics. In 2015, for example, the EU accepted the first directive to reduce the use of micro plastics in cosmetics, arguing the deleterious effects of micro plastics based on scientific evidence (The European Commission 2019). This case shows that the results of the research discussed in a few laboratories in the 1960s spread within a few decades into the heads of the people and into the agendas of various agents globally. The story of the diffusion of expert knowledge ('EK') on micro plastics proves that EK has diffused not only from laboratory to laboratory and from university to university, but it has also spread into our daily lives, including domestic and international politics.

Observers (e.g. Nowotny et al. 2003; Ravetz 2012, 2016; Rogers 1983/2001) argue that we live in a knowledge society based on a knowledge economy, both associated with the diffusion and use of EK and innovations. In such a world the policymakers have been increasingly reliant on experts to plan and implement policies and find solutions to social and other problems. Politics (and thus policy) has turned out to be a knowledge-based activity. Governments and international organizations have established scientific advisory positions and have declared the use of science and expert knowledge to make politics (Gluckman 2014; Joint Research Center n.d.). Scholars (e.g. Adler – Poulio 2011; Antoniades 2015; Evers 2000; Haas 1992; Lazega 1992; Sending 2015) have demonstrated that EK is the key to carrying through and defending changes, the source and the instrument of power, the way to reach effectiveness and to win authority, profit or control over the dominant role in the game, and the basis for so-called informed decision.

The rise in importance of EK and its diffusion in international politics has correlated with the growth of a number of issues which we are not able to solve on a national level and without access to specialized and scientifically confirmed findings. The contemporary CVOID-crisis confirmed this argument. The production and diffusion of EK have become the international strategic processes and the key determinant of innovation. Furthermore, the potential for EK diffusion in the international environment is immense: states and companies fear that without EK they will lose their competitiveness, the diffusion of EK is supported by various development programs (e.g. by the World Bank /1998/1999) and

there are less bloc mechanisms to EK diffusion in the international environment than in internally organized ecologies.

That EK has been diffusing into and in international politics and that the diffusion of EK is a process with exceptional power and economic and social potential and effects is a fact. But it has to be said that in other respects we do not know much about the processes. The goal of the present article is to open the debate on "how expert knowledge gets from the place of its production into international politics, how EK became globally actionable, how the international political environment is settled by EK? In other word, what does matter in EK diffusion?". To find answers is especially complicated, because "the contemporary international" may be characterized as the social environment of multi-layered interactions between transnational, national and local where states have a relatively marginal position (Sending 2015) and where there are, in Burton's (1992) words, a lot of structural holes.

Previous research into EK diffusion in international politics (e.g. Sending 2015; Waisová 2018) is mainly organized as in-depth theoretically informed analyses following the socio-genesis of the particular EK and its diffusion, respectively the activities of particular agents or the impact of the structure. However, such an approach is able to give us only partial answers to the questions above. Here I aim to develop an innovative approach how to grasp and study EK diffusion in international politics and what does matter in this process.

I proceed in two steps: Firstly, I do an interdisciplinary state-of-the-art review to discover what different scholars and disciplines understand as important factors and processes in EK diffusion and I debate the relevance of this knowledge for international relations. I decided for a multidisciplinary approach because EK diffusion is an issue analyzed only in a limited and specific way in International Relations and in Political Science (Gilardi 2012; Newmark 2002), and the multidisciplinary revision of diffusionist literature much better highlights a wealth of opportunities for further conceptualization and empirical investigation of the problem in International Relations. I have included findings from the sociology of science, science and technology studies, knowledge management, anthropology, and economic geography to name a few. These disciplines have been paying attention to EK diffusion for decades and the issue is already well embedded in their research traditions (see e.g. Amin – Cohendet 2004; Christakic – Fowler 2007; Grannovetter 1973; Knorr Cetina 2007; Lazega 1992; Liu – King – Baerman 2010; Rogers 1983/2001; Saxenian 2006; Steiner-Khamsi 2012; Strang 1991). Lastly, I used the knowledge from the debate on COVID and the spread of the disease.

Secondly, based on the lessons learned from the interdisciplinary state-of--the-art review I suggest an innovative approach – I called epistemic infrastructure – how to study EK diffusion in international politics. In the conceptual terms I see EPIN as a hybrid entity (or assemblage) which must be understood within the context of the relationships between structure and agency, and which

in essence is based on relationality, practices, materiality, spatiality and temporality. All this in mutual interaction give EPIN the capabilities to diffuse EK; in other words, it gives agency to EPIN. EPIN could be also applied as a framework for analysis, the way offering instruments and steps to grasp and scrutinize the process of EK diffusion. In the final part the potential, as well as weaknesses of EPIN as a concept and framework for analyses are discussed.

The starting point of the research

The revision of diffusionist literature indicates that there are several very different positions to EK diffusion: technocratic-rationalist (see Irwin – Michael 2003; Marsh – Sharman 2009), constructivist (see Gergen – Gergen 2004) and practice-oriented (e.g. Amin – Cohendet 2004; Knorr Cetina 2007; in International Relations e.g. Adler – Pouliot 2011; Bueger – Gadinger 2018; Sending 2015). Present research is inspired by the practice-centered approach. Expert knowledge is understood as an in-depth knowledge of the substance of a specific area or subject, which includes facts, information, professional codes and skills gained through specific training and education, socialization, practice, and research (not necessarily done in the laboratory) and through a theoretical and practical understanding of the subject (Eller 2017). I believe that EK diffusion and knowledgeable practices are not isolated activities; they rather result from social structures, embedded practices, technical processes, absorptive capacities of recipients, and from the institutions and forms in which they take place, develop and are maintained. Knowledge is a spatio-temporal phenomenon situated in practice, which is diffused by interactions. *Ipso facto*, I try to develop an approach which is able to include the tracing of processes, practices, relations and material forms. The main unit of analysis is nothing more than the everyday practice of expert knowledge diffusion and the process of diffusion itself. My emphasis in this article talks about knowledge as a practice and process, rather than a possession; however, it is clear that in the real world it is not possible to delineate a clear border between knowledge that is "possessed" and knowledge that is "practiced" (Cook – Brown 1999).

Diffusion is understood as a multidimensional process consisting of global, international, transnational, domestic and inter-organizational interactions which occur among many different entities. Diffusion is neither automatic nor spontaneous and is also not only a technical process based on a chain of events; it is rather a process which takes place in a network of social relations, in an environment of stable practices, institutions and pedagogical forms. Practiced knowledge is distributed because, instead of being possessed in the heads of individuals, it is collectively enacted through relations between them, and mediated by the intersubjective meanings that are invested in the artefacts they produce (Amin – Cohendet 2004: xiv).

Expert knowledge diffusion: toward a multidisciplinary conversation

The goal of this part is not, and it can never be, to widely map and review diffusionist literature, the goal is to open the door to other disciplines and find out how EK diffusion was grasped to take inspiration for international political research which is still in its infancy (for research challenges of EK diffusion in International Relations see Gilardi 2012). The question was how a multidisciplinary state-of-the-art review should be organized. Step-by-step it became clear that despite many disciplinary differences it is possible to find five uniting issues across the research: 1) research of the actors of diffusion, 2) research of the structures and environment in which diffusion takes place, 3) an analysis of the instruments and mechanisms of diffusion, 4) practice-oriented research, and 5) the debate on methodology and methods for the research of diffusion. The methodological debate is important but rather beyond the interest of this article and that is why I will not pay extensively attention to the issue. Based on this, the following review will be organized; each subchapter will always shortly introduce the issue generally and then the ideas relevant for the analysis of EK diffusion in international politics will be discussed.

The actors of diffusion

A common feature of research accounts in this area is the presence of powerful actors whose agency drives the flow of expert knowledge from one place to another. It deals with people and groups who spread knowledge through interaction. This status is dependent on their ability to act at a distance by enrolling and mobilizing other actors into a stable network on the basis of their representation (Callon 1986; Law 1987). Actor-oriented scholars pay attention to questions such as "who are the actors?", "what are their motivations?", "is their internal characteristic important for the process of diffusion?" to name a few.

In the IR research of EK diffusion, actors were the main topic for a long time (e.g. Haas 1975 or Ruggie 1975). However, new literature is more essential since it is more sensitive to the differences between actors. Contemporary research differs between epistemic communities (Antoniades 2015; Haas 1992); advocacy coalitions and transnational advocacy networks (Weible et al 2011; Keck – Sikkink 1998); discursive coalitions (Hajer 1993); instrument constituencies (Voss and Simons 2014); and knowledge networks (Khaler 2009; Stone 2010, 2013) to name a few. Some scholars also include knowledgeable individuals. For example, Coe and Bunnel (2003) or Saxenian (1999, 2006) associate EK diffusion with the travelling of knowledgeable individuals through work and circulation in companies and business sectors. However, in IR the role of individuals has been rather ignored.

Older diffusionist literature on actors usually did not take the impact of structures and of the environment on actors into consideration and supposed that actors and their interests and qualities are prior to the process of diffusion. Newer research, however, rather in other disciplines then in IR, is much more sensitive to actors, their ecology and their existence in structures. It points out that exogenous factors and structures may impact actors and their position in the process of diffusion, and that some actors (e.g. knowledgeable networks) may have agency and may be the organizational structure at the same time (Stone 2010, 2013; Khaler 2009). This way of thinking has been inspired mainly by Actor-Network Theory, which also credits agency to non-humans (so-called *actants*) (Latour 2005), and by practice-oriented debates which credit agency to the relationality. In spite of this shift, the turn to the structure is circumspect and the thinking on the agency of the structure and of relationality is even more discreet. Scholars who set out this way (e.g. Stone 2010, 2013) understand structures with agency as intentionally emerging and working coordinated and coordinating systems whose parts share the same motivations and are aware of their own existence.

Based on all of the above and with the goal of researching EK diffusion in international politics it can be concluded that: actors matter; attention shall be paid also to individuals; actors may have very diverse characters; even non--human entities may have agency; the agent-structure problem remains, however, not as the dilemma of "who is prior" but in the question of whether "the structure may have agency" and whether "the actor may also be the structure". What is not clear and shall be thought about is the question of whether unintentionally emerging and working systems may have agency.

The research of structures and of environment

A second strand of diffusionist literature believes that the main driving force behind the diffusion process is the character and organization of the structure and relationality. In other words, the existence of connections and the relationality are prior to actors and their character, and that the diffusion process is codetermined by structures. These scholars believe that the diffusion process is not automatic and accidental, and that it is also not *only* a chain of events; it is rather a cascade process influenced by many factors, such as the quality of governance, demographics, or the absorptive capacity of the audience (Ernst – Kim 2001; Hall 1989; Hveem – Knutsen 2012). The possibility to gain EK depends rather than on the attributes of the actors, on the relations between them, their positions in the social network, on the character of the environment, on the channels of communication, and on the points of contact (Granovetter 1973).

In International Relations the research of structures and of relationality has for a long time been handicapped by the idea that there is a gap between the

worlds of politics and science, stemming from the fact that both environments have different structures and logics of rationality (Caplan 1979). This is why the transfer of EK between science and politics is complicated, even impossible (e.g. Jasanoff 2004; Wittrock – Wagner – Wollman 1991). However, contemporary observers say that science, politics and society have undergone profound changes in recent decades, when the borders between the theoretical and empirical components of knowing were weakened and EK is being produced by many actors, not only by scientists in laboratories (Evers 2000; Nowotny et al. 2003; Ravetz 2012, 2016). Policymakers have started to talk about so-called evidence-based policy, highlighting the role of science and EK in politics and the involvement of scientists in policymaking (Oliver, Lorenc – Innvaer 2014). Contemporary literature does not think about science and policy as two different communities anymore; it rather pays attention to research into exogenous factors, to the character and organization of the structure, and to the mutual relationship between science and politics.

The emphasis on the significance of structures and relationality when analyzing the diffusion process emerged in Actor-Network Theory ('ANT') and in Social-Network Analysis ('SNA'). Later, the idea expanded into other disciplines and approaches, such as into the assemblage approach (see below).

According to ANT nothing in the social and natural world exists separately, rather everything is constantly being generated and transformed by the mutual relations between actors of the network. All-important innovations and human enterprise are the function of the interactions of mutually constituting heterogeneous elements assimilated into networks (Law 1987). Networks emerge during the process of the active participation of actors and they then determine the actors' roles and functions. Actors fill networks with sense and enable them to exist and survive (Latour 2005). According to Latour (2005: 107), although we do not know how actors are connected, the connections are assumed, and we also assume that these connections transform the actors' world. Agency, knowledge and institutions are the subjects of networks, the objects of negotiations, and the products of network building. ANT "traces links and networks... and actors who do something" and traces how they assemble to reach their goal (Latour 2005: 98, 128). These activities are not understood as the product of any independent selection or decision, but rather as the product of influences of relations, linkages and networks. According to ANT, the tracing of relational linkages enables an understanding of how actors and actants enable and mediate organized activities. The practice is understood as the conglomerate of agencies, and that is also why it has to be observed and mapped as a network where circulation and activities happen.

SNA has been evaluated (Borgatti et al 2009; Műtzel 2009) as an inter--disciplinary research program aiming to analyze and predict the structure of relations between social entities and the impact of this structure on other social

phenomena. It believes in the importance of relations between mutually influencing entities and its axiom is that structure matters. In other words, relational linkages between actors in the social structure are prior to actors' attributes, such as individual characteristic or quality (Wasserman – Faust 1994). However, the connections – as opposed to attributive data – are not the individual quality of particular agents, but the quality of the conglomerate of agents who produce the social network (Wasserman – Faust 1994). The elements that both approaches share – i.e. in the sense of the product of mutual connections, the actors' role is determined by the network, the activity is prior to the actors – and in "network vocabulary" – connections are prior to nodes, are present in all analyses of EK diffusion which prefer the importance of structures and of relationality (see Eyal 2013; Grannovetter 1973 or Liu – King – Baerman 2010).

At the end of this part I would like to mention a concept which could potentially enrich research of EK diffusion – the concept of *linked ecologies* of the American sociologist Abbott. Abbott's goal (2005) was to overcome the division between individualism and systemism and to offer a solution to the two-communities problem (science vs. politics). Abbott works from the idea that the world is composed of many different simultaneously existing ecologies and from a complex set of social relations and interactions between multiple elements that are neither fully constrained nor fully independent and which emerge and assemble around a particular issue area. Actors living in these ecologies are looking for connections, allies, resources and support across ecologies; this then produces a so-called "linkage between ecologies" (Abbott 2005: 247). The concept of ecology involves three components: actors, locations, and relations associating one with the other… the location of an ecology is not a preexisting position… it is the process of the construction of the relations between actors and locations that in fact constitutes and delimits both actors and locations. Analytically and empirically, the relational process is prior. Abbott calls the process of emerging relations across ecologies "ligation". "Ligation constitutes at one and the same time an actor, a location, and relations between them" (Abbott 2005: 248). When using Abbott's perspective to frame and analyze EK diffusion, the diffusion process would be the result of linkages between ecologies of scholars, experts, policy makers and bureaucrats (see Stone 2013).

When thinking about structures and environment, there are some uncertainties in diffusionist research and there also exists a difference between diffusionist research in IR compared to other disciplines; other disciplines usually research the diffusion process in organized and/or centralized systems such as domestic politics, companies and organizations; contemporary international politics is, in contrast, a hybrid non-centralized multi-scalar and multi-layered environment of interactions between state and non-state actors without any global principle of organization. This means that any analysis of EK diffusion in international politics has to be able to research the complex adaptive systems

that are neither perfectly ordered nor anarchic, non-hierarchic, non-centralistic (but not polycentric) and that are multi-scalar and multi-layered. In other words, "non-structures" of rhizomatic rather than of network character.

Rhizome differs from an arborescent network system with a ramified structure growing genealogically; rhizome is used to describe non-hierarchic and non-centralistic ordering, distribution and communication of facts, ideas and information. Serial and multiple models of the rhizome enable the linking of any components and lines of structures because it is not formed from divided static points or units but from mobile series of lines (Deleuze – Guattari 1980). The model of the rhizome is the reflexive category of fusion between scientific and policymaking thinking and as such it could be well used for the analysis of EK diffusion in international politics.

Based on all of the above and with the goal of researching EK diffusion in international politics it can be concluded that: structure and relationality matter, the entity can be structure and linkage as well as actor at one time and in one structure and relationality may have an agency; the agent-structure problem may be seen as the sum of interactions and practices which gives life and agency to the new entity (the conglomerate of practices and relations) and where the relations and links are prior to the actors' attributes. When analyzing structures and relations it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that the environment of international politics is rather unstructured with rhizomatic processes.

Instruments and mechanisms of diffusion

The third group within diffusionist research pays attention to the instruments and mechanisms of diffusion. As mentioned above, older literature believed that there is a gap between the world of science and the world of politics which has to be bridged. To build a bridge various "linkage techniques" should be used to transfer and utilize knowledge (Caplan 1979). This way of thinking lost its sense when it was clear that it is not possible to easily divide the world of politics and the world of science and that EK is co-produced or entirely produced in the political space (Eller 2017; Grundmann 2017). Contemporary research does not deal with science and politics as divided, it rather concentrates on particular instruments, approaches, mechanisms and strategies enabling diffusion and how new phenomena are accepted and implemented.

Diffusionist research in political science and IR paid attention mainly to the instruments and mechanisms of value, norms and policy diffusion (e.g. Checkel 2005; Gilardi 2012; Schimmelfening 2008). Scholars representing this group concentrate on states and international organizations, other actors including individuals are not taken seriously. Many studies of diffusion instruments and mechanisms are field and technically oriented, many were prepared for states and international organizations to improve their capabilities to diffuse

"something" (model of governance, technical information etc.) more effectively (World Bank 2011).

In the field of instruments and mechanisms, good inspiration for research is offered by the sociology of education, by organizational studies, and by economic geography. Of particular interest is research on the role of individuals and education in EK diffusion. When considering the role of individuals, their life journeys (education and jobs) and personal relationships will be of interest. As shown by Henry and Pinch (2000) or by Saxenian (1999, 2006) one of the main mechanisms to diffuse knowledge across the market is the regular movement of staff between firms (so-called brain circulation). When considering the role of education, Axelrode's (1976) reflection on "cognitive maps" introduce the issue well: he argues that education and professional training are the key formative forces of our vison of the world and assist or limit our ability to accept new ideas or norms. Other scholars (Steiner-Khamsi 2012) add that education significantly influences our preferences, behavior and values; however, not only inter-personally, but also during our life-long professional career. Education and remaining at a particular school help to form like-minded generational groups in which members often maintain relations through decades. Education has the potential to influence the development of a shared vision of social development and elites use education to consolidate its power (Steiner-Khamsi 2012). The most effective way to get a particular EK into politics is to set up education and employ scientists and experts with particular training and educational culture, i.e. with a particular vision of the world in government and bureaucracy. Furthermore, education is no longer a national project. Educational curricula, as well as schools, function globally even when some international organizations (e.g. the United Nations) establish their own universities.

Another view of education as the instrument of EK diffusion is offered by organizational studies. As noticed by Ernst and Kim (2001), powerful producers and entrepreneurs of knowledge on the international market are so-called flagship companies. They set up global production networks through which EK is transferred to local contractors. To better fulfil the flagship companies' demands including the acceptance of new EK, local contractors have to improve their capabilities and absorptive capacity. To make the process easier and faster, the flagships assist to nodes (local contractors) in the network. This approach could be productive when analyzing international politics. Some agents in IR play the role of flagship, other agents play the role of node in the network, and flagships distribute or assist to gain and absorb new knowledge to the nodes. The debate on flagships is based on the idea that diffusion is not a coincidental, spontaneous and automatic process, when – in words of the World Bank (1998/1999) "knowledge is like light"; knowledge diffusion is rather managed and, by a sum of incentives, a supported process.

Another innovative and enriching idea for the analysis of EK diffusion has been offered by knowledge management. Representatives of this new discipline (see e.g. Schwartz ed. 2005) share the idea that knowledge may be managed and is a way to control and master diffusion instruments and to improve the capabilities for EK diffusion to get EK to the right place at the right time. Management of knowledge would enable an increase in the effectiveness of activities and operations, a decrease in costs, and an increase in profits. However, knowledge management as a discipline and an approach to EK goes beyond the analysis of the instruments and mechanisms of diffusion; it considers the instruments and mechanisms more or less recast as practices.

Based on all of the above and with the goal of researching EK diffusion in international politics, it can be concluded that: EK is diffused through diverse flows of people, information, texts and commodities, i.e. human and non-human actants, and that materiality matters, diffusion needs at least weak and soft links; despite the fact that diffusion may be a coincidental, spontaneous and uncoordinated process it is more often a well-deliberated and strategically managed process stimulated by incentives using various techniques of communication and dissemination.

Practice-centered set of perspectives

The fourth group of diffusionist literature does not comprise a single coherent perspective; however, the linking moment is an interest in practices which are understood as doing in a historical and social context which gives meaning to what we do (Wenger 1998: 47). Practice-knowledge nexus emerged in sociology and in economic geography; however, it penetrated IR as well. Practice approaches focus on how groups perform their practical activities in world politics to renew and reproduce social order. Practice-oriented scholars speak about "knowing", rather than about "knowledge", which is itself understood as living through their agents (not necessarily human) and the practices they enact. Indeed, a practical order of meaning produces agency, that is the capacity to act and become an actor, and subject positions, that is the possible spectrum of available actions in the first place. Such an understanding can be understood as a "distributed" form of agency, since agency is not a property of individuals but the effect of practice and relationality (Bueger 2015; Latour 2005). Knowing is interpreted by practice-oriented scholars as the element of the production of new – often hybrid – entities which have the potential to structure politics (Allan 2018).

Practice-oriented studies in IR are so far rather rare; they have been interested in what practices and by whom EK is produced and diffused in international politics, which new entities and of which character have emerged in the process of EK diffusion and what effects they have on international politics

(Adler – Pouliot 2011; Bueger 2015; Sending 2015). Taking into consideration the spare diffusionist practice-oriented research in IR, it is better to look into the diffusionist practice-oriented research of other disciplines for inspiration.

The practice-oriented research outside IR produced several observations and concepts with the potential to enrich IR research; in particular the idea of communities of practice, of global microstructures, and of an assemblage approach. The concept of communities of practice has been mentioned before when talking about actors. Some scholars (e.g. the founding father of the approach, Wenger /1998/) consider communities of practice as not only actors who do something, but also – in new terms – an assemblage of entities. *An assemblage* is a new actor emerging in the process of connections and links, emerging and working based on the existence of particular practices. Wenger (1998) argues that knowledge diffusion is based on learning through the everyday practice of groups of employees within organizations, i.e. a community of practice is a setting for social-interactive learning. Communities of practice work as multiple, lateral, horizontal communications, collaborations, solidarities and support. They have three key dimensions – mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire, which tend to take shape through routines and repeated interaction rather than actively designed or implemented in a top-down sense. Even if Wenger used the concept of community of practice to consider environments inside internally organized entities, the concept may be applied to international politics as well.

The inspiration for IR also produces the concept of global microstructures. "Global microstructure" is defined as a small group of specialized, highly professional and efficient individuals with a specific structure and culture, localized only in several places (unusually in one office), using and connected by modern communication tools and having global influence in a specific issue area at all levels. Global microstructure is "a form of connectivity and coordination that combines global reach with microstructural mechanisms that instantiate self--organizing principles and patterns". In other words, "global microstructures are structures of connectivity and integration that are global in scope but microsociological in character" (Knorr-Cetina 2003, 2005; Knorr Cetina – Bruegger 2002). They have four characteristics: 1) the mechanisms and institutional structures involved suggest a reversal of the historical trend toward formal rationalized structures and do not work based on formal authority, complex hierarchy, rationalized procedures or deep institutional structures; 2) despite not being a highly rationalized system they are effective based on the systematic and reflexive use of systems of amplification and augmentation; 3) they are not simply networks, but consist of channels and even self-reproducing mechanisms or practices, using mechanisms such as media that points away from relational connectivity, and tend to be flat rather than hierarchically organized systems while the same time being highly textured systems which in fact contradict the

assumptions of network structures (Knorr Cetina 2003); and 4) they exhibit temporal complexity. Even when, traditionally in statism, seized IR may ignore the existence and global influence of microstructures, a more detailed look at several issues in international politics such as development agenda or EK diffusion indicates that the idea of global microstructures could be highly relevant for IR scholars.

Different, but also interesting, is approach of several economic geographers to the problem of EK diffusion. These scholars (e.g. Amin – Cohendet 2004; Prince 2010, 2016) argue that we live in a world in which material "stuff" makes up places and such stuff is always in motion, being assembled and reassembled in changing configurations. Attention is paid to the organizational or trans-organizational settings and forms of relational proximity, materiality, scalarity and spatiality. Learning and innovation are the results of the practice and agency of relations between people. These scholars have – similarly to Knorr-Cetina – promoted microspace accounts of diffusion which they see as an interactive and socially embedded process and developed relational views of space produced through social practice. Representatives of this stream started to test new approaches to and concepts of research diffusion, e.g. the assemblage approach.

Thinking in assemblage terms seems to have great potential for EK diffusion research in IR. The assemblage approach is used to grasp dynamic, unstructured, non-centralized and non-hierarchic, in other words, rhizomatic entities (Deleuze – Guattari 2004) as well as being a way to analytically grasp new forms of interweaving between science, technology, society, people, politics, discourse and objects (Irwin – Michael 2003). Assemblage is used to describe a collection of heterogeneous and in fact autonomous elements (human beings, organizations, as well as material factors or even ideas) not necessarily localized, which at the same time work together and their joint existence has a specific effect and shows characteristics which the separately existing parts do not have (Acuto – Curtis 2014: 3). This approach emphasizes the historical coincidences of connections between parts of the assemblage, their discovery, mapping and power effects and pays attention to practices which are the essence of collectively organized assemblage. In sum an assemblage describes a new material, collective, and discursive relationships (Collier – Ong 2005). The next step when considering assemblages was done by Collier and Ong (2005), who introduced global assemblages, or assemblages with a global reach respectively. They argue (2005: 12) that "in relationship to 'the global', the assemblage is not a 'locality' to which broader forces are counterposed... An assemblage is the product of multiple determinations that are not reducible to a single logic". They are actual configurations through which global forms gain significance.

Based on all of the above and with the goal of researching EK diffusion in international politics, it can be concluded that: communication instruments which are able to overcome the spatiality and proximity problem matter, and

it is necessary to pay attention to how both material and immaterial entities are produced, mediated, and transformed through the practices of humans and other "dynamic hybrids", including non-humans (actants), and thus all need to be considered as mediators and outcomes of socio-cultural/material relationships. It should be also stressed that despite the fact that IR works traditionally with a macroperspective, microstructures matter as well. As a way to solve the problem and to be able to grasp the "contemporary international", an assemblage approach could be used; it opens the door to a rhizomatic way of thinking and is able to include individuals as well as macrolevels.

Epistemic infrastructure: a new Framework for Analysis

How is it possible that EK which came into existence in one place is going global among academics, NGOs, policymakers and bureaucrats at national and international level, and how is it possible that particular EK has been able to transform the agenda and structure of international politics? From the debate above it seems clear that agency and structure, relationality, practices and materiality play important roles in the process of EK diffusion. This means that the questions need to trace how actors, structures, relations and practices work together and interact in the process of EK diffusion. In other words, we need to trace the mutual interactions between heterogeneous material and societal practices. To grasp, analyze and explain the process I suggest using a so-called epistemic infrastructure. "Epistemic" in this case means "emerging, existing and developing around particular expert knowledge". The term "infrastructure" is more complicated.

Most people, when hearing about "infrastructure", probably imagine transport infrastructure such as a network of streets, highways, ports and airports. However, "infrastructure" is not only a network of material objects, it is also something which enables something to work – for example, to trade. Infrastructure may be seen as an assemblage of objects, actors and the regular relations between them, and of practices, all of which produces an ecology and the conditions for particular activities and the operation "of something else". In this specific case, I use the term "infrastructure" to suggest that EK should not be considered in the context of an anarchic, placeless "space flow", but rather in terms of situated social relations.

To better explain the argument, the metaphor of a playground may be used: to say that "something" is a playground, you have to have the projection of a playground (i.e. to know what it is), there has to be a space where swings and slides are located, and there have to be children *regularly playing* there. Those with children already know that there are better and worse playgrounds, playgrounds for babies, as well as teenagers; the differences are based on the equipment in the playground. In other words, the equipment in the playground

and the person who makes the decision pre-determine whether children will like the playground, which children will go there, and what they will do there. Some playgrounds are surrounded by a fence, some are not. The borders of a playground – despite a fence – may be flexible when children extend a game beyond the fence (e.g. playing hide-and-seek). The metaphor of a playground demonstrates that it is simply a configuration of several – even imagined – material objects and actors and the relations between them, and of practices carried out within a particular ecology, which produce the "infrastructure" and give it sense. An infrastructure is a relational issue going beyond one event and emerging rhizomatically from intentionally emerging entities in a particular time and space (Star – Ruhleder 1994).

EPIN is emerging as the linkage between ideas, their authors, those who would like to diffuse, use and promote EK and particular social systems where EK is diffused. An EPIN is an adaptable instrument and an ecology where the potential of social relations is mobilized and used to initiate and diffuse EK and change respectively. Similarly to the fact that the localization of a playground and its equipment pre-determine who and what games will be played in a particular space, EPIN and those and that which create and form it and the relational linkages within an EPIN influence who will receive EK and how the EK will be consumed and handled. In the world of science, which "is so large that personal acquaintance no longer dominates in professional relations… and where impact is the name of the game" (Ravetz 2016), EPIN enables and mobilizes epistemic power and participation, and creates a space in which physical distance does not play a significant role, and relations and connections are based on mental proximity. EPIN enables the communication, management, integration, sorting and control of EK flow across disciplines and social systems. EPIN emerge as an assemblage, either intentionally or spontaneously, but from intentionally established parts.

An epistemic infrastructure is, metaphorically, a playground without a fence; a dynamic, unstructured, non-centralized and non-hierarchical space. It is an assemblage of material and non-material objects (organizations, laboratories, norms, etc.), actors (including individuals), relational links between them cumulating around specific EK, and practices which emerge in this socio-material ecology, all giving sense to the EPIN. Specific expert knowledge configures and gives sense to a particular EPIN; however, without the EPIN the EK has a low potential to diffuse. EPIN makes EK actionable. A particular EPIN and particular expert knowledge are interdependent entities in the making. EPIN borders are not clearly predetermined, it develops and perishes organically, i.e. it exists as long as it is relevant.

An EPIN is, in a nutshell, a temporal global assemblage of temporal non--global assemblages emerging and existing across diverse and mutually distinct social environments connected by multi-layered rhizomatically evolving inter-

actions and material manifestations. In other words, EPIN is the complexity of socio-material relationality endowed by agency and working through its own existence and practices which evolve within it. To research EPIN means to trace the rhizomatic growth, temporality, scalarity, spatiality, relationality, structure and actors, including knowledgeable individuals, at microscopical level. EPIN research includes: who creates relational links and practices and what quality they have; how relations and practice work, how they are mediated and shared in time and space; who is part of the network, what role the actors have in the diffusionist process and what role they have in EPIN. The analysis also traces individuals, their circulation across important jobs in international politics, their personal linkages and connections between the institutions they represent, the materiality of EK diffusion, such as new documents, bodies, projects etc., and the implementation of new practices which contain and use specific EK. But how to research rhizomatic structures is already beyond this article (more see e.g. Baker – McGuirk 2017; Deleuze – Guattari 1987, Desmond 2014 or Latour 2005).

Conclusion: Why epistemic infrastructure and why does it matter?

The central focus of this article has been expert knowledge diffusion in international politics, particularly questions such as "how expert knowledge gets from the place of its production into international politics, how EK became globally actionable, how the international political environment is settled by EK, and what does matter in EK diffusion?". I believe that the key to learning about, analyzing and understanding EK diffusion in international politics is so-called epistemic infrastructure and uncovering its structure and inner workings. EPIN has been constructed here initially as a concept and later as a framework for analysis. However, it must be said that EPIN should be considered an entirely constructed analytical tool and that the concept of EPIN is analytic and metaphorical rather than ontological.

I have defined EPIN as a non-accidental, dynamic, rhizomatic, spatio-temporal unlimited hybrid entity emerging as an assemblage of artefacts, physical phenomena, actors, relations and practices cumulating around specific expert knowledge with the goal of using and promoting it. EPIN gives power and energy to EK and has the potential to structure reality, as well as the international political landscape. EK lives through EPIN and the practices, technical processes, institutions and pedagogical forms that take place within; however, at the same time EK configures the EPIN – without EK there would be no EPIN. Within the EPIN, within the process of EK diffusion and within its practices there are new emerging "objects" which afterwards structure, develop and maintain practices and the EK. An EPIN, its character and inner moving forces influence who receives EK and what is done with it. The concept of EPIN

enables the capture and understanding of the societal essence of EK diffusion and the fact that EK diffusion needs channels as well as an institutional, material and financial background. EPIN enables the explanation of why specific expert knowledge (and not other) becomes influential within a policy field. It also enables the bringing together of the micro- and macro-sociologial sides of the field, and to connect the research of the structure and actors, as well as of the diffusion process which contains "diffusion practices".

A general statement of the EPIN existence is not sufficient for the understanding of its emergence, inner character, workings and role within the process of EK diffusion in international politics. To make more general conclusions on EK diffusion in international politics, we need to trace, analyze and compare more of these processes and EPINs respectively. To do this, it is necessary to deal with the second research question: how do we research the process of EK diffusion in international politics?

EPIN needs not to be only a concept; it could be used as a framework for analysis. To use EPIN as a framework for analysis it needs to be able to reflect the rhizomatic and dynamic character of EK diffusion in international politics, the special characteristics of its ordering, and the internal diversity and dynamics of the processes and interactions which take place within the process of diffusion. We trace "the flow" of the specific EK through the international space and track the path to the place and time where the EK emerged. We trace actors including individuals and what they do with the EK and who and what has accumulated around it, who mediates the EK in time and space and how; we trace the material signs of the EK, such as documents or reports to name a few; we trace the relations and practices containing the particular EK and how they work; and we trace the emergence of an institutional background and channels of communication of the specific EK. When tracing the trajectory of EK diffusion, a pragmatic combination of instruments such as topology, Social Network Analysis and historical qualitative study has to be used.

The critical point to research EK diffusion and use EPIN as the framework for analysis, it is necessary to stress that to trace the tracks, actors and processes in a multi-scalar, unlimited, non-hierarchical and dynamic environment is difficult and the risk of losing the track is high; however, it is possible to minimize the risks of a "false track" by utilizing two strategies: the first strategy involves the step-by-step tracing of several paths, or of several rhizomes when concurrently including sufficiently long periods and sufficiently wide spaces; the second strategy involves the choice of two different events which clearly demonstrates the existence and actionability of the EK in international politics, both events being in different places and at different times, but both somehow connected and consequently emerging. The tracing of tracks and rhizomes will therefore proceed clearly – the researcher will observe the mutual creation and interdependence of both events and attempt to uncover their mutual connections, be

these actors, their relations, practices or any other phenomena. An additional important and helpful instrument when analyzing rhizomatic processes is topology and visualization (e.g. heuristic sketches or conceptual diagrams). This helps in keeping on the right path and also enables the discovery of unexpected connections.

To sum up, the diffusion of expert knowledge in international politics may be explained by epistemic infrastructure. EPIN is interpretative, reflexive, pragmatic and profoundly empirical. It is a concept and may be used as a framework for analysis. The systematic study of different EK based on EPIN as a framework for analysis would provide sufficient comparable empirical evidence necessary to evaluate, explain, understand and theorize EK diffusion in international politics.

Notes

1. While in the interstate environment the production and diffusion of EK is managed, regulated, evaluated and financed by government; there is no authority which would systematically and globally do the same in international politics.

2. Structural holes are places where links between nodes are missing or these links are so weak that the flow of information between actors from the different sides of the structural hole is impossible.

3. The author of the concept, K. Knorr Cetina (2003, 2005), analyzed several big investment banks and showed that a small group of financial market experts sitting in only a few offices is able to set up the rules for and influence the workings of a global financial market.

4. The term "epistemic infrastructure" has been used by several sociologists, but in a different way and limitedly (Knorr Cetina 2007; Evers 2000).

References

Abbott, A. (2005): Linked Ecologies: States and Universities as Environments for Professions, *Sociological Theory*. 23 (3): 245–274. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2751.2005.00253.x

Acuto, M. and Curtis, S. (eds.) (2014): *Reassembling International Theory. Assemblage Thinking and International Relations.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Adler, E. and Pouliot, V. (2011): International practices. *International Theory* 3 (1): 1–36.

Allan, B. B. (2018): From subjects to objects: Knowledge in International Relations theory. *European Journal of International Relations* 24 (4): 841–864.

Axlerod, R. (1976): *Structure of Decision: The Cognitive Maps of Political Elites*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Amin, A., and Cohendet, P. (2004): *Architectures of Knowledge: Firms, Capabilities, and Communities*. Oxford University Press.

Antoniades, A. (2003): Epistemic Communities, Episteme and the Construction of (World) Politics. *Global Society* 17 (1): 21–38.

Baker, T. and McGuirk, P. (2017): Assemblage thinking as methodology: commitments and practices for critical policy research. *Territory, Politics, Governance* 5 (4): 425–442. doi: 10.1080/21622671.2016.1231631

Borgatti, S.P., Mehra, A., Brass, D. J., Labianca, G. (2009): Network Analysis in the Social Sciences. *Science* 323 (5916): 892–5.

Bueger, Ch. (2013): Communities of Security Practice at Work? The Emerging African Maritime Security Regime. *African Security* 6 (3–4): 297–316.

Bueger, Ch. (2015): Making Thing Known. Epistemic Practices, the United Nations, and the Translation of Piracy. *International Political Sociology* 9 (1): 1–18.

Bueger, Ch. and Gadinger, F. (2018): *International Practice Theory, 2nd substantially revised edition*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-73350-0.

Burawoy, M. (2000): *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*. With J.A. Blum, S. George, Z. Gille, T. Gowan, L. Haney, M. Klawiter, S.H. Lopez, S. Ó Riain, and M. Thayer.

Burt, R.S. (1992): *Structural Holes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Callon, M. (1986): Some elements of a sociology of translation; domestication of the scallops and the fishermen of St Brieuc Bay, in Law J. (ed.), *Power, Action and Belief. A New Sociology of Knowledge?* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Caplan, N. (1979): The Two-Communities Theory and Knowledge Utilization. *American Behavioral Scientist* 22 (3): 459–470. https://doi.org/10.1177/000276427902200308

Coe, N.M. a Bunnell T.G. (2003): Spatializing' knowledge communities: towards a conceptualization of transnational innovation networks. *Global Networks. A journal of transnational affairs* 3 (4): 437–456.

Collier, S.J. and A. Ong (2005): GlobalAssemblages, Anthropological Problems, in S.J. Collier and A. Ong (eds), *GlobalAssemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethicsas Anthropological Problems*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Deleuze, G., and Guattari, F. (1987): *A thousand plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Desmond, M. (2014): Relational Ethnography. *Theory and Society* 43: 547–579.

Eller, J. D. (2014): *Social Science and Historical Perspectives Science, Society, and Ways of Knowing*. London: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

Ernst, D. and Kim, L. (2001): *Global Production Networks, Knowledge Diffusion, and Local Capability Formation: A Conceptual Framework*. East West Center Working Papers, Economics Series 19, May, Honolulu.

European Commission (2019): *Microplastic Poolution*, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm?pg=pollution#.

Evers, H. D. (2000): Epistemic Cultures: Towards a New Sociology of Knowledge. *Bielefeld Working paper 330*. University of Bielefeld: Sociology of Development Research Centre.

Fox, N. J. and Alldred, P. (2015): New materialist social inquiry: designs, methods and the research-assemblage. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 18 (4): 399–414, doi: 10.1080/13645579.2014.921458.

Gergen, K. J. and Gergen, M. (2004): *Social construction: Entering the dialogue*. Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Press.

Gilardy, F. (2012): Transnational diffusion: norms, ideas and policies. in W. Carlsnaes, T. Risse and B. Simmons (eds). *Handbook of International Relations*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 453–477.

Gluckman, P. (2014): The art of science advice to government. *Nature* 507: 163–165.

Granovetter, M. (1973): The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (6): 1360–80.

Grundmann R. (2017): The Problem of Expertise in Knowledge Societies. *Minerva* 55 (1): 25–48. doi:10.1007/s11024-016-9308-7

Haas, E.B. (1975): Is there a hole in the whole? Knowledge, technology, interdependence and the construction of international regimes. *International Organization* 39 (3): 827–876.

Haas, P. M. (1992): Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination. *International Organization* 46 (1): 1–35.

Haas, P. (2004): When does power listen to truth? A constructivist approach to the policy process. *Journal of European Public Policy* 11 (4): 569–592, doi: 10.1080/1350176042000248034.

Hajer, M.A. (1993): 'Discourse Coalitions and the Institutionalization of Practice: The Case of Acid Rain in Britain', in *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*, edited by Frank Fischer and John Forester, 43–77. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Hall, J. (ed.) (1989): *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism Across Nations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hveem, H. and Knutsen, C. (ed.) (2012): *Governance and Knowledge*. London: Routledge.

Checkel, J. (2005): International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework. *International Organization* 59 (4): 801–826, doi:10.1017/S0020818305050289.

Christakic, N.A. and Fowler, J.H. (2007): The spread of obesity in a large social network in last 32 years. *The New England Journal of Medicine* 4 (357): 370–379.

Irwin, A. and Michael, M. (2003): *Science, social theory and public knowledge*. Open University Press: Philadelphia.

Jasanoff, S. (ed.) (2004): *States of Knowledge: The Co-Production of Science and Social Order*. Routledge.

Joint Research Center – EU Science Hub. (non-dated), availible at: https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en.

Kahler, M. (2009): *Networked Politics: Agency, Power, and Governance*. Cornell University Press.

Keck, M.E. and Sikkink, K. (1998): *Activists Beyond Borders.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Knorr Cetina, K.K. (2003): From Pipes to Scopes: The Flow Architecture of Financial Markets. *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory* 4 (2): 7–23, doi: 10.1080/1600910X.2003.9672857.

Knorr Cetina, K.K. (2005): Complex Global Microstructures: The New Terrorist Societies. *Theory, Culture & Society* 22 (5): 213–234, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276405057200.

Knorr Cetina, K.K. (2007): Culture in global knowledge societies: knowledge cultures and epistemic cultures. *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 32 (4): 361–375.

Knorr Cetina, K.K. and Bruegger, U. (2002): 'Traders' Engagement with Markets'. *Theory, Culture & Society* 19 (5–6): 161–185, https://doi.org/10.1177/026327602761899200.

Latour, B. (2005): *Reassembling the social: an introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Law, J. (1987): 'Technology and Heterogeneous Engineering: The Case of Portuguese Expansion', in Bijker, Hughes & Pinch (eds.), *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Lazega, E. (1992): *Micropolitics of* Knowledge. *Communication and Indirect Control in Workgroups*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Liu, K.-Y., King, M., Bearman, P. S. (2010): Social Influence and the Autism Epidemic. *AJS; American Journal of Sociology* 115 (5): 1387–1434.

Marsh, D. and J.C. Sharman (2009). Policy diffusion and policy transfer. *Policy Studies* 30 (3): 269–288, doi: 10.1080/01442870902863851.

Mützel, S. (2009): Networks as Culturally Constituted Processes: A Comparison of Relational Sociology and Actor-network Theory. *Current Sociology* 57 (6): 871–887.

Newmark, A. J. (2002): An Integrated Approach to Policy Transfer and Diffusion. *Review of Policy Research* 19: 151–178, doi: 10.1111/j.1541-1338.2002.tb00269.x.

Nowotny, H., Scott, P. and Gibbons, M. (2003): Introduction: ‚Mode 2' Revisited: The New Production of Knowledge. *Minerva* 41 (3): 179–194.

Oliver, K., Lorenc, T. and Innvær, S. (2014): New directions in evidence-based policy research: A critical analysis of the literature. *Health Res Policy Syst* 12 (1): https://doi.org/10.1186/1478-4505-12-34.

Prince, R. (2010): Policy Transfer as Policy Assemblage: Making Policy for the Creative Industries in New Zealand. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 42 (1): 169–186, https://doi.org/10.1068/a4224.

Ravetz, J. (2012): 'Keep Standards High: Sociology of Science'. *Nature* 481 (7379): 25.

Ravtz, J. (2016): How should we treat science's growing pains? *The Guardian*, June 8.

Rogers, E. (1983/2003): *Diffusion of Innovations.* (5th ed.). New York, NY: The Free Press.

Ruggie, JG. (1975): International responses to technology: Concepts and trends. *International Organization* 29 (3): 557–583.

Ryan P. G. (2015): 'A Brief History of Marine Litter Research', in Bergmann M., Gutow L., Klages M. (eds), *Marine Anthropogenic Litter*. Springer, Cham

Saxenian, A.L. (1999): *Silicon Valley's New Immigrant Entrepreneurs*. Public Policy Institute of California: San Francisco.

Saxenian, A. (2008): The New Argonauts: Regional Advantage in a Global Economy. *Economic Geography* 84: 105–108, doi: 10.1111/j.1944-8287.2008.tb00393.x.

Sending, O.J. (2015) *The Politics of Expertise: Competing for Authority in Global Governance*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Schimmelfenning, F. (2008): EU political accession conditionality after the 2004 enlargement: consistency and effectiveness. *Journal of European Public Policy* 15 (6): 918–937.

Star, S.L. and Ruhleder K. (1994): Steps towards the ecology of infrastructure. *Information system research:* 253–264.

Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2012): 'For All By All?' in Klees S.J., Samoff J., Stromquist N.P. (eds), *The World Bank and Education. Comparative and International Education (A Diversity of Voices)*, 14. Rotterdam: SensePublishers.

Stone, D. (2013): Knowledge Actors *and Transnational Governance,* Palgrave Macmillan.

Stone, D. (2010): 'Knowledge and Policy Networks in Global Governance', in Brigitte Young (ed.) *Gender Knowledge and Knowledge Networks in the International Political Economy*, Baden--Baden: Nomos.

Strang, D. (1991): Adding Social Structure to Diffusion Models: An Event History Framework. *Sociological Methods & Research* 19 (3) 324–353.

Voß, J.-P. and Simons, A. (2014): Instrument constituencies and the supply side of policy innovation: The social life of emissions trading. *Environmental Politics* 23: 735–754.

Waisová, Š. (2018): Human security: An analysis of the dissemination of the idea in the world politics. *Politics in Central Europe* 14 (3): 75–99.

Wasserman, S. and Faust, K. (1994): *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Weible, C., Sabatier, P. and Jenkins Smith, H. (2011): 'A quarter century of the advocacy coalition framework: An introduction to the special issue'. *Policy Studies Journal* 39: 349–360.

Wenger, E. (1998): *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. New York, NY, US: Cambridge University Press.

Wittrock, B., Wagner, P., and Wollmann, H. (1991): 'Social science and the modern state: Policy knowledge and political institutions in Western Europe and the United States', in P. Wagner, C. Weiss, B. Wittrock, & H. Wollman (eds.), *Social Sciences and Modern States: National Experiences and Theoretical Crossroads* (Advances in Political Science, 28–85). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, doi:10.1017/CBO9780511983993.002.

World Bank (1998/1999): *Knowledge for Development. World Development Report*, availible at: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/5981.

Šárka Waisová *studied International Relations and International Territorial Studies at the Charles University in Prague/Czech Republic, Phillips-Universität in Marburg and Technical University of Dresden/Germany. She holds the PhD in Political*

Science and European Studies from the Palacky University in Olomouc/Czech Republic and habilitation (associate professor degree) in Political Science with the focus on Security studies from the Masaryk University in Brno/Czech Republic. She works as Associate Professor and guarantee of study programmes International Relations (M.A. and PhD. level) at the Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen/Czech Republic and teaches also at the Metropolitan University Prague. In 2016–2018 she was an International Chair at the National University of Public Service in Budapest/Hungary, she realised also longer research stays in Taiwan, U.S. and Canada. In her research she is concerned with foreign policy, security, conflict resolution and knowledge diffusion. She is author or co-author of about one hundred scholar publications. Among the most recent we can mention books Environmental cooperation as a tool for conflict transformation and resolution (Lexington Books, 2017), The role of Taiwanese civil society organizations in Cross-Strait relations (Routledge, 2018) or Foreign, Security and European Policy of Visegrad Group (eds. together with L. Cabada). E-mail: waisova@kap.zcu.cz and sarka.waisova@mup.cz

Justice Reform or Facade Reform: The case of the Western Balkans

ZENUN HALILI

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0021

Abstract: *EU transformative power is put into question and constantly challenged by the political actions of leaders in the Western Balkans. Although the political elites in this region have internalised a pro-European discourse, they are still guided and governed by authoritarian logic and practices colliding with the EU's governing model. The paper analyses precisely this relationship between the EU and internal politics, namely, the transformative power/powerlessness of the EU towards the aspiring countries for membership in a single dimension; namely, justice. The paper reviews the reforms developed and the effects they have produced in the justice system in a calculation relation: costs and benefits. In this logic, this paper analyses costs and benefits of the internal elites of the Western Balkans, representing a classic oxymoron. On the one hand, pro-EU discourse is superficially used and, on the other, substantive actions are far from the EU's governing model. The central argument emphasises that the reform process in the region has turned into a repetitive system of itself and destined to fail right from the beginning. So, we see a loss in reforms and plunging into a vicious circle, whereby each time elements increase and intensify but deteriorate one another, inevitably leading to the deterioration of the situation and producing multidimensional corruption.*

Keywords: ***Europeanisation; Justice System; Reform; Costo; Benefit; Facade.***

Introduction

The changes that were driven globally by the fall of the Berlin Wall permeated states across Europe and produced different results in different regions of the continent. While examples of success in building a democratic state and

European Union (EU) integration are found in most countries in Central and Eastern Europe[1], examples of fragmentation and mismanagement are found mainly in the Western Balkans.

In the 1990s this region faced chaotic situations, such as the violent breakup of Yugoslavia, which produced four wars, three of which had devastating consequences, as well as the riots like those in Albania in 1997. Such events in this region were reflected and classified in the literature with terms like 'delayed transition', 'double transition' and were described by many scholars under the term 'Balkanization'. However, with the establishment of peace and the creation of a commanded stability, these studies were added to the research centred on observing the transformative power/powerlessness of the EU vis-à-vis the region. In the line of these research activities, this paper also aims to analyse the Europeanisation process specifically in the justice system.

Although the countries of the region are at different levels in the process of Europeanisation, the EU's February 2018 strategy of 'a credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans' describes the main political challenges common to all these countries, and which they must face on their way to EU membership. These challenges include: the rule of law, fundamental rights and good governance, strengthening democratic institutions, economic reform/creating a competitive economy, fighting corruption and organised crime, and solving bilateral problems and deepening regional cooperation (European Commission 2018a). Yet in all this architecture of challenge, the EU's top priority for the region is the reform of the justice system as the key foundation for strengthening the rule of law and creating capable and independent mechanisms to cope with or, to put it another way, to fight corruption and organised crime. Justice reform is the set of complex and comprehensive tools, agendas and actions taken to strengthen the justice mechanisms in general. This paper analyses the judicial reform process undertaken over the years in the Western Balkan region by 'focus on the costs and benefits for self-interested reformers and on power struggles between reformist change agents and reform-resisting veto players' (Mendelski 2018: 118). The central argument in this paper emphasises that the process of reforms in the region has turned into a repetitive system of itself destined to fail right from the beginning. Now the question may be asked: what can be understood by 'a repetitive system of itself'?

The term 'self-repeating system' describes the governing logic of the elected in the Western Balkans expressed in the form of reformology (containing the requirement for system variability), but which results in system renewal. So while during electoral campaigns the voter is captivated by the illusion of change (mainly by opposition parties), with the takeover of power these political forces

1 Despite the new democratic backsliding of Poland and Hungary.

manifest the same governing mindset as previous governments, degenerating and functioning on the basis of phenomena such as corruption, patronage, nepotism and clientelism. In this way the state capture system is reproduced, but with a slight difference, the captors change. As a result, the reform process in the region turns into a facade process destined to fail from the outset, the main effect of which is to remove supporters/militants of other parties from public office (established there during the governance of their parties) to be replaced by supporters/militants of the ruling parties. Thus, in the case of the Western Balkans, we are dealing with a loss in reforms, overlapping reforms or, alternatively, a dive into a vicious circle, where each time the elements add up and intensify and aggravate each other, inevitably leading to a worsening of the situation and producing even more rampant corruption than before. In this way, through a pathology called facade-reform, the system reproduces itself. However, this represents only one way of reproducing. The other way implicates stakeholder interaction in defining rules and institutions in order to prevent the infringement of these stakeholders' dominant positions. Thus, in Albania in 2008, some constitutional changes were initiated following the agreement between the two main political parties, DP and SP. The main effect of these changes was to reinforce the positions of both parties and the leaders of these parties, whose power goes 'up to the limits of arbitrariness' (Hoxhaj 2015: 45). They, the heads, are the main power that determines the lists of candidates for deputies whose selection is generally based on the principle of obedience and preference (Hoxhaj 2015). In this way the parliament becomes a neglected institution for the executive power, subject to the will of the leader/leaders. However, the commonality of these two modes of system renewal is the technique of keeping the justice system in a state of weakness. Thus, referring to the 'World Justice Project' rule of law index, all Western Balkan countries (part of the indexing does not include Montenegro and Kosovo) show poor grading (below average) on most of these components (6 of 8) such as: Constraints on Government Power, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice and Criminal Justice (World Justice Project 2019). Even in the Freedom House report, these countries in the rule of law rank with an average score on most indicators (see: Freedom House report 2019). Consequently, state capture in the Western Balkans does not just appear to be tied to one party or leader but turns out to be an ongoing process, which Solveig Richter and Natasha Wunsch (2020: 53) call a 'state capture trap'.

This article has four parts. After the introduction in the first section, the second part deals with theoretical and conceptual considerations about the judicial reform and the third part discusses the judicial reform process in the Western Balkan region. The paper ends with a concluding section, which contains its final conclusions.

Theoretical Framework

Concept of the Rule of Law

Since the beginning of the transformation processes, the aspiration for EU membership has been stated as the main goal of the leadership and peoples of the Western Balkan region. However, the road to the EU goes first and foremost to reforms that make the rule of law operational. The concept of rule of law is a multidimensional, flexible and contentious concept defined by many and in a variety of ways (Lautenbach 2013: 19). First of all, the concept incorporates two basic elements: on the one hand it involves the separation and balancing of powers and on the other hand the legality (ibid.). Yet in the Western Balkan region both of these dimensions are violated by executive power. In this region the justice system suffers from politicisation, instrumentalisation and patronage (Elbasani 2018; Mendelski 2015; Mendelski 2016; Mendelski 2018).

Europeanisation of the Rule of Law

Europeanisation is the concept that first of all investigates the impact that the EU exerts on the internal changes within states. This influence generally extends to all three dimensions of politics: policy, politics and polity (Elbasani 2013: 7). Thus Europeanisation is first and foremost a process of 'a) building, b) diffusing, c) and institutionalizing formal and informal rules, procedures, policy models, styles, ways of doing things, and common norms or beliefs that are established and consolidated at EU policy level, which are then embedded in the logic of local discourse, identity, political structures and public policy' (Radaelli 2003).

The EU exerts its influence on the internal change within states through the mechanisms of socialism, externalism and imitation, but first and foremost through the conditionality mechanism (Schimmelfenning 2012: 8–10). According to Tanja A. Borzel (2011: 12) 'conditioning can have a decisive impact on countries' readiness to meet EU standards and implement its obligations'. However, '1) internal reformist elites must be able to prioritize EU requirements and 2) functional state institutions must be able to coordinate and carry out reforms on the ground' (Elbasani 2014). However, the process of Europeanisation can take the form of a facade, where formal rules are imported, but no sustainable reforms are made. Thus, when EU pressure and monitoring ceases, reforms are overturned and instrumentalised for particular purposes, thus exploiting both the internal vacuum (Elbasani – Sabic 2018: 3) and the vacuum created by EU policy towards the region of the Western Balkans.

Since the first EU initiative towards the region, besides democratisation, stabilisation has been an important dimension. This EU approach has been criticised by many scholars who believe that the EU has favoured the second

dimension to the detriment of the former. All this EU behavior towards the region has led some scholars to use the term stabilocracy (Beha 2017; Bieber 2018a; Bieber 2018b; Pavlovic 2016) to describe the political systems of WB countries. A stabilocracy, according to Florian Bieber (2018a), implies 'a regime that includes significant deficiencies in terms of democratic governance but enjoys external legitimacy by providing assumed stability'. For Antoinette Primatarova and Johanna Deimel (2012), a stable democracy 'provides external stability but internally fluctuates between democracy and autocratic tendencies' (p. 19). So, a stable democracy has two main characteristics: one is the external support or legitimacy that is provided by mainly EU actors/states as a result of the promise of democratic reform, but above all the promise of maintaining regional stability, while the latter is the derivative of the former. The EU's approach to the region, namely the external legitimacy that local actors benefit from European state players, has left them free to adopt undemocratic and authoritarian practices for obtaining and maintaining power (Bieber 2018a; Bieber 2018b) by using democratic means. Today 'autocrats in the Western Balkans rule through informal structures of power, state capture by ruling parties, patronage and media control' (BIEPAG 2017: 3).

Dimensions of the Rule of Law

In Martin Mendelski's conception, the rule of law appears as a multidimensional concept consisting of two main qualities; *de jure rule of law* and *de facto rule of law* as well as of four distinct dimensions. *The de jure rule of law* refers not only to the quality of formal rules but also to the way they are created and the values they promote. *The de jure rule of law* consists of two dimensions: formal legality and substantive legality. *The formal legality* is a dimension that implies that laws that are enacted must be enforceable, clear, coherent and contain no contradictions. They must be easy to follow, as well as consistent or unchanged for a long period of time in order to provide the constraints and predictability needed for decision making (ibid.). *The substantive legality* refers to the essential quality of laws, namely the presence of good laws that contain and provide rights and principles widely accepted and promoted by the international community, as well as good governance practices. 'Adherence and approximation to these international rules has been called "embeddedness", as well as "legal approximation"' (Mendelski 2016: 321–322).

The de facto rule of law refers to the quality of the judicial system and includes two dimensions: *judicial capacity* and *judicial impartiality*. *Judicial capacity* refers to the capacities in the judicial system, such as human resources, financial capacities, computerisation and automation levels such as quality of administration and management. So this dimension focuses on the inputs, tools and resources needed to create a capable and professional judicial system to enforce legisla-

tion in an efficient and timely manner. However, building and ensuring judicial capacity does not in itself lead to the rule of law. Capacities can be misused for particular purposes, so the fourth dimension is the determination dimension *judicial impartiality*. *Judicial impartiality* consists of six sub-dimensions, as follows: 1) judicial independence; 2) separation of powers; 3) judicial corruption; 4) accountability towards the law; 5) judicial accountability; and 6) citizens' trust in justice. So this dimension refers to impartial and impersonal law enforcement focused on the results of the rule of law, which include impartial judicial verdicts made by independent, uncorrupted and responsible magistrates (Mendelski 2016: 321–322).

Both of these qualities and the four dimensions, though different from each other, are complementary and interdependent, whereas EU conditionality does not affect them uniformly. 'Externally (EU)-driven judicial reforms, reinforce judicial capacity and substantive legality, but at the same time reduce some crucial aspects of formal legality and judicial impartiality' (Ibid.). However, reforms are context-dependent and countries that are most exposed to these adverse effects are those that already have weak rule of law and weak institutional capacity (Mendelski 2016: 348–349), so under these conditions it is also necessary to investigate the behavior and preferences of the local political players involved in the process.

Rational Choice Institutionalism Approach

During the 1980s a concept known as *new institutionalism* was developed, as an appropriate tool to describe the nature and complexity of the international system, and the impact that international institutions and organisations have on the EU in particular with internal change within states (March – Olsen 1998; Hall – Taylor 1996). New institutionalism emphasises the importance of institutions and their structures in explaining these phenomena (March – Olsen 1998; Bulmer 1998) but without overlooking the informal rules, agendas and values embedded within institutions (Bulmer 1998; Kerremans 1996). Three important approaches have been developed within new institutionalism: rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism and sociological institutionalism (Hall – Taylor 1996: 936).

Rational choice institutionalism is an approach developed within the great theory of new institutionalism alongside the other approach *historical institutionalism*, but nevertheless relatively isolated from its influences, born originally in studies of American congressional conduct (Hall – Taylor 1996:942). This approach involves a dual interpretation of institutions; on the one hand there is a concept that considers institutions as constraints or as a given exogenous form of play. This implies that institutions are fixed forms and rules, which are above the will of the actors. On the other hand we have the endogenous conception of institutions which implies that the rules are not fixed but are the product of the interaction

of the actors provided by the institutions, so a set of rules can and probably will produce better results for a set of interests rather than another set. In this way, institutions are simply a way of balancing things (Shepsle 2006: 24–27). However, in addition to this distinction, there must be a distinction between structured and unstructured institutions, the main difference here being the extent to which the rules are codified. Thus, structured institutions maintained approximately the same form year by year, unlike unstructured institutions, which are more amorphous and implicit than formalised (Shepsle 2006: 28–32).

This approach is quite broad and contains numerous internal debates, however its underlying assumptions generally emphasise that actors are strategic actors trying to maximise their fixed preferences and tastes and, consequently, politics in this respect emerges as a series of dilemmas of collective action 'individuals acting to maximize the attainment of their own preferences are likely to produce an outcome that is collectively suboptimal (in the sense that another outcome could be found that would make at least one of the actors better off without making any of the others worse off)' (Hall – Taylor 1996: 945). Even with regard to European integration this approach follows a cost-benefit calculation relation and with this logic this article analyses the costs and benefits of the internal elites of the Western Balkan region derived from maintaining pro-EU reform discourse and their actions that collide with the European spirit. Although at first glance the linkage between the theory of new institutionalism, Europeanism and state capture seems weak, yet the theory of new institutionalisation by understanding institutions not only as fixed rules but also dynamic products of stakeholders' interaction allows us to make a cost-benefit analysis of these interactions. At this point it is extremely appropriate to investigate the products of the interaction of stakeholders, thus institutions and rules, and analyse whether they are in line with the Europeanisation process or are instruments in the service of state capture enterprise.

Reform to Reform: Loss in Reforms

Discussion of Reforms

Since the beginning of democratic change, reforms or, more specifically, reforming the justice system and other areas such as education, health, etc., have been and remain an important dimension in the discourse of the Western Balkans' political elites, especially during electoral campaigns. And so Aleksandar Vucic in Serbia, Edi Rama in Albania, Zoran Zaev in Macedonia and most recently Albin Kurti[2] in Kosovo, have all won elections in the name of reforming the

2 It should be clarified that at the time this research was conducted, Albin Kurti won the elections in Kosovo; however, he has not yet been appointed as the country's prime minister, so his behavior and policies and their consequences are not addressed in this research.

system in general and strengthening the rule of law, in particular the fight against corruption. However, 'instead of tackling systematic reform, the political elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania have put state institutions and media under their control to the utmost degree. Only several weeks ago, the Prime Minister of Albania Edi Rama got two new laws off the ground, subjecting independent Internet media to a greater degree of state control.Judicial systems in the entire region are groaning under endemic corruption and party influence. The paradigm of law and order has been grotesquely reversed. Local laws and international legal standards do not determine what is lawful, but rather powerful criminal cartels, closely intertwined with the dominant parties' (Kraske 2019). Thus the discourse of reformology in practice has taken the form of promise, where everything is promised but in the end what is achieved is state capture. Otherwise the only transformation that takes place in these countries is that the capturers are changed, but the governance remains the same. The main consequences of this approach are best seen in the justice system, which continues to be one of the weakest links in the political systems of the Western Balkan countries.

State Capture and Instruments that Help Capturing

The EU's February 2018 strategy related to the WB region states, among other things, states that 'countries show clear elements of state capture, including links to organized crime and corruption at all levels of government and administration, as well as a strong confusion of public and private interests' (European Commission 2018a: 3).

State capture, according to Transparency International (2009: 43), presents the situation in which some powerful persons, whether institutions or groups of individuals, shape the political and economic environment of a country in their favour through the instrument of corruption. However, 'state capture can be widely understood [also] as disproportionate and unregulated influence of interest groups or decision-making processes, where special interest groups manage to propagate state laws, policies and regulations through practices such as illegal contributions paid by private interests for political parties and election campaigns, parliamentary vote buying, buying presidential decrees or court decisions, as well as through illegal lobbying and door-to-door appointments' (Transparency International 2014: 1).

So, in its entirety, state capture is understood as the appropriation or control of state resources by the elites, who then use these resources for both personal and political gain, thereby distorting the democratic process (Gryzmala-Busse 2008: 640; Fazekas – Toth 2016). The forms of state capture and the types of capture are different. In discussing the type of state capture, Lily Evelina Sitouris (2011: 47) believes the emphasis should be on the institutions that are

subject to capture and on the type of actors who aim at capturing. In the wake of this logic, referenced by Fazekas and Toth (2014: 3), the capture appears in two ways: local, which means entering into a captured relationship of only some public and private organisations leaving a certain number of 'islands' relatively autonomous and global, which presents the situation where an elite at the national level controls the captured organisations, which are linked to one another. Even in the typology of state capture provided by Abby Innes (2013: 1), state capture appears in two ways: state capture by party and state capture by corporations. The former implies the politicisation, or the re-politicisation, of state institutions by political parties for the purpose of pursuing and securing political monopoly, while the latter is defined as the exercise of power by private interests through the overthrow of legitimate channels of political influence. However, in the case of the countries in the WB region we are dealing with the first type, namely the capture of the state by party, where, after the progress of the early 2000s in building independent institutions, we now see a partition of these institutions and control of the parties over them. 'This reaffirmation of party control is articulated through the erosion of independent institutions, the penetration of state administration by party members, and the use of informal mechanisms to secure control' (Bieber 2018b: 348).

The instruments used for the appropriation or control of state resources by the elites are different; however, referring to Arolda Elbasani (2017) in the case of Albania we are dealing with state capture through the mechanism of the judiciary. Similar features to that of Albania are present in all of the countries in the WB region in which the functioning and independence of the judiciary are seriously violated. According to the European Commission's 2019 reports, Western Balkan countries such as Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina are considered to have achieved some level of preparation in the field of the judiciary (see: European Commission report for Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina: 13, 14, 28). Montenegro is considered to be 'moderately prepared' (European Commission report for Montenegro 2019: 15), Northern Macedonia has a dual classification of 'some level of preparation' and 'is moderately prepared' (European Commission report for North Macedonia 2019: 15), while the Kosovo judicial system is considered to be 'at an early stage in developing a well-functioning' (European Commission report for Kosovo 2019: 14). However, despite the differences in qualification, all countries across the WB region face similar problems in establishing the rule of law.

Since 2015 Serbia is considered to have achieved some level of preparation in the field of the judicial system (European Commission 2015: 11); however, the progress achieved since then has been at a reduced level. Serbia's judicial system continues to suffer from political interference, the constitution and legal framework still leave room for political interference. Pressures on the work of judges and prosecutors, as well as commentary on court cases by individuals at

high political levels, remain high. Likewise, government control over the media and selective justice and impunity continue to be serious problems that oppose the rule of law (see: European Commission report for Serbia). To address these problems in the justice system, 'Serbia has adopted the basic legislative conditions and founding stones for vetting, [however] the current government has failed to design a comprehensive vetting process and institutional restructuring. This is due in large part to a lack of political will' (Haider 2018: 46).

Lack of political will by all Serbian governments in the period following Slobodan Milosevic's[3] overthrow is also seen in the prosecution of war criminals. Initially the Serbian governments refused to cooperate with The Hague Tribunal, for many years refusing to turn over criminals such as Ratko Mladic or Radovan Karadzic, while internally they initiated improvisation processes that culminated during the governance of A. Vucic and his party. Among others, this government has begun the process of accommodating war criminals and those convicted in The Hague, through Serbian institutions.

In Albania, the justice system characterised by profound politicisation, partial justice, corruption, links between crime and politics has emerged as the weakest cog in the chain, the 'Achilles' heel' of the system throughout the post-communist transition. To change this situation, a comprehensive reform of justice has been initiated, which aims at building the institutional and human capacity needed to ensure the rule of law. One of the most important aspects of this reform is the process of reviewing the purity, competence and wealth of judges and prosecutors, otherwise known as the vetting process. However, vetting as a key instrument of justice reform in Albania is not a novelty for the Western Balkans. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Kosovo have also gone through such a process before. Thus 'even radical measures did not produce the intended effect: in 2009 – 2010, Kosovo and Serbia, for example, attempted a mass evaluation and reappointment procedure for all magistrates, with mixed results at best, and possibly with the solution being worse than the problem' (SELDI 2014: 75). This process in Kosovo exposed the failure in training of new professional staff. Among other things, this process was characterised by political implications in cases of reappointment and appointment to leading positions and in the filtering of judges and prosecutors (Gashi – Musliu 2013: 16–18). Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have experienced similar symptoms as Kosovo. For this reason, new EU justice reforms have been initiated in all Western Balkan countries.

3 Slobodan Milosevic was a Yugoslav and Serbian politician who served as the President of Serbia from 1989 to 1991 and within The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1997, and President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1997 to 2000. He was the representative face of Serbian ultra-nationalism and the main cause of the violent dissolution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. During the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, Milosevic was charged by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) with war crimes in connection to the wars in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo. He died in his prison cell in The Hague on 11 March 2006.

This process has shown in a large number of cases the links between prosecutors and judges and segments of organised crime. In other cases, such as with former Chief Prosecutor Adriatik Llalla, corruption and incompetence appears. 'Llalla was apparently involved in transactions worth millions of dollars, which fitted into a clear scheme of money laundering, such as the reevaluation and sale of properties, which he had bought only a few months before, at a much higher price. In one case, the transaction involved selling a property for a price 23-times higher than the one he had allegedly bought it for from a person with an official record of killings and various crimes. The public also learned that Llalla's high school diploma cannot be found but the alleged lack of secondary education seemed rather insignificant amidst the allegations of criminal charges that have surfaced' (Elbasani 2018: 29–30).

In cases similar to that of A. Llalla, judges and prosecutors could not justify the origin of the personal property, and cases of incompetence were found as well. All of these cases reveal the decay of the judicial system in Albania and its transformation into a party branch where recruitment and management of particular individuals is done not on the basis of meritocracy but on the basis of loyalty to the party. 'Five out of six post-communist presidents have been nominees of one party and the first and last two presidents hailed from that party's close circle of leadership, the Albanian presidents usually served to carry out party patronage schemes by positioning individual and party loyalists across the judiciary system. […] Since those appointees owed their job to the party, they served the party patronage schemes – by controlling active investigations, nominating lower level appointments, distributing cases to suitable prosecutors and judges, etc. – in order to advance their careers. Consequently, not only did the Albanian presidents establish a long-running mechanism of political patronage, but they also helped to maintain low professional standards, as the second side of the same coin' (Elbasani 2018: 31).

This context has prompted obstruction or, in other words, promoted the veto of this reform by the actors involved in the deformation of the legal system (Elbasani 2018). Nevertheless, the speed at which this reform is being implemented and the political environment in which it is taking place are two of the main concerns for its future and for the justice system itself. The justice system in Northern Macedonia just like Montenegro, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina[4] appears to have the same symptoms in Serbia and Albania. Political interference and influence in the justice system, biased justice and lack of media freedom, commentary on court cases by senior government officials, corruption and

4 In the Bosnian case some time ago a scandal broke out where the President of the Judicial Council was offering his services to a businessman. Instead of holding him accountable, other Council members came out in his favour (see Kraske 2019). This scandal proves once again the decay of the justice systems of the Western Balkan region, the links of judges and prosecutors with segments of organised crime and their involvement in corrupt affairs.

links to organised crime are evident in each of these countries (see European Commission reports on 2019).

Thus, in general the rule of law in the WB region remains weak due to the unwillingness of the elites to strengthen the justice system, as this would also mean breaking authoritarian practices and informal networks. By keeping the justice system weak, the political elites have succeeded in extending their power through corruption, clientelism, nepotism and patronage. The flooding of institutions and state companies with party members is obvious in all countries of the Western Balkan region. Contribution and loyalty to the party remain the two main premises for recruiting new members against whom the party has countermeasures that ensure that they are kept under control, such as the promise of employment and promotion, temporary positions, insecurity or fear of losing jobs. Thus 'state institutions in the [Western] Balkans are sacrificed to political party influence, the result of which is an utter rupture of their functionality. Captured state structures reveal that criminal structures are stronger than any corrective mechanisms in these systems' (Kraske 2019). In this way, destroying the corrective mechanisms opens the way for the enrichment of some persons through the use of state resources or other forms of abuse. This money is later used to finance the political campaigns of the parties to which these individuals are affiliated, as well as to purchase votes, a phenomenon that is widespread in every Western Balkan country. So here we are dealing with a chain phenomenon that is networked and encompasses a wide range of institutions vital to the functioning of democracy and is presented with symptoms such as structural corruption involving high levels of politics.

High levels of corruption since the beginning of the transition have been a major problem for societies in the WB region. Rosa Balfour and Corina Stratulat (2011: 22) discuss a uniform scenario involving the political elites of all Balkan countries. This scenario first assumes that in the moments of political and economic transformation, the political elites took advantage of the vacuum created so that political and economic reforms could be tailored to their personal interests and status. This strategy proved to be successful in many countries, making it difficult to distinguish between politicians, businessmen and magistrates. In these cases 'the government acted more as an invisible captured hand than as an invisible hand and deliberately promoted partial reforms with the general aim of capturing the state'. As Othon Anastasakis (2013: 108) states, the beginning of transition determines its continuation, namely, 'the early years of transition lay the groundwork for a climate of corruption'. Such a corrupt climate, despite its improvement over 2008–2011 (see metrics index), has followed and continued to dominate politics at the highest level in all countries of the Western Balkan region. Today this region is one of the most corrupt in Europe. However, ethnic divisions such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo, as well as

nationalist discourse and the EU's own approach to the region, contribute to this state-capturing approach.

'The exploitation of public resources in election campaigns creates a major corruptive force in the electoral process, as it introduces or exacerbates power inequalities and provides unfair leverage for the elected incumbent or political parties via patterns of clientelism, party patronage, corruption, and nepotism. It erodes the quality of democracy, as incumbent elites can take advantage of a civil service, public contractors, government communications, public media, and even private companies and privately owned media which are part of the established clientelistic chain. After the elections, powerful voted officials can pay back the services rendered during the campaign by securing well-paid positions in the public sector for their supporters, providing access to privileged information, granting favorable procurement contracts, and so on' (Kmezic 2020: 5).

The Role and Impact of EU Policy in the Process of State Capture by Local Elites

The role and influence of the EU in the development and results of justice reforms have been analysed by a large body of research (Mendelski 2015; Mendelski 2016; Elbasani – Sabic 2018; Kochenov 2008; Ritcher – Munsch 2019), and although the conclusions are different, there is increasing agreement on the counter-effect of EU conditionality on the reform process.

'The presence of informal networks that capture formal institutions and impede deep democratisation explains why the EU has been able to induce partial compliance with membership criteria, but has not had a profound democratising impact in the region. [so] not only that the presence of state capture inhibits the operation of conditionality as a trigger for democratic transformation, but that conditionality unintentionally enables informal networks to consolidate their power, creating a dynamic that durably undermines any progress towards sustainable democratization' (Ritcher – Wunsch 2020: 56).

Thus, according to Solveig Ritcher and Natasha Munsch (2019) 'EU conditionality has not only failed to effectively address state capture, but also inadvertently contributes to the consolidation of such processes by enabling informal networks to tighten their grip on power'. There are three reasons that make EU conditionality an instrument that helps to consolidate state capture. First, in the absence of a comprehensive legal framework, external pressure to liberalise markets created favourable conditions, namely allowing a small political and economic elite to derive private benefits and influence political decision-making through powerful informal networks (Ritcher – Munsch 2019). 'Governing the reform processes has helped the ruling parties [...] gain a clear edge over their political competitors in the process of the redistribution of

powers. Institutional reforms in view of Europeanization enabled the possessive parties direct personnel policies in the state sector. The "perturbation of established arrangements" within the state apparatuses opened opportunities for a new generation of bureaucrats. Due to ruling parties' claim to consolidate their influence over the state, many among them have owed their appointments to their loyalty to the party and its leader. In the economic field, the privatization and deregulation of the markets opened new spaces for the re-distribution of power. It created a powerful nexus between economic and political power. This led to the rise of new pro-government elites, including managers of state-owned companies, large businessmen and emergent middle-sized entrepreneurs' (Günay – Dzihic 2016: 8). Second, robust top-down conditionality eliminates almost any discussion in the domestic political scene and with it undermines internal accountability mechanisms (Ritcher – Munsch 2019). However, inter alia, EU conditionality, especially in the area of rule of law and the fight against corruption, is focused, as Jovana Marovic (2017) puts it, on quantity, thus bypassing quality by creating the appropriate ground for the ruling elites to silence internal opponents. Third, the interaction between the ruling elites of the countries of the Western Balkan region with EU officials or with the officials of the member states respectively strengthens the legitimacy benefiting the WB elites and leaders within this interaction (Ritcher – Munsch 2019).

In this way, according to Cengiz Günay and Vedran Dzihic (2016), European Union integration reforms stemming from the latter's (EU) conditionality mechanism along with the promise of redistribution and redirection of public resources and narrative national-populist constitute the macro-strategy of the dominant parties in hybrid regimes such as Turkey, Serbia and Northern Macedonia. Thus 'EU reforms functioning as "legitimising devices" opening new spaces' (Günay – Dzihic 2016). So, 'The Rise of Strong Balkan Rulers, such as Nikola Gruevski (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), Milorad Dodik (Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Milo Djukanovic (Montenegro) and Aleksandar Vucic (Serbia), and their machines of the party, came under EU scrutiny and often with tacit support and approval. These autocratic-minded leaders – all, of course, self-proclaimed pro-European democrats – have been able to stay unmatched in their domestic political arena because there is no democratic acquis to bring the monopoly of power, the organization of party and competition or informal practices' (Stratulat 2017: 13).

This tacit approval by EU leaders of the autocratic powers of strong Western Balkan leaders has come primarily as a result of the destabilising power these leaders possess. These leaders have repeatedly transmitted insecurity, which has served as an instrument for strengthening supporters' dependence on parties (Günay – Dzihic 2016), but also for sending messages about and related to the power they have for destabilising the region. In this way, by tolerating their autocratic power, the EU has succeeded in neutralising this force and thus

maintaining the status quo in a region where there are no hot spots, which have the potential to destabilise the entire region. An important dimension in this regard is the geopolitical context of the Western Balkans. Thus, aiming to maintain the pro-European spirit and policy of the political elites of the Western Balkan region and to neutralise the presence of third parties such as Russia, China or Turkey, the EU has tolerated and funded the region's autocratic powers. However, the refusal to open accession negotiations with Albania and Northern Macedonia may produce an optimal context for the action of these actors and thus trigger a new wave of authoritarianism, which would undermine even the region's few European achievements. This ambiguity of the EU has created the desired space for the absorption of Russia's authoritarian sentiment towards the region (Mujanovic 2018: 111–117)

Conclusions

In the Western Balkans, both the political elites and the justice institutions have been unable to support and implement the Europeanisation process. On the one hand political elites have proved ineffective, corrupt and self-interested in state capture or certain state segments or resources, so generally reformist political elites have appeared too weak to undertake radical reforms and change (Anastasakis 2005: 84; Elbasani 2013: 10; Bieber, 2018b: 341; Halili 2019). On the other hand, justice institutions have served as a key instrument in the state capture enterprise. Thus, the reform process in the region has become an iterative system destined to fail at the outset. So, we see a loss in reforms, overlapping of reforms and plunging into a vicious circle, whereby each time the elements increase and intensify but deteriorate one another, inevitably leading to a deterioration of the situation and producing multidimensional and rampant corruption. In the meantime, the impact of the EU has not been transformative, but rather stimulating authoritarian and non-legalistic authoritarian practices. In this respect, therefore, it is necessary to change the EU's approach to the region. This (new approach) should not be rejective (refusing to open accession negotiations with individual countries as in the case of Albania and Northern Macedonia may produce counter-effects) but coercive (coercion should be of a financial nature, i.e. benefit only those countries that carry out sustainable and independent reforms).

References

Anastasakis, O. (2013): Post-1989 Political Change in the Balkan States: The Legacy of the Early Illiberal Transition Years: available at https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ded2/e4a40de7d4f9185e43959626a083353a5395.pdf?_ga=2.67358865.1293660710.1567853494-170048700.1558809480 (1 July 2020).

Balfour, R., & Stratulat, C. (2011, November): The democratic transformation of the Balkans: available at https://www.epc.eu/documents/uploads/pub_1363_the_democratic_transformation_of_the_bal kans.pdf (1 July 2020).

Balkans in Europe Policy Advisory Group (2017): The Crisis of Democracy in the Western Balkans. Authoritarianism and EU Stabilitocracy: available at http://www.biepag.eu/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/BIEPAG-The-Crisis-of-Democracy-in-the-Western-Balkans.-Authoritarianism--and-EU-Stabilitocracy-web.pdf (1 July 2020).

Beha, A. (2017): Mes stabilitetit dhe demokratizimit. Zgjedhjet, partitë politike dhe demokracia: available at https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kosovo/13962.pdf (1 July 2020).

Bieber, F. (2018a): The Rise (and Fall) of Balkan Stabilitocracies: available at https://www.cirsd.org/en/horizons/horizons-winter-2018-issue-no-10/the-rise-and-fall-ofbalkan-stabilitocracies (1 July 2020).

Bieber, F. (2018b): Patterns of competitive authoritarianism in the Western Balkans. *East European Politics* 34 (3): 337–354. Doi: 10.1080/21599165.2018.1490272.

Borzel, T. (2011, September): When Europeanization Hits Limited Statehood. The Western Balkans as a Test Case for the Transformative Power of Europe. Doi: 10.4324/9780203386064.

Bulmer, S. (1998): New Institutionalism and the governance of the Single European Market. *Journal of European Public Policy* 5 (3): 365–86.

Cengiz, G. – Dzihic, V. (2016): Decoding the authoritarian code: exercising 'legitimate' power politics through the ruling parties in Turkey, Macedonia and Serbia. *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 16 (4): 529–549: available at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14683857.2016.1242872?scroll=top & needAccess=true & journalCode=fbss20, https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2016.1242872 (1 July 2020).

Elbasani, A. (2013): Europeanization travels to the Western Balkans: Enlargement strategy, domestic obstacles and diverging reforms. In A. Elbasani (Eds), *European Integration and Transformation in the Western Balkans: Europeanization or Business as Usual?* 3–22. Abingdon: Routledge.

Elbasani, A. (2014, June 17): EU's 'new approach', democratization and the problem of stateness in the WB: available at https://biepag.eu/eus-new-approach-democratization-and-theproblem--of-stateness-in-the-wb/ (1 July 2020).

Elbasani, A. (2017): Judiciary as a mechanism of state capture: external actors, party patronage and informality: available at https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/perspectives_-_09-2017_-_web.pdf? dimension1=division_osoe (1 July 2020).

Elbasani, A. – Šabić, S. (2018): Rule of law, corruption and democratic accountability in the course of EU enlargement. *Journal of European Public Policy* 25 (9).

Elabasani, A. (2018): International promotion of rule of law: Facing connections between patronage, crime, and judiciary corruption. In Rule of law in the Western Balkans: Exploring the new EU enlargement strategy and necessary steps ahead, 28–34. 16–19 April. Alt Madlitz.

European Commission. (2015): Serbia Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhoodenlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2015/20151110_report_serbia.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2018): A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced EU engagement with the Western Balkans: available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credibleenlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): Albania Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood--enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-albania-report.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): Serbia Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood--enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-serbia-report.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): Kosovo Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood--enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-kosovo-report.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): North Macedonia Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-north-macedonia-report.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): Montenegro Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-montenegro-report.pdf (1 July 2020).

European Commission. (2019): Bosnia and Herzegovina Report: available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-analytical--report.pdf (1 July 2020).

Fazekas, M. – Toth, J. (2014): From Corruption to State Capture: A New Analytical Framework with Empirical Applications from Hungary. *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (2): 320–334.

Fazekas, M. – Tóth, I. J. (2016): From Corruption to State Capture. *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (2): 320–334. Doi: 10.1177/1065912916639137.

Gashi, A. – Musliu, B. (2013): "Justice System Reform in Kosovo" : available at http://kli-ks.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Justice-reform-in-Kosovo-RAPORTI-FINAL-ANGLISHT.pdf (1 July 2020).

Grzymala-Busse, A. (2008): Beyond Clientelism. *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (4–5): 638–673. Doi: 10.1177/0010414007313118.

Günay, C. – Dzihic, V. (2016): Decoding the authoritarian code: exercising 'legitimate' power politics through the ruling parties in Turkey, Macedonia andSerbia, Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, DOI: 10.1080/14683857.2016.1242872.

Hall, P. A. – Taylor, R. C. (1996): Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms. *Political Studies* XLIV: 936–957.

Halili, Z. (2019): Western Balkans Integration into European Union: Challenges and Consequences. Traektoriâ Nauki = Path of Science 5(8): 4001–4012.

Haider, H. (2018): Rule of law challenges in the Western Balkans: available at https://gsdrc.org/wpcontent/uploads/2019/01/464_Rule_of_Law_in_the_Western_Balkans.pdf (1 July 2020).

Hoxhaj, O. (2015): Impact of Constitutional Changes 2008: Is Albania Ready for a New Constitutional Reform? *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization* 44: 41–45.

Innes, A. (2013): The Political Economy of State Capture in Central Europe. JCMS: *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52 (1): 88–104. doi: 10.1111/jcms.12079.

Kerremans, B. (1996): Do Institutions Make a Difference? Non-Institutionalism, Neo--Institutionalism, and the Logic of Common Decision-Making in the European Union. *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 2: 217–240.

Kmezic, M. (2020): "Rule of law and democracy in the Western Balkans: addressing the gap between policies and practice":available at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14683857.2019.1706257 (1 July 2020).

Kraske, M. (2019): Western Balkans: Seizing Opportunities, Expanding Influence and Fending Off Dangers: available at https://ba.boell.org/en/2019/10/22/western-balkans-seizing--opportunities-expanding-influence-and-fending-dangers (1 July 2020).

Kochenov, D. (2008): EU Enlargement and the Failure of Conditionality: Pre-Accession Conditionality in the Fields of Democracy and the Rule of Law. Kluwer Law International. The Hague.

Lautenbach, G. (2013): The Concept of the Rule of Law and the European Court of Human Rights. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

March, J.G. – Olsen, J. P. 1998): The Institutional Dynamics of International Political Orders. *International Organization* 25 (4): 943–969.

Marovic, J. (2017, April 26): Are the autocrats in the Western Balkans interested in the rule of law?: available at https://wb-csf.eu/csf-rule-of-law-and-democratisation/opinions/are--theautocrats-in-the-western-balkans-interested-in-the-rule-of-law/ (1 July 2020).

Mendelski, M. (2015): The EU's Pathological Power: The Failure of External Rule of Law Promotion in South Eastern Europe. *Southeastern Europe* 39: 318–346.

Mendelski, M. (2016): Europeanization and the Rule of Law: Towards a pathological turn. *Southeastern Europe* 40 (3): 346–384.

Mendelski, M. (2018): The Rule of Law. In A. Fagan & P. Kopecký (Eds), *The Routledge Handbook of East European Politics*, 113–125. London: Routledge

Mujanovic, J. (2018): *Hunger and Fury: The Crisis of Democracy in the Balkans*, Oxford University Press.

Pavlovic, S. (2016): Montenegro's 'stabilitocracy': The West's support of Đukanović is damaging the prospects of democratic change: available at https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2016/12/23/montenegros-stabilitocracy-how-the-westssupport-of-dukanovic-is-damaging-the-prospects--of-democratic-change/ (1 July 2020).

Primatarova, A. – Deimel, J. (2012): *Bridge over Troubled Waters? The Role of the Internationals in Albania*. Sofia: Centre for Liberal Strategies.

Radaelli, C. M. (2003): The Europeanization of Public Policy. In K. Featherstone c. M. Radaelli (Eds), *The Politics of Europeanization*, 27–56. London: Oxford University Press.

Ritcher, S. – Munsch, N. (2019): How EU conditionality entrenches state capture in the Western Balkans: available at https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2019/03/07/how-euconditionality--entrenches-state-capture-in-the-western-balkans/ (1 July 2020).

Ritcher, S. – Wunsch, N. (2020): Money, power, glory: the linkages between EU conditionality and state capture in the Western Balkans: available at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13501763.2019.1578815 (1 July 2020).

Schimmelfenning, F. (2012): Europeanization beyond Europe. *Living Reviews in European Governance* 10 (1): 1–34.

Shepsle, K. A. (2006): Rational Choice Institutionalism. In R. A. W. Rhodes, S. A. Binder, B.A. Rockman (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, 23–38. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

SELDI.(2014): "Anti-Corruption Reloaded, Assessment of Southeast Europe" https://www.syri-ivizionit.org/repository/docs/20141122120435_SELDI_RAR.pdf (1 July 2020).

Sitorus, L. E. (2011): State Capture: Is It a Crime? How the World Perceived It. *Indonesia Law Review* 1 (2): 45. Doi: 10.15742/ilrev.v1n2. 82.

Stratulat, C. (2017): Democratization via EU Integration: Fragile Resilience and Resilient Fragility. In S. Lange, Z. Nechev, F. Trauner (Eds.): *Resilience in the Western Balkans*, 11–17. Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies.

Transparency International. (2009); The Anti-Corruption Plain Language Guide: available at https://issuu.com/transparencyinternational/docs/ti_plain_language_guide?mode=window & backgroundColor=%23222222 (1 July 2020).

Transparency International. (2014): State Capture: An Overview: available at https://www.transparency.org/files/content/corruptionqas/State_capture_an_overview_2014.pdf (1 July 2020).

World Justice Report. (2019): Rule of Law Index: available at https://Worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/WJP-ROLI-2019-Single%20Page%20Vieë-Reduced_0.pdf (1 July 2020).

Zenun Halili *is Associate Professor of political science at the University of Pristina, Kosovo.His main areas of scientific interest are: EU policy and democratic transitions with a particular focus on Cental and South-eastern Europe. E-mail: zenun.halili@uni-pr.edu*

The Turkish Community in the Czech Republic: A Diaspora in the Making?[1]

LUCIE TUNGUL

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0025

Abstract: *Migration is a relatively new phenomenon in the Czech Republic, which has gradually become a destination country. The securitisation and politicisation of migration in the Czech domestic discourse has created a great deal of public anxiety, especially towards Muslims. This paper focuses on the position of Turkish migrants, the single largest Muslim community in the Czech Republic, in the specific context of the Czech Republic. The objective is to define the nature of Turkish migration to the Czech Republic as part of broader migration patterns. Using data from the Czech Statistical Office and from a questionnaire survey, it investigates the Turkish community's assessment of adaptation to the Czech environment and their position within the wider Turkish diaspora policy. I argue that that the non-transparent Czech immigration policy and Czech Islamophobia are potential factors influencing the adaptation process of the Turkish community, which might affect their decision to remain in the country. Furthermore, the small size of the Turkish community can hamper the migrants' social life, who might wish to maintain strong ties with the homeland and the diaspora community in Europe.*

Keywords: ***Turkey, diaspora, migration, the Czech Republic***

Introduction

Migration is regulated on a wide range of levels from the local and national to the global and transnational, and affects many areas of human activity includ-

1 This article is supported by grant GA ČR 19-15958S "Europeizace ve veřejném diskurzu kandidátských zemí EU"/"Europeanization Discourse in the EU Candidate Countries" awarded by the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic.

ing economic, social, national and foreign policies. These various areas affect each other in a multi-layered web of relationships in and across nation states. In the case of Europe, the single market and the Schengen agreement together with the institution of European citizenship and with asylum policy cooperation have had crucial importance for the movement of people on the continent. Immigrants are often seen as culturally "other", as a potential economic and social threat to the sovereign nation because they are seen as belonging elsewhere. The perception of the kin countries, that the emigrants are "theirs", goes hand in hand. According to Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002), immigrants receive attention because they 1) are not part of the shared loyalty to the state, 2) remind the nation that it emerged by assimilation and integration in the past, 3) contribute to the social system but are excluded from full enjoyment of the services, and 4) their move runs counter to the notion of territory in the nationalist imaginary.

Much migration to Europe comes from predominantly Muslim countries, thus, the attitudes to migrations are closely linked with the perceptions of Islamic and/or Middle Eastern cultures. The most negative attitudes can be found in countries with a limited knowledge and/or experience of immigration and/or Muslims (e.g. Burns – Gimpel 2000; Lahav 2004; Hjerm 2009). The debate about migration often focuses on refugees claiming that while some are escaping political persecution and war, others are using the situation to claim material benefits. The distinction between economic migrants and political refugees is not clear, however, because people seek political freedom, physical safety and material well-being. The lack of political freedom is highly subjective and can range from (possible) threats of imprisonment and material suffering to the perception that the individual's lifestyle is under threat. Given the nature, limitations and conditions of the asylum process, many people with sufficient material and non-material resources choose to use alternative ways to reach Europe such as job applications, education and family reunification. Dedeoğlu and Genç (2017) found that factors that influence the inflow of migrants include economic prosperity and per capita income, distance from the country of origin (including travel costs), level of urbanization (greater variety of jobs available), density of migrant social networks providing assistance and information to new migrants and political stability.

Migration is a relatively new phenomenon in the Czech Republic, which has gradually become a destination country due to its positive economic performance but also political stability and security. The economic necessity of immigration notwithstanding, securitisation and politicisation of migration in the Czech domestic discourse has created a great deal of public anxiety. We have witnessed what Lahav (2004: 1162) identified as the majority's fear that migrants would destabilise "national and cultural identity". The fear has been particularly strong in the case of Muslims combining post-2001 Islamophobia with the 2015

and 2016 EU migration crisis. Like the other Eastern European EU member states, the Czech Republic has a complicated history of national sovereignty and feels threatened by transnationalism related to the postmodern migration flows. Its public discourse on migration has been controlled by methodological nationalism, which considers the nation-state a natural unit and equates society with it (cf. Wimmer – Glick Schiller 2002). Furthermore, the violation of state sovereignty by the process of EU integration has pushed the nation states to "prove their status" in areas like migration (Nachmani 2016: 343).

The attitude of the receiving state is complemented with the reality of diaspora life. While former studies focused on archetypal diasporas and the "return to the imagined homeland", the more recent ones discuss "linkages across borders" (Faist 2010: 12) and "multiplicity of spaces" (Aksel 2013) as actual borders have declined in importance. The post-WW2 emphasis on everyone having to belong somewhere and everyone having to belong to only one nation (seen as a privilege) has been undermined by the increase in transnational politics since the 1990s. The revolution in technologies and decrease in transportation prices led to an increase in transborder activities. Diaspora creates "collective memory and insistence on multiplicity of diasporic identity [is relevant] to the social, political, and economic practices of diasporic communities" (Malek 2016: 26). A rising number of migrants commute between the home and host countries, invest and trade goods. Another issue is the mobilisation of the diaspora, its sense of belonging and identities, the narrative of departure and the idea of home(s). This is linked to the relationship of the home country with its citizens abroad, which bears possible positive and negative outcomes, where in the latter case, the homeland is said to hamper integration. National background becomes an easy distinguishing point for identifying "us" and "them". Generally, loyalty and ties to the home country are seen as a problem for migrants' integration, i.e. social cohesion, because members of the diaspora are seen as compatriots and the country of origin wishes to preserve their "national character", sometimes trying to engage them in domestic political battles abroad.

While European and Czech attention have been recently directed mostly to the refugees arriving through Turkey as a transit country, the rising authoritarianism of the Turkish government that escalated after the 2016 failed coup and the deteriorating economic and security situation in the country have been major push factors leading to a steady increase in an exodus of Turkish citizens. While research has been mapping the developments in those EU countries which traditionally have large Turkish minorities such as Germany and the Netherlands, there has been little attempt to investigate the structure of current Turkish migration to Central Europe. Recently, Turks have become the single largest Muslim community in the Czech Republic and it is possible that they want to settle in the country for a longer period of time. This paper focuses on the position of Turkish migrants in the specific context of the Czech

Republic. The objective is to define the nature of Turkish migration to the Czech Republic as part of broader migration patterns, where the country has become a destination country for an increasing number of migrants. It investigates the Turkish community's assessment of adaptation to the Czech environment and their position within the wider Turkish diaspora policy. I argue that that the non-transparent Czech immigration policy and Czech Islamophobia are potential factors influencing the adaptation process of the Turkish community, which might affect their decision to remain in the country. Furthermore, the small size of the Turkish community can hamper the migrants' social life, who might wish to maintain strong ties with the homeland and the diaspora community in Europe.

The Turkish diaspora in Europe

Turkish national identity was built on Turkification and immigration of Turks from neighbouring countries and on policies leading to direct and indirect expulsion of ethnic minorities. Since the 1960s, the Turkish government signed labour agreements with several countries providing "guest workers" helping the country's excess labour and enabling the flow of remittances. Economic migration peaked in the late 1960s and early 1970s and was followed since 1975 by family reunification making the migration more permanent, together with political migration of leftists and Kurds after the 1980 military coup. Another wave of political migrants came from the "Kurdish" regions in the 1990s.[2] The early 2000s witnessed a declining trend[3] of Turkish migration to Europe due to the economic and political reforms of the new Justice and Development Party (AKP) government and the increasing standard of living in the country, which increasingly made Turkey a destination country as well. Prior to the 2016 failed coup, Turkish-born migrants accounted for 2.9 million people (2014–2015), of which 2.5 lived in Europe, thus Turks were the second largest migrant group in Europe after Moroccans; more than half lived in Germany, followed by France and the Netherlands (De Bel-Air 2016).

A new wave of Turkish emigration started after the failed coup of 2016, after which the economic situation and political freedoms deteriorated in the country (see Table 1).[4] According to the official figures from the Turkish Statistical

2 There are thirteen regions in Turkey, where a majority of the population are ethnic Kurds. They are located in the south-east and east of the country. These include Iğdır, Tunceli, Bingöl, Muş, Ağrı, Adıyaman, Diyarbakır, Siirt, Bitlis, Van, Şanlıurfa, Mardin and Hakkâri.

3 The numbers of asylum applications had declined already earlier. For instance, in Germany, 25,514 Turks applied for political asylum in 1995, which dropped to 8,968 in 2000 and to 1,365 in 2014 (De Bel-Air 2016).

4 The 2019 Economist Intelligence Unit report labelled Turkey a hybrid regime, falling by 10 points from the previous year. With a total of 4.37 points (placing between Palestine and Gambia), it scored the lowest of Western European countries, ranking 110th in the world and for six years has been experiencing

Institute (TÜİK), a total of 69,326 Turks left the country in 2016, followed by a sharp increase in 2017 (113,326) and another increase in 2018 (136, 740). Eurostat data showed that over 42,000 Turks sought asylum in the EU in 2018 and 2019, thus, a majority left Turkey without applying for asylum. According to a January 2019 Dutch report, the number of Turks looking for employment in the country doubled since 2016 (an increase from 540 to 1020 of Turkish university graduates between 2016 and 2018), with their reasons citing "the shortage of freedoms in the country" and the economic situation. Başer and Korkmaz (2018: 2) found that the people leaving Turkey since 2016 represented mostly "privileged, educated citizens." Obtaining passports and a Schengen visa has become costly[5] for Turkish citizens, and only the more privileged can try to look for employment abroad or can apply for the so-called golden visa (through investment or purchase of property) – in 2018, 10% of Turkish millionaires left the country.

Table 1: First time asylum applications from Turkey

	EU-28	Germany	Greece	France	Czech Republic
2014	4,415	1,565	30	1,400	0
2015	4,180	1,490	35	1,015	0
2016	10,105	5,385	180	1,005	30
2017	14,655	8,030	1,820	1,285	20
2018	22,075	10,160	4,820	2,045	30
2019	20,490 (Jan-Oct)	10,775	3,790	3,175 (Jan-Nov)	20 (Jan-Nov)

Source: Eurostat 2019.

Turkey is one of the countries, which actively seek to maintain contact with its citizens and its diaspora policy has a decades long history. Aydin (2014: 8) noted that the Turkish government has pursued a "defensive policy of influence and identity" trying to strengthen the ties and loyalty to the country. The 1980 coup marked the beginning of an era when the Turkish regime sought to secure the diaspora's support while acquiring influence over them and the host countries. Turkey supported "incorporation in host societies [and discouraged] cultural

a decline (Economist 2020). IHS Markit (2018) evaluated the risk rating of Turkey as elevated (political and operational), high (legal, tax and security) and severe (economic). For a more detailed analysis, see the full report.

5 In 2020, a Turkish passport valid for 10 years cost 1,155 Turkish lira (TL, around 196 USD), while the minimum wage was 2,325 TL in 2020. The Schengen visa was raised from 60 to 80 € in February 2020, which was an additional 526 TL. Most applicants receive a single-entry short-term visa and have to go through the costly and sometimes time-consuming process repeatedly. The government also cancelled the passports of many people and/or restricted their travels abroad.

and political assimilation" (De Bel-Air 2016: 1). Article 62 of the 1982 Turkish Constitution stated that: "The State shall take the necessary measures to ensure family unity, the education of children, the cultural needs, and the social security of Turkish citizens working abroad, safeguard their ties with the home country and help them on their return home."[6] A further aim was to strengthen the Muslim identity of Turks abroad,[7] while supporting their integration in the host country and their active role in domestic politics (Aydin 2014). Thus, the main features of the Turkish diaspora policy combined integration incentives with Kemalist nationalism and Islam. It provided possibilities for strong emotional bonds to Turkey while separating Turks from the other migrant groups.

In the 1980s, Turkey also allowed Turkish citizens to hold dual citizenship and vote at customs several weeks before the elections. In the 1990s, Turks without Turkish citizenship received Pink cards (today Blue Cards), Turkish political parties could set up branches abroad, and institutional changes were later made under the office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Labour to assist Turks abroad and collect information about the challenges they faced. In 2010, the government set up a new agency, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), and defined its three objectives: "… to protect the family structure, socio-cultural values of our diaspora and the transmission of them to future generations…". Thus, the government has become increasingly proactive, especially in countries with sizeable Turkish minorities.

The diaspora experience depends on the migrants' preferable identity, how they relate their "localized knowledge to various socially constructed, nested imaginaries" (Vainikka 2016: 9). It would be a mistake to consider the Turkish diaspora a monolithic group of people. While some arrived in Europe as economic migrants, others came because they felt their lifestyle or political rights were threatened. Some developed a transnational diaspora identity, others could be better defined as living in an exile mentality. The distinction is often blurred due to the situation in the receiving country, the nature and complexity of Turkish migration patterns, and the complex domestic economic, political and social factors. Leaving aside the specifics of the receiving country, the polarisation of the Turkish society and politics is present and visible in the Turkish communities. The timing and reasons for leaving the country influence

6 After the 1980, Kurds and Alevis were not included in the definition of Turkish emigrants and into the definition of Turkishness unlike the Turks who lived in the former Ottoman lands or even people of broader Turkic origins.

7 Article 136 of the 1982 Constitution stated that "The Department of Religious Affairs [Diyanet], which is within the general administration, shall exercise its duties prescribed in its particular law, in accordance with the principles of secularism, removed from all political views and ideas, and aiming at national solidarity and integrity" thus linking nationalism with religion in the long history of discussion on the specific nature of Turkish Islam, which dates back to the nineteenth century and aims at Turkifying Islam or Islamising Turkishness (Sunier – van der Linden – van de Bovenkamp 2016) and in the post-1980 coup era became known as the Turkish-Islam synthesis.

the migrants' perception of Turkey, relations with other members of the community and the plans for return.

Given the migration discourse in the EU and the nature of the Turkish diaspora, Dedeoğlu and Genç (2015) mention two factors in the debate on Turkish migrants: their integration and future migration patterns. The latter concerns the debate about possible future Turkish membership in the EU, the visa liberalisation programme linked to the 2016 EU-Turkey refugee deal and more generally the migration flows of Turkish and non-Turkish citizens from Turkey, which have been used by the critics of Turkish EU membership ever since Turkey became an EU candidate country. The discussion on their integration often involved matters of loyalty, language, citizenship and dominant culture. Much of the debate also relates to the assessment of the current political situation in Turkey, the role of Islam in Turkish national identity, and in some cases the position of the Kurdish minority in Turkey. The perception of successful integration varies by country and is largely affected by the history of migration, the characteristics of the migrant community, and the nature of immigration policies in the country. It is therefore affected by a multitude of economic, political, social and cultural factors.[8]

The Czech Republic

Although the Czech Republic has a relatively low share of foreigners per capita,[9] the number of foreigners with permanent and temporary residency has been increasing since 2001, recently affected by the persisting labour shortages in the country. At the end of 2018, 564,345 foreigners lived in the Czech Republic, most frequently Ukrainians, Slovaks and the Vietnamese. By the end of 2018, foreign nationals constituted 12.4% of the total employment in the Czech Republic. Table 2 summarizes additional basic data on foreign nationals in the country.

Czechs exhibit relatively hostile attitudes to foreigners. In 2018, 58% of Czechs saw foreigners as a problem (73% in 2003); 64% believed that foreigners increased crime rates, and 62% believed foreigners represented a health risk, while the number of people claiming foreigners increased total unemployment has steadily decreased from 79% in 2014 to 41% in 2018. The share of people who believed foreigners threatened the Czech way of life has increased in absolute terms since 2009 (46%, respectively 36%) but had had a declining trend since 2016 when it peaked at 53%. Only 20% believed that foreigners helped solve the problems of ageing society and that they contributed to economic growth. Similarly, only 18% believed they enriched the local culture. People in Bohemia were more likely to say that foreigners were not a problem while

8 For variations across multiple countries, see e.g. Dedeoğlu and Genç (2015).

9 It ranked 19th in the EU-28: CR 4.9%, EU-28 average 9% (ČSÚ 2019).

Moravians were more likely to say that no foreigners lived in their area. People who personally knew foreigners or had foreigners as friends were more likely to say that foreigners were not a problem (CVVM 2018).

Table 2: Selected Data on Foreign Nationals in the Czech Republic (31/12/2018)

Number of foreigners	Total Women EU nationals Third country nationals	564,345 244,768 () 232,493 331,852
Most frequent citizenship of foreigners	Ukraine Slovakia Vietnam Other	23% 21% 11% 45%
Most frequent place of settlement	Prague Stredocesky Jihomoravsky	205,595 76,393 50,351
Foreigners by category of residence	Permanent residence Temporary residence EU nationals Long-term residence Long-term visa Asylum	289,459 145,177 113,793 15,916 2,586
Foreigners by age	0-19 20-29 30-44 45-59 60 and +	79,126 91,598 210,202 129,952 53,467
Employment of foreigners	Total Employees Self-employed	658,600 568,500 89,800

Source ČSÚ 2019, 2020.

The lack of comfort with becoming a destination country has been translated into a more restrictive immigration policy both on the level of political statements and policy implementation, which have witnessed a number of discrepancies and inconsistencies. Šimáčková (2018:10) noted that the CR has become a destination country due to the values and principles it offers to its population. These are what the immigrants seek, i.e., rule of law and protection of human rights, but the failure to protect the rights of the foreigners raises the question, how they can identify with the country's fundamental principles, when the Czech immigration and asylum laws are "exceptionally inconsistent, incomprehensible and parts of it have been declared repeatedly by the Constitutional court as unconstitutional" (12). She noted that the immigration laws, their execution and judicial practice violate rule of law based on transparency, clarity

and enforceability and the equality of all people. The administrative proceedings were also often problematic and the country did not seem to know whether it wanted foreigners or not and if so, which ones. Until applying for permanent residency, there were no integration requirements, which were more extensive only in the case of citizenship applications. People under international protection and asylum applicants were also not required to integrate into society except for children at the compulsory education age (Šimáčková 2018). This brings the question as to whether the current Czech integration policy matches the new position of a destination country for an increasing variety of migrants and whether it can address the legitimate concerns of the Czech public regarding the diversity of the migration patterns.

In many European countries, Islam is seen as the religion of the underclass because their Muslim communities were a result of post-WW2 labour migration, which filled low-skilled jobs. In Central Europe, however, there have been no significant Muslim migrant communities. The majority population see Muslims, however, as uneducated, violent and dangerous, thus, they evoke hate and hostility. In a 2018 survey, while 80% of Czechs did not know any Muslim personally, 35% claimed they would not like to have a Muslim co-worker, 81% opposed the idea their children had a Muslim partner, and 35% would not like their child to attend school with a Muslim child. 52% did not agree that Muslims could obtain Czech citizenship. The terrorist attacks in Europe also led to fears about Muslim terrorists and their radicalization in Europe. The survey revealed that while fear of Muslims did not distinguish much between Arabs and Muslims from other Muslim countries (feared by 79, and 78% respectively), the number was only slightly lower for the Balkans and post-Soviet republics (70%), somewhat lower for Czech converts (61%), and lowest but still high for second generation Muslims living in the country (51%). The survey revealed a very positive correlation between respondents with general xenophobia and a rejecting position towards Muslims (95% of respondents with a high level of xenophobia had a closed view of Muslims as compared to 29% of people displaying low levels of xenophobia) (Idnes.cz 2018). Schiffauer (2007) summarised the European reservations about Islam as incompatibility with democracy, an authoritarian family (patriarchy, misogyny, domestic violence) and fundamentalism. The host society determines who is a bad and good Muslim based on the subjective degree of religiosity. A good Muslim is seen as a person, who is not religious and does not follow the rules of the religion, and is thus seen as capable of integration into the host society. Much of this also applies to the Czech context, where some of the migration anxiety is caused by the Islamophobic feelings described above, which together with the current setting of the Czech immigration policy and the politicisation of the issue can potentially hamper the adaptation process of the migrants coming from the Muslim countries, who might already feel culturally marginalised from the host country.

Method

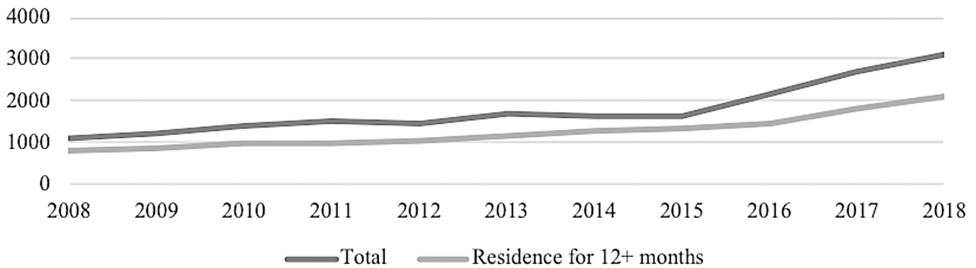
Our study analysed the state of research on migration in the specific context of the Turkish diaspora in Europe. The empirical part relied on available statistical data about foreigners in the Czech Republic obtained from the Czech Statistical office (ČSÚ 2018). The overview of the data for the Turkish citizens is summarised in Annex 1. These data were complemented with data collected from an online survey, which was distributed in Turkish in two Turkish-Czech Facebook groups between 20 July and 17 August 2019. The first group, Turci v Česku/Çek Cumhuriyeti'deki Türkler is a private Facebook group with 1,199 members created in 2012. The second group, Česko Turecko/Çek Türk, has 1,965 members. It is a private group created in 2013 by the Czech-Turkish community of the same name. A total of 98 responses were obtained. The questionnaire combined close and open-ended questions, which enabled a more thorough analysis of the data obtained. Its aim was to map the level of adaptation into Czech society and the attitudes of the Turkish diaspora in the country, which could not be obtained from the general data available from the Czech Statistical Office. The questions were divided into two main groups. The integration level was measured based on selected aspects identified by the World Migration report (2015) as the most frequent obstacles faced by migrants, i.e. language barrier, legal and administrative barriers, discrimination and xenophobia. The second pool of questions focused on several features identified with the diaspora as discussed above, i.e. the connection with the country of origin and engagement with local and transnational diaspora. The link to the home country was measured by questions about the following domestic politics in the Turkish media and generally news about Turkey, by the frequency of their visits to Turkey, their reasons for leaving Turkey, the plans for returning to Turkey but also the level of trust in the Turkish embassy. Annexes 2 and 3 provide the results of the close-ended questions and the population summary. The main limitations were the sampling and distribution of the questionnaire in the Facebook groups, thus, we also relied on the ČSÚ data on the Turkish community in the country. Another problem was distrust on the part of some respondents, which was clear in the board discussions but also in the lower response rates for some questions, which focused on their political preferences and the evaluation of the Turkish embassy.

Findings

The Turkish community in the Czech Republic is small but its numbers have been rising (see Annex 1). Graph 1 shows the increase since 2016; in 2017 Turkey entered the top 25 groups of immigrants in the Czech Republic for the first

time; it is now the sixth largest European third country nationals' group and the largest Muslim community in the country.[10]

Graph 1: Number of Turkish Citizens Legally Residing in the Czech Republic (2008–2018)

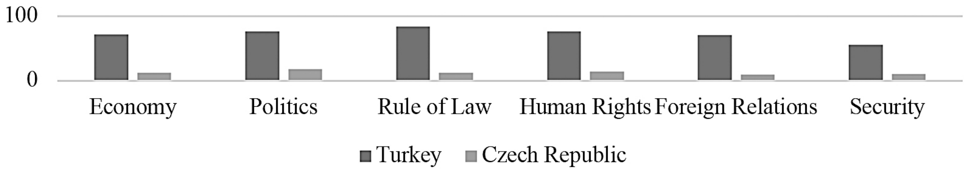


Source: own results

The Czech Republic is not the top country of choice for Turks, but the increase in the immigration numbers indicates that Turkish push factors and Czech pull factors have affected Turkish migration flows since 2016. The possibility of having or finding employment seemed very important in the decision as much as the economic situation in Turkey. Economic reasons were the most often stated *primary* motives both to leave Turkey and to come to the Czech Republic. The ČSÚ and our data indicated that the Turkish community preferred to settle in the largest and most diverse urban centres in the country, which also had the lowest unemployment rates. The second and third most common reasons for choosing the Czech Republic were family and education. The ability to obtain a family visa provided a significant pull factor and facilitated the integration process including knowledge of the environment and the ability to find an occupation. The relatively low cost of education and universities with international programmes also served as noticeable pull factors. Our data also confirmed the argument of Dedeoğlu and Genç (2017) that political (in)stability can serve as a secondary push and pull factor: the respondents ranked political instability among top five problems in Turkey today (together with unemployment, inflation and terrorism) and evaluated the political situation in Turkey as poor or very poor while the evaluation of the situation in the Czech Republic was positive on all accounts asked (see Graph 2).

10 The only country with a majority Muslim population that has more foreigners living the Czech Republic is Kazakhstan, where over 70% of the population is Muslim but due to the Soviet past and despite the more recent religious revival in the country, the level of religiosity is relatively low compared with many other Muslim countries.

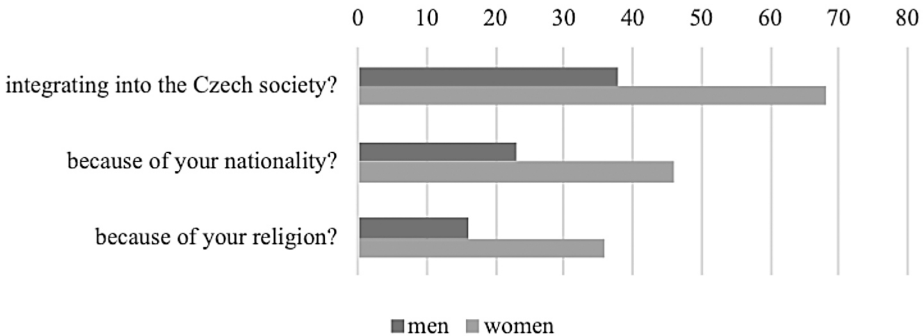
Graph 2: The current situation is poor or very poor in the following areas (%)



Source: own results

Generally, the respondents indicated their will to integrate into Czech society. A majority spoke Czech, did not plan to leave the country in the near future, planned to apply for Czech citizenship and once eligible, vote in the Czech elections. Their children were mostly receiving education in Czech (if applicable).[11] When self-evaluating the ability to adapt to Czech society, a majority (58%) claimed they did not face any problems. Those who did were most likely to encounter problems with finding accommodation, with finding friends and having a social life, with the authorities including the police, with access to health care and with finding a job. The region and size of the settlement did not seem to influence problems with integration unlike the sex of the respondent. Women were far more likely to report problems (see graph 3), which will require additional information to identify the causes of this discrepancy.

Graph 3: "Have you encountered any problems … "



Source: own results

Among the things mentioned that the Czech government could improve in their services to the respondents (and their families, if relevant) were better

11 Annex 1 shows that the number of Turkish children enrolled in Czech schools is very low but the data can be influenced by the number of children, who are dual citizens, thus, are not recorded as foreigners.

integration policies including teaching Czech, adaptation training, consultancy, better access to health care (including birth and post-birth assistance), less bureaucracy and introduction of e-government and English-speaking staff at the departments handling immigration affairs. Although a slight majority of the respondents declared their knowledge of Czech, for many language barrier was one of the crucial problems in their adaptation process and some even considered leaving the country for this reason. While a majority (57%) of the respondents did not consider moving to another country, those who did (32%) most often complained about the low standard of living but also the language barrier, racism, cultural differences and the related problems with socialisation. These respondents were also more likely to report problems with integrating into Czech society and discrimination based on their nationality. The respondents, who reported discrimination based on their nationality, mentioned general racism and prejudice in society but also racism in governmental offices.

The Czech perception of Turkey is to some extent perceived as affecting the majority's approach to the Turkish migrants. The long-standing good relations between the two countries are little known.[12] While the official relations are stable, the public has become increasingly critical. The European Council on Foreign Relations (Aydintasbas 2018) evaluated the Czech-Turkish relations as characterised by declining support for Turkish EU membership among the Czech public due to perception of increasing authoritarianism. Czechs considered the post-2016 Turkish development as a violation of human rights and democracy and did not welcome the changing Turkish relationship with Russia and Israel. The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was the least trusted foreign leader in 2016 (yet, most people did not know what he looked like). Czech society's view of Turkey was also affected by the strong representation of the Kurdish perspective on the Turkish "Kurdish problem" and rising Czech anti-Islamism both projected into the understanding of the Turkish involvement in Syria and affecting the perception that the Turkish regime has become increasingly undemocratic. The relations between the countries hit the lowest point during the Salih Muslim crisis in February 2018.[13]

The survey respondents viewed the relationship between Turkey and the CR as mostly neutral/normal (33%) or bad/insufficient (30%) while only 18% assessed it as good. One respondent described the relations as defined by "lack of information and interest" while another stated that the two countries

12 Few people are aware that the relations between the two countries date back to the post-WW1 era and continued even during the Cold War era. The first agreement between the two countries was signed in 1924 and several agreements were also signed between Turkey and socialist Czechoslovakia and with the Czech Republic in the 1990s and the early 2000s. Some of the recent agreements facilitated cooperation in terms of double taxation, pensions and social security.

13 The former Syrian Kurdish leader was arrested in Prague and Turkey requested his extradition on terrorism charges but the Czech court released him, which Turkey called "scandalous" (BBC 2018) and against international law.

crossed paths only during the the Salih Muslim crisis. One other respondent argued that the Czech Republic was siding with the Americans, which could indirectly damage its relations with Turkey. The respondents also recorded the impact on the negative view of Turkey on their integration into society. Several people complained about racist or discriminatory remarks and behaviour in business and social relations. One respondent noted that people's reactions to him changed when they learnt he was Turkish, so he began saying he was from Cyprus. While none of the respondents directly associated the perceived discriminatory treatment of Turks with the current political situation in Turkey, they recorded that the anti-Turkish attitudes were influenced by the anti-Islam discourse as documented in most of the respondent' personal stories. One respondent stated that even though not religious, being Turkish "I was inevitably subjected to the same treatment" as Muslims. Another noted that when hearing Turkey, Czechs directly think Muslim and do not want to have any contact.

When specifically asked about problems related to their religion, only 16% declared they experienced problems in their workplace, social life and school.[14] One person stated that Czechs did not like foreigners, but especially Muslims. Some respondents, while declaring they did not have any religious beliefs, complained about the anti-Muslim attitudes in the country, while another said he was happy he was not Muslim in this country. Several personal stories were provided when answering this question. One female respondent noted that her son attending primary school was told that he was a Muslim terrorist, and another female respondent wearing a headscarf reported that the glances and prejudiced behaviour were pushing her to insulation from social life. She found it "impossible to find job or friends." The personal stories also included cases of verbal and physical assaults on a friend with a headscarf and the rejection of medical assistance to a covered woman. Generally, those experiencing problems believed that Muslims were not welcome in the Czech Republic and that their religion was causing social problems and issues with finding a job. These perceptions were also reflected in the declared plan to leave the country.

These responses indicated that while Turks were not all that visibly different from the majority in terms of complexion and dress, except for women wearing headscarves, some people perceived them as primarily Muslim. This was affected by the widespread belief that for Muslims, their first source of identification is their religion, which increases hostility together with the belief that Muslims cannot successfully integrate and that they come from poorer countries, and thus, some people "look down upon them" (Nachmani 2016). Paul and Becker (2017: 141–142, 152) argued that Turks were more likely to highlight their similarities with Europeans than Arabs and were actually critical of Arabs and

14 Some of the anti-Muslim attitudes were recorded, however, in the question on discrimination based on their nationality.

disliked being confused with them: "prioritizing and emphasizing national identity/culture facilitates stigma management", which could also be found in some of our responses. Several respondents complained that Czechs viewed Turks as Arabs but one respondent noted that the problem with perceiving Turks as Arabs and all Arabs as terrorists was commonplace in Europe in general.

Paul and Becker (2017: 141–142) argued that Turks also dealt with the "Muslim stigma" by emphasizing traditional Turkish hospitality, friendliness, love for children and generosity. The respondents described the local Turkish community as family, close friends and business contacts and defined its members as warm, social, hard-working, well educated, secular and well-integrated people. The negative descriptions of the Turkish community were infrequent and criticised selfishness and pretentious behaviour. The self-descriptions fit the national perspective on Turkish culture defined in Turkey as related to the Central Asian Turkic tradition and different from Arabs ("with their strange views of women and their theocratic political systems") but also the West (and "its excessive and exploitative nature") because it builds on "strong family ties, respect for elders and unconditional love of, and commitment to, children... loneliness is a rare phenomenon... the foremost motivation of individuals is not greed... racism seems distant from everyone's mind" (Iskenderoglu, quoted in Nachmani 2016: 329).

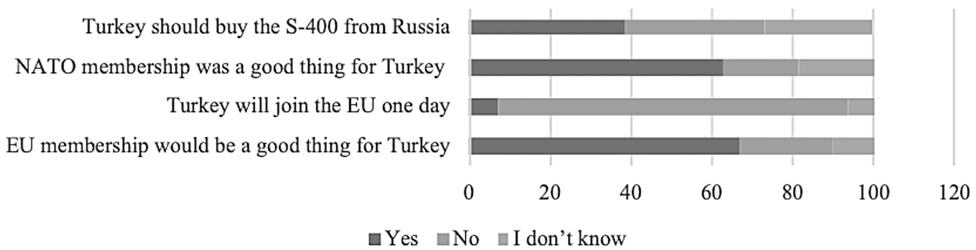
Our results confirm the discomfort some Czechs feel with foreigners and Muslims in particular. There is a question whether Czechs perceive the Turkish migrants primarily as Turks or as Muslims but the image is in both cases highly problematic due to Islamophobia and the unpopularity of the Turkish regime. Collective responsibility is often applied, when Turks are expected to show shame for the violence caused by their government or by Muslims. Given that the negative view of the Turkish regime in Czech society is connected with President Erdogan, who is perceived by the Czechs as an Islamist, there might be a political connection as to how the Czech perceive the Turks.

Another important aspect was the existence of an (at least on some level) organised local Turkish community, with its activities and links to Turkey or other communities abroad. Vainikka (2016: 17) argued that "the sense of security and freedom, shared values, discourses of trust, conventional practices and comfort in the way of living contribute to seeing national communities as objects of emotional identification." Two thirds of the respondents were in contact with Turks in their current place of residence, only one respondent did not know about Turks living in the area, which could be caused by his recent arrival, and the small size and geography of his residency in the country. Half the respondents were aware of events and activities organized by the Turks in their neighbourhood and of those informed, a slight majority participated in these events. Among those who were not aware of the events in the area, 62% declared they would like to attend. The links to Turks in other European countries

were less common, 44% had contacts with Turks in other European countries. It is worth noting that those who planned to leave the Czech Republic were considering Germany (46%), the Netherlands (41%) and the UK (33%). The fact that these countries have significant Turkish minorities could be a factor in the decision, because those considering the move expected not only better living conditions but also a better social life.

The mobilization of Turkish immigrants can represent an opportunity but also a challenge to the Turkish state and the host country. In recent debates about Turkish nationals in other European countries, one hears about the level of control the Turkish government has over its diaspora and some worry about the Turkish diaspora being the "fifth column" especially linked to the spread of conservative social values and Islam (Aydin 2014). Our findings indicate that the Turkish community in the CR maintained close ties with Turkey. More than half visited Turkey at least once a year (55%) and they were quite engaged in following the events in the home country; 92% followed the news in Turkey, usually combining various sources but mostly relying on the Internet (93%) and the social media (77%), but also news from family and friends (53%). The involvement in Turkish politics was strong through elections – 85% of Turks voted or planned to vote in Turkish elections. The political views of the respondents were pro-European and pro-Western (see Graph 3).

Graph 4: Selected Foreign Policy Views



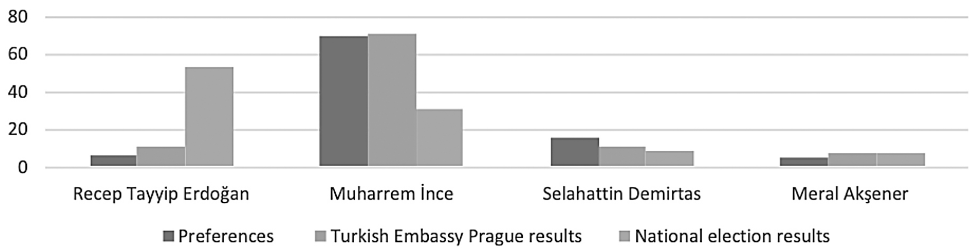
Source: own results

The respondents and the official results of the Turkish embassy in Prague from the 2018 presidential election also showed high support politically for the main opposition candidate Muharrem Ince (Republican People's Party, CHP) and low support for Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (see Graph 4).[15] This clearly distinguished

15 Given the fact that some of the respondents did not vote in Prague due to their arrival to the country and their registration as voters (while 80% claimed they voted in the Turkish election, the 2018 presidential election had a 53% turnout in Prague), the sampling limits of the online survey through the social media, and the fact that 9 respondents did not answer the question, the numbers correspond well with the results announced by the Turkish embassy in Prague except for the results of Erdogan.

the Czech Turkish community from the diaspora in some EU countries with a more numerous Turkish community, where President Erdoğan won and with a higher percentage than in Turkey.[16] The support for the CHP candidate could also explain the relatively low perception of religious discrimination in the country as recorded by the respondents (discussed above) because the CHP electorate are generally non-religious, secular voters (cf. Ciddi 2009).

Graph 5: Support for presidential candidates, 2018 election



Note: voter turnout in Prague 53%, total diaspora turnout was 48.8%
Source: own results, Sabah 2018.

Unlike for instance Germany, the Turkish government does not seem to have a strong ally in the Turkish diaspora in the CR, where many Turks do not support the AKP and negatively assess the political and economic situation in Turkey. The service of the Turkish embassy in Prague was generally assessed as not particularly good, with only 20% of the respondents finding it very good and good and 68% claiming that the embassy should provide more services than it did. These included organizing events which would support the Turkish community (meeting of Turks, connecting Turkish children with their Turkish culture and language, social gatherings, educational activities, and economic opportunities; all these should have a regular programme) but also improving Turkey's image in the host society, promoting Turkish culture and Turkey in general. The demand to help increase the cohesion of the Turkish community and "unity" was particularly frequent.

The findings confirm Aydin's argument (2014) that most Turks maintain very close relations with the home country and wanted to keep their "lively connections"; they especially agreed on the need to preserve the culture and language as links to the motherland. The embassy did not seem all that active, however,

16 While the comparison is not the focus of the study, we also need to note that the diaspora turnout was quite low and much lower than in Turkey, thus, the results might not represent the views of the Turkish diaspora in general. Erdogan received the highest number of votes in Austria (72.3%, voter turnout 48.9%), in the Netherlands (73%, voter turnout 46.7%) and in Belgium (74.9%, voter turnout 53.6%). For more see Sabah 2018.

in supporting the local Turkish community. The website of the embassy does not inform about any activities for local Turkish citizens or links to the official diaspora programmes of the Turkish government.[17] Thus, the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB) does not seem to be interested in supporting Turkish diaspora activities in the country including those directly related to its proclaimed goals such as education of children. When asked about classes teaching children Turkish and helping their families socialize, the embassy's reaction was limited to supply of books in Turkish (M.C. 2020).[18] Several projects involving children of the Turkish community are currently under preparation, all without the direct involvement of the embassy. While asking for more services, the responses revealed ambivalent levels of trust in the embassy: 41% trusted it and 37% did not, while a relatively high share of the respondents refused to answer the question (24%). This might also be related to the claims that the Turkish embassy had been spying on the citizens in Prague (and other European cities), who were critical of President Erdoğan and affiliated with the Gülen movement,[19] as claimed by the pro-Gülenist news portal Nordic Monitor (Bozkurt 2019).[20]

At the same time, the respondents demanded more assistance with their life in the country from the embassy such as receiving information in Turkish about the visa and residency application processes, housing, health care, transportation, diploma recognition, employment opportunities – generally services facilitating their early adaptation, but also assisting their long-term integration such as organizing Czech language courses and learning about bilateral agreements concerning social policy and retirement rights. This indicated the dissatisfaction with the work of the embassy but indirectly also the insufficiency of the Turkish support groups and the inadequacy of the integration services available to immigrants in the CR including the availability and awareness about the Czech integration centres.

17 This might change after the new ambassador Egemen Bağış was appointed in autumn 2019. He met with various Czech-Turkish groups active in the country and is planning to organize a one week cultural festival in Prague in June 2020. More specific information is not available at the moment but the aim is to promote Turkey in the Czech Republic and strengthen the ties of the Turkish community.

18 The interview with the president of a Czech-Turkish association, which cooperates with the embassy on cultural affairs, was conducted on 21 February 2020. The interviewee wanted to remain anonymous so we do not provide the full name of the association.

19 A social-religious movement built around the preacher Fethullah Gülen formed an informal alliance with the AKP until 2013. The government holds it responsible for the 2016 failed coups. For more, see e.g. Tungul (2018).

20 The article claimed that they had been "targeted by a campaign of intimidation and harassment and denied consular services abroad, while their relatives and friends back in Turkey risked the possibility of jail time, asset seizure and persecution on fabricated criminal charges."

Conclusion

International migration is a phenomenon, bringing many opportunities but also threats to the host societies, which leads to an increasing hostility to migrants across the Western world. National migration laws are becoming stricter, while politicians and the media are becoming increasingly antagonistic, especially to asylum seekers but also other migrants, who they often associate with disorder and criminality (Snyder 2011). Despite the anti-immigration sentiments in the Czech Republic, it has become a destination country for an increasing number of people. While job insecurity and low income, exacerbated by (possible) political persecution, can be important push factors in a country undergoing a prolonged economic crisis and rising authoritarianism like Turkey, foreigners looking for employment help fight shortages in the host countries like the Czech Republic and can potentially address certain problems of ageing societies. The perceptions of political stability, rule of law and respect for human rights associated with EU membership serve as additional pull factors for third country nationals. The decisions to live abroad or to return to the homeland take into consideration social, economic and political factors. The factors of economic and political stability are complemented with the distance from the country of origin and the ability to reach the kin/host country at an acceptable cost, the existence of possible (transnational) migrant networks, and the standard of living in the kin/host country.

The originally economic push factors of Turkish migration to Europe in the 1960s have developed into a far more complex web of reasons for migration and have affected its patterns and characteristics. While the European public opinion is rather negative about current Turkey, Turkish communities can now be found in all EU countries, including Central Europe. The Turkish diaspora policy and transnational connections between Turks are often seen as obstacles to their successful integration into the host societies and are called the fifth column or Trojan horse. The rising authoritarianism of President Erdoğan and the results of the Turkish elections abroad seem to confirm that view in some European countries. The host society blames them for social conservatism and perceives their collective Muslim identity as a problem or even a threat. The political views of the Turks in the Czech Republic do not support this view but it would be interesting to see whether the Czech public would associate the Turkish migrants with pro--Erdoğan attitudes due to their nationality or due to the news about the support of the Turkish diaspora for Erdoğan in countries like Austria and Germany.

The homeland provides a strong point for identity formation and preservation of the diaspora. The individualised definition of migrants' Turkishness depends on the memory of the life before leaving, the narrative of the departure, the reception and environment in the host country and the relations with the other members of the diaspora and the kin state. They might believe or hope

that one day they will be able to return to the country, when the political situation changes. In their case, the emotion of loyalty to their homeland can be replaced by an emotion of resentment to the country of origin as it stands today. We witness the idealization of the homeland but also the shame of the homeland and these feelings do not have to be mutually exclusive. The people who left because of some political turmoil such as the 1980 military coup, during the Kurdish insurgency or most recently after the 15 July failed coup experienced a "traumatic loss". They maintained a memory of the place and the trauma and create their own discourse of why they had left the country as witnessed in the case of the Turkish Kurds, and more recently the members of the Gülen movement. In this context, more research is needed to assess the memory and diaspora narratives of selected sections of the Turkish diaspora.

The Turkish community in the Czech Republic has been rising in numbers and the majority of its members seem interested in staying in the country for a longer period of time and in integrating with Czech society. The anti-Islamic feelings might not be sufficient deterrents to migrants coming from Muslim countries because there is a general perception that Islamophobia is on the rise in the West in general. It was apparent that the inconsistencies in Czech immigration policy and the lack of requirements for integration of immigrants has been reflected in the problems the Turkish citizens recorded and the demands they expressed towards the Czech authorities and the Turkish embassy. The evaluation of the level of their integration depends on what the receiving state considers successful integration, which obviously brings substantial differences between individual countries. Thus, it is not only the nature of the diaspora but also the receiving state that define the result. The Czech immigration policy lacks consistent and lucid integration priorities and goals, which would better reflect the position of the destination country and assist with the integration, which is required both on the level of political decisions and policy implementation by the state authorities. Such a policy should reflect the fact that while there are dominant migrant groups, a majority of the migrants come from third countries. They do not therefore have EU citizenship rights, often wish to apply for permanent residency, and many of them will be raising their children in the Czech Republic. Acknowledging and preparing for diversity might contribute to economic prosperity but also political stability and democratic maturity.

References

Aydın, Yaşar (2014): The New Turkish Diaspora Policy. Its Aims, Their Limits and the Challenges for Associations of People of Turkish Origin and Decision-Makers in Germany, SWP Research Paper 10.

Aydintasbas, Asli (2018): The Discreet Charm of Hypocrisy. An EU-Turkey Power Audit, European Council on Foreign Relations, Policy Brief.

Baser, Bahar – Korkmaz, Emre Eren (2018): Is Turkey Really Facing an 'Exodus? It's Not That Simple, The Conversation (6 February): available at https://theconversation.com/is-turkey--really-facing-an-exodus-its-not-that-simple-90197 (14 January 2020).

BBC (2018): Saleh Muslim: Release of Syrian Kurdish leader angers Turkey, (27 February): available at https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43212481 (22 February, 2020).

Bozkurt, Abdullah (2019): Turkish Embassy in Prague Spied on International School in Czechia, Nordic Monitor (25 April, 2019): available at https://www.nordicmonitor.com/2019/04/turkish--embassy-in-prague-spied-on-international-school-in-czechia (22 February 2020).

Burns Peter – Gimpel, James G. (2000): Economic Insecurity, Prejudicial Stereotypes, and Public Opinion on Immigration Policy. *Political Science Quarterly* 115 (2): 201–25.

Christofis, Nikos – Başer, Bahar – Öztürk, Ahmet Erdi (2019): The View from Next Door: Greek--Turkish Relations after the Coup Attempt in Turkey. *The International Spectator* 54 (2): 67–86.

Ciddi, Sinan (2010): Kemalism in Turkish Politics: The Republican People's Party, Secularism and Nationalism, Routledge.

ČSÚ (2019): Cizinci v České republice 2019 (December): available at: https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/91605941/29002719.pdf/74e31838-8cfa-4e93-9aed-4771e13683a8?version=1.0 (13 January 2020).

ČSÚ (2020): Více než 12 % zaměstnanosti v Česku tvoří cizinci (16 January 2020): available at https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/vice-nez-12-zamestnanosti-v-cesku-tvori-cizinci (27 February, 2020).

CVVM (2018): Postoje české veřejnosti k cizincům – březen 2018, (18 April): available at https://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/cz/tiskove-zpravy/ostatni/vztahy-a-zivotni-postoje/4603-postoje-ceske--verejnosti-k-cizincum-brezen-2018 (12 January 2020).

De Bel-Air, Francoise (2016): Migration Profile: Turkey, Migration Policy Centre, Policy Brief No. 9.

Dedeoğlu, Dincer – Genç, H. Deniz (2017): Turkish Migration to Europe: A Modified Gravity Model Analysis. *IZA Journal of Development and Migration* 7(17): 1–19.

Economist (2020): Democracy Index 2019: available at https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy--index (17 November 2019).

Eurostat (2019): Asylum statistics: available at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics--explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics#Number_of_asylum_applicants:_drop_in_2018 (22 February, 2020).

Hjerm, Mikael (2009): Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Cross-Municipal Variation in the Proportion of Immigrants. *Acta Sociologica* 52 (1): 47–62.

Idnes.cz (2018): Muslimové v Česku: Exkluzivní průzkum pro iDNES.cz, (23 July): available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/muslimove-v-cesku-pruzkum-median-kompletni-vysledky.A180719_164409_domaci_jj#space-a (13 December 2020).

IHS Markit (2018): 'Country Reports – Turkey' (30 October): available at https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/economics-country-risk.html (17 November 2019).

Lahav, Gallya (2004): Public Opinion Toward Immigration in the European Union. Does it Matter? *Comparative Political Studies 37* (10): 1151–83.

Malek, Amy (2016): The Iranian Diaspora between Solidarity and Difference. Heinrich Böll Foundation, Identity and Exile 40.

Nachmani, Amikam (2016): The Past As a Yardstick: Europeans, Muslim Migrants and the Onus of European-Jewish Histories. *Israel Affairs* 22 (2): 318–354.

Paul, Crystal – Becker, Sarah (2017): "People Are Enemies to What They Don't Know" Managing Stigma and Anti-Muslim Stereotypes in a Turkish Community Center. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 46 (2): 135–172.

Sabah (2009): Seçim 2018: availale at https://www.sabah.com.tr/secim/24-haziran-2018-secim--sonuclari (17 November 2019).

Schiffauer, Werner (2007): From Exile to Diaspora: The Development of Transnational Islam in Europe, in Al-Azmeh, A. – Fokas, E., eds., Islam in Europe: Diversity, Identity and Influence, 68–95. Cambridge University Press.

Snyder, Susanna (2011): Encountering Asylum Seekers: An Ethic of Fear or Faith? *SCE* 24(3): 350–366.

Sunier, Thijl – van der Linden, Heleen – van de Bovenkamp, Ellen (2016): The Long Arm of the State? Transnationalism, Islam, and Nation-Building: The Case of Turkey and Morocco. *Contemporary Islam* 10: 401–420.

Tungul, L. (2018): The Lost Opportunity Window of the Gülen Movement in Turkey. *Slovak Journal of Political Sciences* 18(2): 141–154.

Turkish Minute (2019): '10 Percent of Turkish Millionaires Emigrated in 2018: Report', (28 April): available at https://www.turkishminute.com/2019/04/28/10-percent-of-turkish-millionaires--emigrated-in-2018-report/ (17 November 2019).

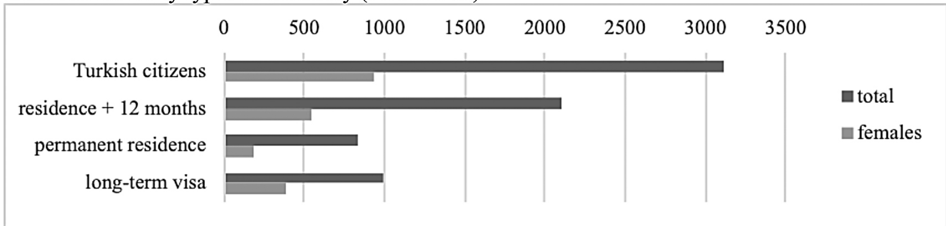
Vainikka, Joni Tuomas (2016): A citizen of all the different bits: emotional scaling of identity. *GeoJournal* 81: 5–22.

Wimmer, Andreas – Glick Schiller, Nina (2002): Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation--State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences. *Global networks* 2(4): 301–334.

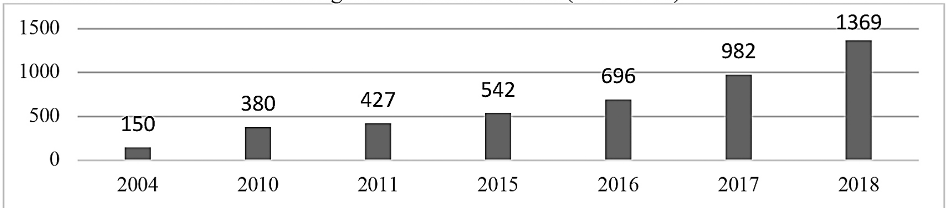
Lucie Tungul *graduated from Miami University, Ohio (International Relations), and Palacky University in Olomouc (Politics and European Studies). Her areas of interest are European integration with a special focus on Europeanization, democratization, Euroscepticism, migration processes and identity discourses. She worked as an assistant professor at Fatih University, Istanbul, between 2006 and 2016. She is currently an assistant professor at the Department of Politics and Social Sciences, Law Faculty, Palacky University and Head of Research at the political institute TOPAZ. Email: lucie.tungul@upol.cz*

Annex 1: Selected official data on Turkish citizens in the Czech Republic

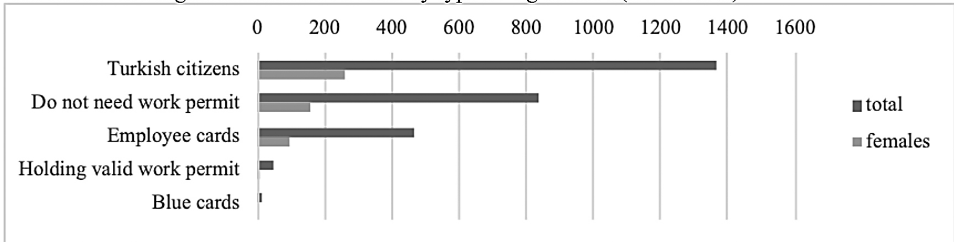
Turkish citizens by types of residency (31/12/2018)



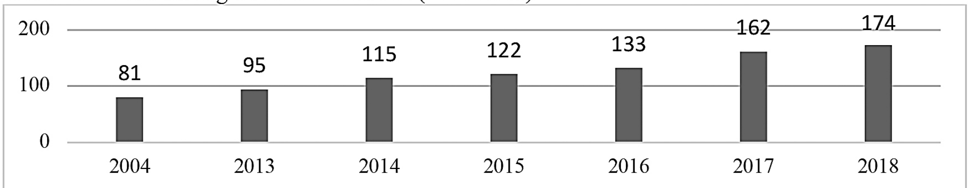
Total number of Turkish citizens registered at labour offices (2004-2018)



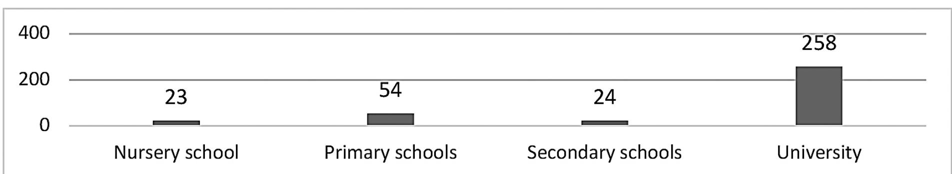
Turkish citizens registered at labour offices by type of registration (31/12/2018)



Turkish citizens holding valid trade licences (2004-2018)



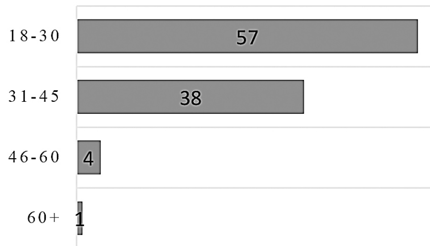
Turkish children, pupils and students enrolled in the Czech education system (31/12/2018)



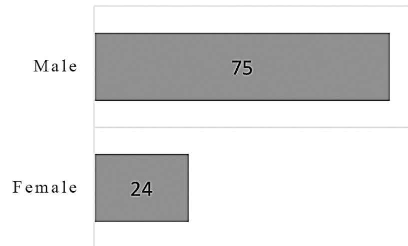
Source: ČSÚ 2019.

Annex 2: Basic sociodemographics of the survey respondents (N=98)

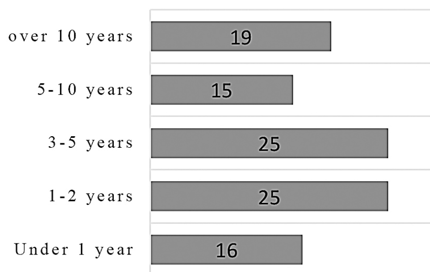
Age



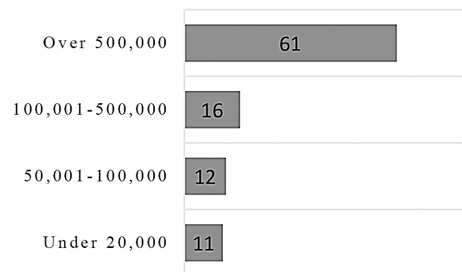
Sex



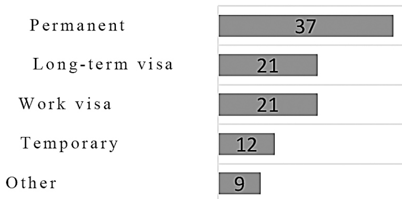
Length of stay in the Czech Republic



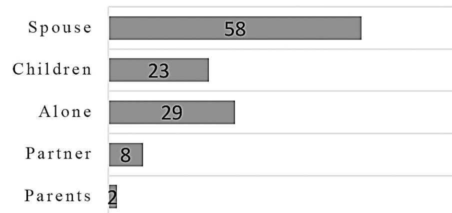
Size of settlement



Type of residency



Household shared with



Annex 3: Summary of selected questions and responses

Question	Response	%	Question	Response	%
Do you plan to apply for Czech citizenship?	Yes No Don't know	60% 18% 22%	**Your problems with adaption, if any, concerned**	*Accommodation* *Social life* *Police* *Work permit* *Health care* *Finding a job*	*61%* *37%* *35%* *33%* *33%* *30%*
Do your children (if you have any) receive education in Czech?	Yes No	88% 12%	**Have you encountered any problems because of your nationality?**	*Yes* *No*	*26%* *74%*
Do you visit Turkey?	Yes No If yes, I go Once a year Twice a year/more	94% 6% 55% 26%	***Have you had any problems because of your religion?***	Yes No	16% 74%
Primary reason to leave Turkey	Economic Family Political Education Other	27% 26% 18% 17% 12%	***Are you in contact with other Turks in your area of residence?***	Yes No	67% 33%
Why did you choose the Czech Republic?	Occupation Family Education Other	55% 24% 15% 6%	***Are you aware of any events or activities organized by other Turkish citizens in your area?***	Yes No	50% 50%
Do you plan to move to another country in the near future?	No Yes, reasons: Economic/academic Racism/xenophobia Social/cultural Language barrier	57% 32%, 42% 19% 19% 13%	***Do you have regular contacts with Turks in other European countries?***	Yes No	43% 57%
Do you plan to move back to Turkey one day?	Yes No If yes, in … years Less than 5 5-10 More than 10	21% 65% 15% 46% 31%	***Do you follow events in Turkey?***	Yes No	92% 8%
Which languages other than Turkish you speak?	English Czech German	92% 53% 20%	***If yes, you receive information from***	Internet Social media Friends/family Television	93% 77% 53% 26%
Have you or your close ones encountered any problems adapting to Czech society?	Yes No	43% 57%	***Do you plan to vote in … elections?***	**Czech** Yes No **Turkish** Yes No	 72% 28% 86% 14%

Multi-level Governance and Energy Specifics of the V4 Countries within the Context of European Integration[1]

HELENA BAUEROVÁ AND MILAN VOŠTA

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0022

Abstract: *The topic of energy is still one of the most sensitive policy areas. The aim of this article is to examine the multi-level governance and energy specifics of the V4 countries within the context of European integration by analyzing selected the specifics of the energy mix of the V4 group countries. This will be carried out within the context of applying the theory of multilevel governance. The paper shows how energy policy is formed at state, and/or non-state level, as well as how these levels are influenced by the EU. The article also looks at the efforts taken to shape a common energy policy. A closer examination of the individual countries' levels lies outside the scope of this article. Therefore, the framework was chosen with regard to the particular features within the context of the functioning of the V4 group of countries. Using multi-level governance as a theoretical concept, the authors considered the limits arising from the determination of levels and the subjects of the survey, as well as having distinguished three levels of analysis. The first is the supranational level. This is represented by the EU. The second level is represented by the V4 states. The third level is the state as the actor that formulates energy policy, sets the energy mix and subsequently manifests itself in relation to the EU and the V4 group. Energy policy is significantly influenced by states, especially in the area of energy security of fuel supplies, or that of setting the energy mix. With the gradual communitarization of energy policy, the EU's influence is growing and it is debatable how the evaluation of existing strategic plans, presented by individual states, will be done. The role of the V4 group is the weakest of the three levels of analysis which were examined. However, its increasing influence can be pre-*

1 This paper is the result of Metropolitan University Prague research project no. 74-02 "Territorial Studies, Economics, International Relations" (2020), based on a grant from the Institutional Fund for the Long-term Strategic Development of Research Organisations.

dicted mainly in the case of coal depletion and the perception of nuclear energy as a renewable source.

Keywords: ***Visegrad group, European Union, EU energy policy, multi-level governance, energy mix***

Introduction

Energy policy is one of the oldest policies of the European integration process. The coal and steel co-operation project of the early 1950s; leading to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC); laid the foundations for energy cooperation in the present-day European Union. However, it should be noted that energy policy has long been an area outside the scope of primary Community Law. A real energy policy began to take shape only after the adoption of the Single European Act (1986). This was in connection with the construction of the common internal market, which also, logically, included energy-related commodities.

The energy sector was, and still is, one of the most sensitive areas where, in terms of European integration, the interests of states (government, policies or corporate interests) conflict with the interests and direction of European integration. The indicated contradiction is plainly visible from the turn of the 1980s and 1990s and has continued up until the Treaty of Lisbon was adopted. This is because because energy was not considered to be a "classic" Community policy. EU activities and challenges since the publication of the White Paper (1995): *Energy Policy for the European Union* have referred to the need to build energy policy on a Community policy platform. Such a policy should include "... *private and public operators... a framework for consultation on energy action and instruments... a framework for cooperation between Member States in order to identify common interests*" (Evropská komise 1995). However, the challenges which the European Commission faced were the lack of interest and unwillingness of member states to find a common ground for the shaping of common rules for the internal market in energy commodities; as well as for the communitarization of this policy. The change did not occur until 2006, with the publication of the Green Paper on a *European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy* (Evropská komise 2006). The European Commission mentions the possibility of developing a common energy strategy based on a single energy policy; not on the separate energy policies of each of the 25 member states. The indicated activity of the European Commission resulted in the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, which communitarized energy policy.

The aim of this paper is to analyze selected specifics of the energy mix of a group of countries within the context of the application of the theory of multilevel governance. The authors assume that energy policy (setting the energy mix) clearly demonstrates the blending of several spheres of decision--making (local level, state, government organizations and the EU level) into the formation and final form of energy policy; both of the individual state and the EU. At the same time, the authors are aware of the breadth of the topic, and therefore chose a narrow group of states. The selected states are connected by geographical proximity and cooperation on the basis of their membership of the Visegrad Group and the European Union. The aim of the article is to show to what extent energy policy is formed at state and/or non-state level, as well as how these levels are influenced by the EU and its efforts to shape a common energy policy. The breadth of the individual levels also lies outside the scope of this paper. Therefore, the framework was chosen with regard to the partial specifics, especially within the context of the functioning of the group known as the Visegrad Group. The levels of analysis are, therefore, the following three: 1) The four countries Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, which are: 2) part of the Visegrad Group (V4); which is the second level of analysis. The last level of analysis: 3) is the EU. In terms of time, the analysis will focus on the period after accession to the EU (after 2004), and mainly on the most recent period after 2015.

The following text is divided into two main parts. The first part introduces the theory of multi-level governance as a concept by which the selected issue can be grasped. At the same time, the weaknesses of the approach that can adjust the resulting findings are demonstrated. In the second part of the article the specifics of energy policy in the concept of V4 countries in connection with the EU are analysed. This is specifically a partial energy policy of the group of analysed states within in the context of those activities implemented by the Visegrad Group. Subsequently, the energy mix is analyzed within the context of each state's specifics. The text seeks an answer to the research question: *„to what extent are the specifics of the energy policy of the selected countries determined by state policy?"* To put it another way, to what extent is it possible to monitor the EU's influence on the energy policy of the Visegrad Group countries? Is it possible to say that the Visegrad Group does or does not shape the energy policies of the Member States within the context of EU action?

Multi-level Governance as a Framework for Grasping the Energy Policy of the V4 Countries

The common denominator of all approaches using multi-level governance (hereinafter to be referred to as MLG) is the system of governance, which takes place at various levels. The basic divisions are: national, local, supranational

or regional level (Daniel – Kay 2017: 4). There are two main types of MLG. The first is associated with the federal organization of the state, where governance goes from the state government to the units. The second type is an expression of broad governance involving both the individual and the state (Hooge – Marks 2003). The division of governance according to levels allows the MLG concept to explain the development and implementation of outputs at different levels; which together achieve the defined objectives (Zürn 2010). One can agree with the statement of Stein and Turkewitsch (2008) that multi-level governance leads to the optimization of political decision-making. This is because it is possible to monitor the vertical and horizontal levels of decision-making. Moreover, they are intertwined and the decision-making process reflects a number of actors that influence the resulting decision (Stephenson 2013). This helps us to analyze, *inter alia*, the functioning of energy policy in this paper.

In the context of European integration, it should be recognized that the MLG concept requires the monitoring of the principle of subsidiarity, as well as the tendency of partial policies to communitarise in the context of European integration. This principle led to the involvement of other actors in the integration process after 1993.

If multi-level governce is used as a theoretical concept, it is necessary to consider certain limits resulting from the determination of levels and actors to be examined. The authors of this paper are aware of these limitations. However, from the beginning of their research activity, they recognise three main levels of analysis. The first is the transnational level, represented by the EU as an actor that creates common rules for the functioning of energy policy within a grouping of 27 member states. The second level is represented by selected countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). At state level, the paper is greatly simplified, because its analysis monitors the behavior of states as units; i.e., primarily the energy mix of the state. Therefore, it does not deal with partial problems (e.g. energy security), or specifics at sub-state level (e.g., the influence of pressure or lobby groups). In the following text, the state is perceived as an actor which formulates energy policy, sets the energy mix within the entire territory of the given state. This is then reflected in relation to the EU and the Visegrad Group; which is the third level of analysis. The Visegrad Group is an example of intergovernmental cooperation, which is non-binding upon the parties involved (the V4 states are free to decide whether or not to apply in practice the results of the negotiations and the conclusions). On the other hand, V4 level negotiations provide a common platform that makes it easier for the participating countries to negotiate with each other, as well as in other fora, such as within the EU. The Visegrad platform is, therefore, perceived in the analysis as a specific meeting place where its member states' energy policy interests may or may not be harmonized, and the negotiations may or may not be reflected at national and/or EU level.

The EU and the V4 Energy Policy

Cooperation between the Visegrad Group countries is based upon an effort to return to Europe by engaging in European integration and joining NATO. The V4 countries' imminent entry into European structures has enriched the co-operation of the countries of Central Europe in new areas, including dialogue related to energy. V4 cooperation on the basis of energy policy dates back to 2002, when the working group on energy was established. In the beginning, it was only an information platform, which began to develop only within the context of EU accession. The main focus of activity was the discussion on EU-based energy policy (Starý 2006). The group of states thus responded to the EU's efforts to revise their existing energy policy. It is, therefore, possible to monitor the V4 countries' increased discussions of energy policy[2] However, the external influence of the Russian-Ukrainian gas crisis cannot be overlooked.[3] One of the stimuli of increased interest in EU energy policy was, and still is, the fact that the V4 countries are dependent on imports of strategic energy raw materials from abroad, due to the fact that domestic production is not sufficient.[4]

In general, the problem of high dependence on the import of primary energy sources affects the whole EU. At present, the European Union is still heavily dependent on oil and gas consumption. This necessitates future changes to be made in the context of overall consumption development, production possibilities, shortages of raw material reserves, as well as political influence. The response to import dependence can be seen in the EU's efforts to reduce the share of imported fossil fuels, and to increase the share of renewable energy sources, as a part of total consumption. In particular, the decline in the amount of oil and natural gas consumed was positively reflected in an increase in the use of renewable energy sources. Coal use has always been a difficult area, because some EU countries, and in particular, the Czech Republic and Poland (V4 countries), remain highly dependent on its use. Mention should also be made of the importance of nuclear energy in the EU, which has gradually declined after peaking in 2002. However, it is in the V4 area that it is possible to observe an increased interest in nuclear energy as an alternative energy source (Eurostat 2017).

The current structure of the EU energy balance (2017) consists mainly of fossil fuels. Of this, the largest share is oil (36.4%); the second most important fossil fuel source for consumption is natural gas (23.2%); with coal in third position (14.5%). Renewable energy sources outperformed nuclear fuel with a share of 13.6% (12.3%) (Eurostat 2019). There are differences across the EU,

---

2 This is reflected in the intensified negotiations that took place in 2006.

3 The crisis also prompted the EU to engage in dialogue and diversification of resources with regard to dependence on imports from third countries, in particular the Russian Federation (Evropský parlament 2006).

4 See more below in the text on the energy mix of the individual countries analyzed.

and the V4 countries are no exception. Poland and the Czech Republic; whose energy industry sectors have been historically based on coal mining; show a lower import dependency of around 30%. Hungary and Slovakia are more dependent on primary fuel source imports. They import between 55 and 60% of their primary energy sources (Eurostat 2019).

Energy is one of the areas where the Visegrad Group is very active. This stems from its geographical location and also its dependence on the import and distribution of energy resources and raw materials. The Visegrad countries have become increasingly aware that pre-negotiated, and subsequently shared positions; which are presented during EU summit plenary sessions; have greater potential for enforcement. Therefore, since 2009, efforts to pre-negotiate sub-themes on the part of the Visegrad Group, and to present them as topics of common interest at EU level (European Council, summits, etc.) could be discerned. Since 2010, the abovementioned schemes have been called mini-summits, in which the Visegrad Group states seek to integrate regional interests and to act as a unit at EU level (Bauerová 2018: 179–180). Energy policy in the context of the above is one of the most important areas of interest, especially in the spirit of common interests. This interest stems from the V4 states' dependence on energy supplies predominantly from the Russian Federation. The instability in the Middle East region as well as the absence of a single European energy market also have a significant impact (Slobodian 2016). Especially after the Russian-Ukrainian gas crises, increased cooperation at V4 level has become a desirable outcome for all V4 states. This is evidenced by the Ministerial Declaration of the V4 countries issued from the Bratislava meeting (2011). The Declaration envisages: 1) energy cooperation in the context of the EU institutions; 2) the creation of a local energy sector as part of the EU's single energy market, while strengthening the importance of the V4 countries; 3) reducing territorial dependence on gas imports by creating a pipeline network that will diversify the structure of suppliers; 4) with the construction of the North-South Gas Corridor by 2020; 5) cooperation with other countries (Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia), in particular on the North-South Gas Corridor project; 6) with the support of joint information exchange projects in the field of energy policies, legislation and regulations; 7) ensuring the stability of oil flow through the Druzhba pipeline and seeking alternatives for oil transport (Adria, TAL, TANAP); 8) with support for research in new areas of energy (Visegrad Group 2019).

However, finding common approaches is not easy because, as has already mentioned, V4 countries differ in their national interests and energy mixes, but also in the structure of their suppliers and the structure and capabilities of their transport infrastructures (Visegrad Group 2019).

The activities of the Visegrad Group can be followed by their efforts to solve the problem of energy dependence through intensive dialogue with Ukraine (in V4 + Ukraine format). This culminated in 2014, when the V4 supported the

integration of Ukraine[5] into EU structures. Interest in Ukraine was also demonstrated by the large amounts spent from the Visegrad Fund (Maksak 2018). Currently, however, it should be noted that interest in Ukraine has weakened. Relations with Ukraine have become problematic in the context of the war in eastern Ukraine (since 2014), and in 2015 the migration crisis became the V4 states' dominant concern. This is illustrated, for example, by the Final Declaration of the Summit of Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group of Countries in 2015. While the Energy Declaration (2015/2016) of the Czech Presidency is one of the priority topics, the final summary does not mention this issue at all.[6]

From the point of view of the V4 countries' energy direction, we can discern partial similarities in the way that the states in the region define themselves towards the EU, as well as towards its expected direction. In general, the countries that joined the EU in 2004 report a total of one fifth of carbon dioxide emissions (Ámon 2018). The solution to the complicated energy mix situation in member states is the EU's plan to create an energy union that would divert countries away from the use of traditional, environmentally-unfriendly energy sources. A major turnaround in EU energy policy took place in 2006, when the debate on shaping a single EU-based energy policy was opened. The European Union has begun to build a so-called New Energy Policy for Europe, and a Green Paper on a European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy has been published.[7] It was and is crucial to the V4 states that the energy mix should remain in the hands of states.

The main »problem« with EU energy policy is, paradoxically, the aforementioned strong influence of states on the formation of the state energy mix, which may not meet the requirements coming from the EU. At V4 level, states clearly demonstrate the rather traditional direction of their energy policy. This is evidenced by the setting of the energy mix resulting not only from geographical realities, but also from often political will (see below). The EU is currently moving towards carbon neutrality agreed at the Brussels Summit in 2019. The European Green Agreement envisages that by 2050, the EU will emit as much CO2 as it can absorb.[8] Overall, the EU roadmap includes 4 main objectives: in

5 More on the relationship between the EU, the V4 countries and Ukraine in the context of relations with Russia, eg Daborowski, 2015.

6 See Summit předsedů vlád červen 2016, available at: https://www.cssd.cz/data/files/summit-predsedu-vlad-zemi-visegradske-skupiny-8-cervna-2016.pdf (24 February 2020); Program českého předsednictví ve Visegrádské skupině v letech 2015-2016. Available at: https://www.mzv.cz/public/93/bd/c9/1534795_1336641_program_V4_e_brozura_A4_CZ.pdf (24 February 2020).

7 Komise evropských společenství (2006): Green Paper. European strategy for sustainable, competitive and secure energy. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0105:FIN:CS:PDF (23 December 2019).

8 ČT24 (2019): The EU agreed on climate neutrality until 2050. The Czech Republic enforced the mention of the core. Available at: https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/3003023-cilem-je-plan-ochrany-klimatu-rekl-pred-summitem-michel-dohodu-v-eu-brzdi-i-spor-o (29 March 2020).

addition to reducing CO2 emissions, it seeks to increase the share of renewables, increase energy efficiency and increase the interconnection of energy systems.[9]

By the end of 2019, all EU states had to submit draft national action plans, which were to be subsequently reviewed by the European Commission in the light of the defined EU energy policy objectives. However, member states want to achieve neutrality differently and perceive EU control as interference with their sovereignty (Zachová – Hosnedlová 2020). For example, in the V4 region, it is possible to observe the effort to replace coal with nuclear energy, or Poland's efforts to negotiate special conditions for itself.[10] At the same time, it is possible to observe that the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary preferred to reject the plan to create a carbon-neutral Europe in the context of a functioning economy (Simon 2019). The Slovak position is not so negative, but it does not want to set a specific year for achieving carbon neutrality (Szalaj 2019). Some countries have already adopted certain legislative measures (eg Finland, Austria or Sweden). On the one hand, the EU can be seen as a major engine and stimulant for states to change long-term energy strategies and directions. On the other hand, state sovereignty is a major obstacle to the formation of a single energy market and energy union. The V4 platform is a regional alternative where closer, common, EU-led collaborative factors can be sought. In the long run, the V4 countries have tended to favour traditional sources of energy, especially coal. The V4 countries are currently willing to adjust their energy mix, but the changes should be based on the needs of each state in the context of the functioning of the economy.[11] In the field of energy policy, national interests are adapted to local conditions, not always to trends coming from the EU.

The Visegrad Group's interest in energy policy stems from a number of documents and statements.[12] The first real effort to solve energy problems together on the V4 platform appeared in 2009 in the context of the gas crisis. The crisis has supported efforts to create a common energy market in the region, which would not only lead to lower raw material prices, but also increase energy security (Denková 2016). In this sense, a number of opportunities have arisen for the V4 countries to find a common ground and mutually acceptable solutions with regard to security of energy supply. Cooperation V4 level is evident, for

9 Aliance pro energetickou soběstačnost (2019): The new decade will strengthen the growth of sustainable energy: a comparison of the approach of the Czech Republic and nearby countries. Available at: https://www.tzb-info.cz/docu/clanky/0201/020104_Klimaticke_plany_2030_CR_vs_V4.pdf (1 April 2020).

10 The Polish case will not be discussed until mid-2020. At the time of writing (March 2020), the necessary data are not yet known.

11 Euractive (2013): Prime Ministers V4: Each EU country has the right to its own energy mix, including nuclear and shale gas: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/aktualne-v-eu/news/premieri-v4-kazda--zeme-eu-ma-pravo-na-vlastni-energeticky-mix-vcetne-jadra-a-bridlicoveho-plynu- visegradska-rusnok--tusk-fico-orban-eu-energetika-011190 / (29 March 2020).

12 Due to the limited scope of the article, the following text will deal with the situation from 2015 to 2019.

example, in the response to the agreement between Austria and Germany on the introduction of a congestion management system at the "Germany/Luxembourg – Austria" tender border.

The reaction is evident in the cooperation of the Energy Regulatory Office of the Czech Republic (ERO), the Hungarian Office for Energy and Public Services (HEA), the Energy Regulatory Office of Poland (URE), and the Office for the Regulation of Energy Networks of Slovakia (RONI). According to the V4 countries, the above agreement violates the rules of interconnected transmission networks, because the V4 region was not involved in the project (Energetický regulační úřad 2017). The discussion on the energy market revealed partial problems associated with V4 level negotiations (not only in the field of energy policy). One of the main problems arises from the fact that energy policy has been the responsibility of member states themselves for a long time, and it is clear that purely national interests cannot be overcome by shared V4 interests for the time being. For example, the above positions were clearly shown by the different positions in foreign policy towards the Russian Federation (Osička – Lehotský – Zapletalová – Černoch 2016). It also showed the influence of the EU, which is now a relevant platform for all four countries surveyed. Energy policy and the EU's interests span the interests of the Visegrad Group. The EU has been liberalizing the energy market since 1996 (Evropský parlament 2019), and the V4 countries have had to adopt existing rules in accession negotiations. The V4 could undoubtedly act as a place that combines the interests presented at EU level. One example is the V4 consultation on roadmaps in the context of Regulation 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council; which took place in 2019 and will continue to be carried out over the course of 2020. It concerns greenhouse gas emissions, the use of renewable energy sources, energy efficiency and the interconnection of the transmission system. However, it should be borne in mind in this context that partial decisions taken at V4 level are non-binding and there is no legal instrument with which to force states to comply with the rules agreed V4 level. Efforts to create a common energy market from the V4 initiative became evident at the turn of 2015/2016, but this has been delayed due to the migration crisis, as well as other EU sub-projects. Mention should be made, too, of the EU Energy Union project, which was approved at the EU Summit in 2015.[13] The EU project correlates with the interests of the V4 as a whole. From the outset, however, it encounters the problems posed by the lack of uniformity among the EU member states. Within the V4, it is possible to detect some criticism from the Czech Republic and Hungary. On the other hand, in 2015 all EU member states signed a declaration supporting the establishment

13 The European Council defined five main objectives of the European Energy Union and these had 3 basic aspects. Provide affordable energy for businesses and consumers; secure energy for all countries by reducing energy dependence; produce more energy from renewable sources and combat climate change (European Council 2014).

of an energy union. This correlates with the European Commission's interest in promoting regional cooperation in order to achieve greater efficiency. In this sense, a number of opportunities have arisen for the V4 countries to find common ground and mutually acceptable solutions with regard to the security of the energy supply. If we look at the interest taken in the EU Energy Union from the perspective of the V4 as a whole, there is a clear common interest in supporting the concept (see the joint statements of the prime ministers of the V4 countries).[14] If we were to pursue sub-interests at V4 member state level, it is obvious that agreement will be difficult to achieve. For example, the Czech Republic supports the project, while in the case of Hungary it is clear that the Energy Union would undermine state sovereignty (Euractive 2015). The question of state sovereignty is also at the heart of the shared interest in which states determine the energy mix. It is possible to pursue separate cooperation in the area of energy policy in a way which suits the states. An example of such cooperation is the Czech-Hungarian cooperation in the field of nuclear energy and the initiation of the establishment of the Czech-Hungarian Innovation Platform (CIP).[15] A platform for energy research across the V4 should be established within the current Czech Presidency of the V4 (2019/2020).[16]

Energy Mix as a Basis for Cooperation at V4 Level

In the following section, the energy mixes of the V4 countries will be analysed. The main goal is to show the energy profile as well as the determinants that affect the energy mix and also comes close to [or not, as the case may be] the other V4 members. There is a particular need to respond to EU requirements. It is currently necessary to monitor the response of states to Regulation 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the governance of the Energy Union and climate action.

In the Czech Republic, despite a relative decline, it still maintains its leading position in the consumption of coal as a primary source of energy (37.2%). The second most important component of the fuel and energy balance is crude oil (22.3%), which is used mainly in transport. Natural gas (16.6%) and nuclear fuel (16.2%) account for approximately the same share (Eurostat 2019). The Czech Republic is one of the least import-dependent countries of the EU (it

14 Společné prohlášení předsedů vlád zemí V4 z roku 2017: available a: https://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/spolecne-prohlaseni-predsedu-vlad-zemi-v4-_silna-evropa-_-duveryhodna-a-akceschopna-unie_--153994/ (24 February 2020).

15 Věda výzkum (2019): Česká republika a Maďarsko iniciují platformu V4 pro energetický výzkum: available at https://vedavyzkum.cz/z-domova/z-domova/ceska-republika-a-madarsko-iniciuji-platformu-v4-pro-energeticky-vyzkum (1 April 2020).

16 Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2019): Česká republika a Maďarsko iniciují platformu V4 pro energetický výzkum: available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/rozcestnik/pro-media/tiskove-zpravy/ceska-republika-a-madarsko-iniciuji-platformu-v4-pro-energeticky-vyzkum--247655/ (1 April 2020).

is below the EU average) and the V4, while 32.7% of primary energy used in domestic consumption is imported into the Czech Republic. Coal contributes twice as much to the production mix (as in Poland, for example, see below), due to energy obtained from nuclear power plants (Denková – Zbyetniewska 2018). According to EU regulations, it is no longer possible for the Czech Republic not to consider the cessation of coal use. To put it another way, the old state energy concept assumed the share of coal-fired power plants in the energy mix to be 11–21% by 2040, thus deviating from EU plans. In the future, according to the newly issued National Plan[17], we can expect the Czech Republic to be willing to implement changes in the field of energy only if the environment, state of the art and energy security are considered, and if energy transformation is not associated with high costs. In the context of decarbonisation, the Czech Republic is forced to follow EU regulations, and so the so-called Coal Commission should stop producing energy from coal.

At present, the share of coal-fired power plants in electricity generation is 47%. According to the State Energy Policy, nuclear power plants should produce between 46 and 58% of electricity by 2040 (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu, 2014). Currently, the Czech Republic has responded to the European Parliament and Council regulations[18] by issuing the National Plan of the Czech Republic in the field of energy and climate (November 2019)[19] (Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu 2019). However, oil and gas imports are still very important. 97.2% of oil and 96.5% of natural gas are imported. The import balance is improved by the traditional source – coal; which in 2016 showed an import value of –0.9%, ie independence from imports (Eurostat 2019). From the perspective of the European Union's energy policy, the pressure to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels, especially coal, as part of the country's total consumption is significant. However, the Czech Republic has long focused on its own resources, which are characterized in particular by the stability of supply and, thus, they strengthen the energy security of the state. However, this fact is at odds with current EU energy policy priorities. If we evaluate the degree of diversification of suppliers of two key imported fuels to the Czech Republic – oil and natural gas, Russia plays a crucial role, especially in natural gas supplies. These latter in 2017 accounted for 99.2% of total imports to the Czech Republic. In the context of the planned changes, the Czech Republic makes reference to the strengthening of the solar energy sector. The Czech Republic wants to meet the European

17 Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2020): Vnitrostátní plán ČR v oblasti energetiky a klimatu: available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/energetika/strategicke-a-koncepcni-dokumenty/vnitrostatni-plan-ceske--republiky-v-oblasti-energetiky-a-klimatu--252016/ (1 April 2020); srov. Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2019a): Vnitrostátní plán České republiky v oblasti energetiky a klimatu.

18 This is an EU governance regulation

19 The document was adopted in January 2020.

Commission's goals not in the field of energy as such, but the National Plan envisages changes in transport and heat production.[20]

Table 1: Fuel and energy balance of V4 countries in 2017 (in %)

State	Coal	Oil	Gas	Nuclear	RES	Others
Czech Republic	37,2	22,3	16,6	16,2	10,4	0
Poland	48	28,7	14,7	0	8,5	0,1
Hungary	9	28,5	32	15,3	11,1	4,1
Slovakia	20,8	21,4	24	23,1	9,2	1,5
V4	28,8	25,2	21,8	13,7	9,8	1,4
EU28	14,5	36,4	23,2	12,3	13,6	0

Source: Eurostat 2019.

Poland, as another V4 country, shows the lowest degree of import dependence of the entire V4 group and is well below the EU average of 30.3%. It has the least diversified energy mix (Denková – Zbyetniewská 2018). Its energy sector is very strongly focused on coal consumption, where it uses its own resources and thus has the strongest position among the V4 countries in the field of energy policy. Coal is the main item in the fuel and energy balance with a share of 48%, followed by oil, which provides 28.7% of consumption, and the third most important source is natural gas, which covers 14.7% of consumption. Poland has long failed to find the political will to create a new energy concept. The energy mix was therefore backward and unsatisfactory according to European Union standards. The new document was not adopted until the end of 2019 (*Energy Policy of Poland to 2040*).[21] An important point of the concept is the construction of a nuclear power plant, which is a fundamental change from the current energy mix, as nuclear energy has not been used in Poland yet. The first nuclear power plant should be commissioned in 2033 (Eurostat 2019). Onshore wind farms (Ministerstvo Aktywów Państwowych 2019) will also be used more. Poland is a net exporter of coal, so it is completely independent of imports and shows an import dependence value of –12%. However, since the 1990s, this level has fallen sharply, reaching –30.2% in 1995. The situation is different for other fossil fuels. Import dependence on natural gas is 78.4% and in the case of oil imports the situation is even more serious, its value is 92.8% (European Commission 2018). As in the case of the Czech Republic, Russia is

20 Aliance pro energetickou soběstačnost (2019): The new decade will strengthen the growth of sustainable energy: a comparison of the approach of the Czech Republic and nearby countries: available at https://www.tzb-info.cz/docu/clanky/0201/020104_Klimaticke_plany_2030_CR_vs_V4.pdf (1 April 2020)

21 This is an updated version from 2018.

also the main supplier of natural gas and oil to Poland. Russia accounted for 68.5% of oil supplies in 2017, and the share of natural gas going to Poland from Russia was similar (65.6%) (Eurostat 2017).

In recent decades it has not been possible to observe a significant change in the structure of Hungary's energy balance. Hungary is characterized by a rather conservative approach to the diversification of energy sources. The shift from a cautious approach to the energy mix was brought about by the Russian-Ukrainian gas crises (2006 and 2009), when the volume of natural gas in the energy mix was slowly declining. The changes also need to be linked to the new political climate associated with the arrival of Prime Minister Orban in 2010. This prime minister has had a significant and long-term impact on Hungary's energy policy, especially in the context of its relationship with Russia. The Russian Federation is a major supplier of natural gas and the above-standard relations between the two countries are reflected in supplies as well as in pricing policy (Euractive 2015).[22]

Hungary has recently responded to EU energy policy regulations and two documents were adopted in January 2020 – the National Energy Strategy and the National Energy and Climate Plan.[23] The new strategy envisages carbon neutrality by 2050.[24] One of the main conclusions is that changes in the energy sector are not expected to hamper economic growth. At the same time, Hungary wants to reduce its import dependence, especially in the area of natural gas.[25] Unlike the Czech Republic and Poland, Hungary does not have comparable coal reserves and the main item in its energy balance currently remains natural gas, which accounts for 32% of the balance. Oil takes second place with 28.5 percent. Nuclear energy (15.3%) accounts for a relatively large share of primary energy consumption. Nuclear energy is to be the main alternative to green energy in the future, along with the development of solar energy.[26] Hungary has been paying more attention to nuclear energy since 2014, in the context of the plan to expand its existing Paks nuclear power plant.[27] The project is a response to

22 The current Hungarian-Russian agreement will expire in 2020 and it is therefore necessary to monitor the current negotiations, which are being held at the highest level.

23 Previous versions adopted after 2010 always refer to diversification and resources and less ties to the Russian Federation. Cooperation from countries in the region was also crucial in the strategies.

24 About Hungary (2020): Hungarian government approves its climate policy priorities: available at http://abouthungary.hu/news-in-brief/hungarian-government-approves-its-climate-policy-priorities/ (1 April 2020)

25 About Hungary (2020a): Here'sa look at Hungary's climate strategy until 2050: available at http://abouthungary.hu/blog/heres-a-look-at-hungarys-climate-strategy-until-2050/ (1 April 2020)

26 All for power (2019): The first construction and assembly work began at the Paks II nuclear power plant in Hungary: available at http://www.allforpower.cz/clanek/na-madarske-jaderne-elektrarne-paks-ii--zacaly-prvni-stavebne-montazni-prace/ (25 February 2020).

27 Before the start of construction, the EC carried out a deep checking that the project complies with EU competition rules (European Commission 2015).

efforts to minimize CO2. On the other hand, it points to Hungary's strong energy ties with Russia, as the project is being implemented by the Russian nuclear energy company Rosatom and is financed by a Russian loan. The nuclear fuel will also come from Russia (Euractive 2018).

Coal is being used less in Hungary than the growing volume of renewable energy sources (11.1%) and it provides only 9% of the fuel energy balance (Eurostat 2019). Coal, which is rarely used in Hungary, shows an import dependency of 34.6% and, interestingly, the supply structure is relatively diversified and geographically different; coming as it does from the US (38.6%), the Czech Republic (23.2%) and Australia (12.1%). In the long term, coal mining should be halted by the end of 2030, while solar energy should increase (Patricolo 2019). The most important fact is that both of the most used resources – natural gas and oil – are largely imported and even the composition of suppliers is alarming, because here too there is a strong link to Russia. However, this should be minimized under the new strategy. Dependence on crude oil imports in 2017 was 78.9% and on natural gas imports 89.3%. In the case of oil, 42.7% of imports come from Russia (European Commission 2018). Russia is also a key supplier of natural gas. In this case, it is dominated by a 95% share of imports.

In terms of energy security, Hungary can be assessed as a very endangered country with very little of its own resources, unsuitable structure of the energy balance and also minimal diversification of supply flows, especially of the two most used fuels – natural gas and oil. The total import dependency thus exceeds the V4 average as well as the European Union average, reaching 55.6% in 2016 (European Commission 2018). In the case of Hungary and Poland, the use of shale gas as an alternative to conventional sources should also be considered. This would make both countries less dependent on conventional gas.

However, the highest value of import dependence from the V4 countries is still achieved by Slovakia. It has fallen to 59% since 1995, when it exceeded 68 percent, but is still well above the European Union average. The structure of Slovakia's fuel balance is interesting, where no one source has a dominant position; as in the other V4 countries; but the four main sources (natural gas, nuclear fuel, oil and coal) are equally distributed in consumption and contribute to the primary energy consumption of the state in about equal shares. Nevertheless, the main primary source in Slovakia remains natural gas with a 24% share in consumption. In 2017, the second most used resource was nuclear energy with a 23.1% share. The other two primary sources consist of roughly one fifth of the fuel balance of Slovakia; crude oil supplies 21.4% and coal 20.8% (data as of 2017) (Eurostat 2019). Of all the V4 countries, Slovakia has the best distributed energy and energy balance and approx. 80% of energy comes from renewable sources (Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí 2019). Slovakia is dependent on imports and the structure of its suppliers is clearly oriented towards Russia for all fossil fuels. Slovakia's dependence on natural gas imports

was very high in 2016, reaching 92.9%. A slightly more favorable value was reported by another fossil resource – coal (83.3%). However, in the case of oil, it was also above 90 percent (91.8%); (European Commission 2018). Slovakia, through whose territory fossil fuel transport routes run from Russia, used this geographic exposure to shape its supply structure for fossil fuels and focused on Russia. In 2017, imports from Russia accounted for 84% of Slovak natural gas imports and 74% of its oil imports. The importance of geographical exposure and historical links can also be cited in the case of coal imports. The three main countries are the supplier mix: Russia (27.2%), the Czech Republic (24.9%) and Poland (23%) (Eurostat 2019).

Table 2: Import Dependence of V4 Countries in 2016 (in %)

State	Total	Oil	Gas	Coal
Czech Republic	32,7	97,2	96,5	-0,9
Poland	30,3	92,8	78,4	-12
Hungary	55,6	89,3	78,9	34,5
Slovakia	59	91,8	92,9	83,3
V4	44,4	92,8	86,7	26,2
EU28	53,6	86,7	70,4	40,2

Source: European Commission 2018.

Like other V4 countries, Slovakia adopted the Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan[28] for 2021–2030 in response to EU regulations. Here, it is possible to observe similar interests in the field of nuclear energy; i.e., they share the interest with the Czech Republic, for example, that energy produced from nuclear fuel should be counted among low-carbon sources. On the other hand, it must be stated that Slovakia is already a low-emissions country. New projects aimed at the development of renewable sources will further strengthen this fact.

Conclusion

Energy policy is one of the most sensitive areas of European integration. It often impinges on state sovereignty as well as the efforts of states to implement their own energy policy which satisfies local interests, not EU interests as a whole. In the context of a long historical development, national energy policies are adapted to local specificities. These often result from the country's geographical

28 Ministerstvo hospodárstva Slovenskej republiky (2019): Integrovaný národný energetický a klimatický plán na roky 2021 – 2030: available at https://www.mhsr.sk/uploads/files/zsrwR58V.pdf (1 April 2020)

location. These factors are then difficult to overcome. Especially in view of the EU's current efforts to make changes to the energy sector that will be in line with the bloc's plans for a low-carbon Europe. The EU is currently interested in reducing CO2 emissions to a level consistant with a carbon neutral Europe in 2050. Alongside this goal is a plan to increase the use of renewable energy sources as well as increasing energy efficiency. By the end of 2019, EU member states (including the V4 countries) had to submit a concrete plan corresponding to European Commission requirements. At present, it cannot be unequivocally said that states have not complied with the EU Regulation. While partial plans are available, the European Commission is still evaluating the submitted documents (at the time of writing). As yet there is no empirical data that can be compared with the assumed direction of national energy policies. At the EU level of analysis we have clearly demonstrated the increasing influence of the bloc. Since the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the EU's influence in the field of energy has been greatest. However, in the area of the energy mix, states have a choice and this complicates the harmonization of the EU's energy policy. The EU is an actor that sets the rules, but it has to expect a partial response from the member states, and it is in the group of selected countries that every effort is being made by their governments to prioritize state sovereignty over the fact that the state is part of supranational bloc [the EU].

The second level of analysis was the Visegrad Group as a specific platform where it is possible to form partly regionally conditioned interests. In the case of energy policy, it cannot be unequivocally said that energy is an area of sharing interests, which are then always transferred to EU level. Here it is necessary to contextualize the cooperation according to the state's energy source. An important liaison for cooperation is nuclear energy, where the common interests of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary are clearly shown. On the other hand, Poland is outside the scope of this cooperation due to the absence of any nuclear power plant from its territory.[29] Another common feature of a narrower group of countries is the traditional coal mining associated with Poland and the Czech Republic. However, it should be noted here that Poland makes more use of alternative energy sources and pays more attention to EU-based requirements. Conversely, the Czech Republic wants to phase out coal production more gradually. A big incentive for cooperation in the energy field is the countries' strong import dependency. Energy imports proved to be problematic during the Russian-Ukrainian gas crises. Efforts to diversify the import network is in the interests of the entire V4 Group. The Russian Federation is perceived to be an unreliable partner. The exception is Hungary, where the political elite initiated negotiations leading to a separate agreement affecting the import and price of

29 On the other hand, in the future, closer cooperation can be considered if the Polish plan for the construction of a nuclear power plant, which is to be built by the end of 2033 (Moravec 2019), is implemented.

natural gas. Hungary is thus excluded from the V4 Group. The conclusions from Bratislava (2011) also show interest in cooperation in the field of energy. At the same time, these have pointed to particularities which make it difficult to establish the Energy Union. This brings us back to state sovereignty and the fact that decisions made at V4 level are not legally binding on states. This complicates the whole cooperation process. We could say that in the field of energy cooperation there is particular emphasis on the development of new technologies, carrying out research projects, or cooperation in times of crisis in efforts to build gas pipelines that will not lead from the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The third level of analysis; at member state level; was carried out in the context of setting energy mixes and their changes in the implementation of the European plan for a carbon neutral EU. Despite different characteristics, such as the range of energy mixes, the V4 countries share a number of common features. For example, the Czech Republic and Poland, which are focused on coal consumption and are generally less dependent on fuel imports. EU pressure on the Czech Republic and Poland regarding decarbonisation can make them increasingly dependent on imports. Also, the direction taken by the EU towards greater use of renewable energy sources and compliance with the limits set down by the EU energy policy is very demanding on the composition of energy mixes for the Czech Republic and Poland. We must not forget the missing infrastructure for renewable energy sources. Hungary and Slovakia use the most natural gas and, as has already been mentioned, their dependence on the import of this source is very high. The V4 countries are more dependent on natural gas imports than the rest of the EU, and their territorial orientation towards Russia is particularly risky. That is why the key joint projects are focused on solving the problem of a secure and reliable gas supply, which is the key task for the V4 countries. At the same time, it is possible to observe partial specifics resulting from local specifics, whether it is geopolitical; e.g. the fact that Poland can use its position as a coastal state, or the coal deposits in the Czech Republic and Poland. The influence of the political elites on the formulation of energy policy must also be taken into account. Hungary and its inclination to the Russian Federation is a clear example of this. Currently, EU energy policy is being shaped by EU Regulation 2018/1999 (see above). Here, the differences in the perception of the existing and the new settings of energy mixes were clearly shown. The V4 is linked by efforts to interpret nuclear energy as a renewable resource; they want to set a year for carbon neutrality and defer to state sovereignty in the new formulation of the energy mix. It can therefore be expected that energy policy will be a cementing area in which the V4 countries will share their interests and exploit their potential to negotiate a shared V4 based position to be presented in the EU in the future.

Looking at the answers to the research questions raised in the introduction, it is clear that energy policy is significantly influenced by states. This is especially

true when it comes to energy security of supply or energy mix settings. With the gradual communitisation of energy policy, the EU's influence is growing and it is questionable how the evaluation of the already existing strategic plans presented by the states will be carried out. The role of the Visegrad Group is the weakest of the three analyzed levels. In the future, however, its increasing influence can be predicted, especially in the case of phasing out coal mining, or perceiving nuclear energy as a renewable source.

References

About Hungary (2020): Hungarian government approves its climate policy priorities: available at http://abouthungary.hu/news-in-brief/hungarian-government-approves-its-climate-policy--priorities/ (1 April 2020).

About Hungary (2020a): Here's a look at Hungary's climate stratégy until 2050: available at http://abouthungary.hu/blog/heres-a-look-at-hungarys-climate-strategy-until-2050/ (1 April 2020)

Aliance pro energetickou soběstačnost (2019): Nová dekáda posílí růst udržitelné energetiky: srovnání přístupu Česka a blízkých států: available at https://www.tzb-info.cz/docu/clanky/0201/020104_Klimaticke_plany_2030_CR_vs_V4.pdf (1 April 2020)

All for power (2019): Na maďarské jaderné elektrárně Paks II začaly první stavebně montážní práce: available at http://www.allforpower.cz/clanek/na-madarske-jaderne-elektrarne-paks--ii-zacaly-prvni-stavebne-montazni-prace/ (25 February 2020).

Ámon, A. (2018): Visegrádská čtyřka: megalomanské projekty vítězí nad čistou energií. In. Euractive: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/politika/opinion/visegradska-ctyrka--megalomanske-projekty-vitezi-nad-cistou-energii/ (20 February 2020).

Bauerová, H. (2018): V4 a evropská integrace. In. Cabada, L.; Waisová Š. kol. (2018): *Bezpečnostní, zahraniční a evropská politika Visegrádské skupiny*. Praha, Togga, Metropolitan University Prague Press, 167–188.

ČT24 (2019): EU se shodla na klimatické neutralitě do roku 2050. Česko prosadilo zmínku o jádru: available at https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/svet/3003023-cilem-je-plan-ochrany-klimatu-rekl--pred-summitem-michel-dohodu-v-eu-brzdi-i-spor-o (29 March 2020).

Daniel, K. – Kay, A. (2017): *Multi-level Governance: Introduction*.

Daborowski, T. (2015): Difficult path towards gas partnership: Visegrad Group countries' gas cooperation with Ukraine: available at http://www.visegradexperts.eu/data/_uploaded/Finals/Tomasz%20Daborowski.pdf (5 April 2020).

Denková, A. (2016): V4 plánuje propojit své trhy s plynem, státy ale nemají jasno, čeho chtějí dosáhnout. In. Euractive 22. 12. 2016: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/energeticka--bezpecnost/news/v4-planuje-propojit-sve-trhy-s-plynem-staty-ale-nemaji-jasno-ceho-chteji--dosahnout/ (25 February 2020).

Denková, A. – Zbyetniewska, K. (2018): Polsko a Česko: Jak „obnovit" energetický mix? In. Euractive: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/energeticka-bezpecnost/news/polsko-a-cesko--jak-obnovit-energeticky-mix/ (5 March 2020).

Energetický regulační úřad (2017): Společné prohlášení regulátorů zemí V4 ohledně rozdělení německo-rakouské nabídkové zóny: available at https://www.eru.cz/cs/-/spolecne-prohlaseni--regulatoru-zemi-v4-ohledne-rozdeleni-nemecko-rakouske-nabidkove-zony (5 March 2020).

Euractive (2018): Rakušané žalují Komisi kvůli tomu, že Maďarům povolila subvencovat jádro: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/energetika/news/rakusane-zaluji-komisi-kvuli-tomu--ze-madarum-povolila-subvencovat-jadro/ (20 February 2020).

Euractive (2015): Orbán: Evropská energetická unieje pro Maďarsko ohrožením: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/aktualne-v-eu/news/viktor-orban-evropska-energeticka-unie-je--pro-madarsko-ohrozenim-012479/ (24 February 2020).

Euractive (2013): Premiéři V4: Každá země EU má právo na vlastní energetický mix, včetně jádra a plynu z břidlic. Dostupné na: https://euractiv.cz/section/aktualne-v-eu/news/premieri--v4-kazda-zeme-eu-ma-pravo-na-vlastni-energeticky-mix-vcetne-jadra-a-bridlicoveho-plynu--visegradska-rusnok-tusk-fico-orban-eu-energetika-011190/ (29 March 2020).

European Comission (2018): *EU Energy an Figures 2018*. available at https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/pocketbook_energy_2018_web.pdf (1 April 2020).

European Commission (2015): State Aid: Commission opens in-depth investigation into Hungarian investment support for Paks II nuclear power plant: available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_6140 (1 April 2020).

European Council (2014): available at https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/european--council/2014/06/26-27/ (1 April 2020).

Eurostat (2017): C*onsumption of Energy*: available at http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics--explained/index.php/Consumption_of_energy#Consumption¨ (1 April 2020)

Eurostat (2019): *Shedding light on energy in the EU. A guided tour of energy statistics 2019 edition: a*vailable at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/index.html (1 April 2020)

Evropská komise (2006): Zelená kniha: Evropská strategie pro udržitelnou, konkurenceschopnou a bezpečnou energii. SEK (2006) 317: available at eur-lex.europa.eu › LexUriServ › LexUriServ (30 August 2019).

Evropská komise (1995): Bílá kniha: Energetická politika pro Evropskou unii, COM(95)682: available at https://www.euroskop.cz/gallery/96/29026-energeticka_politika.pdf (30 August 2019).

Evropský parlament (2019): Vnitřní trh s energií: available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/cs/FTU_2. 1. 9.pdf (25 February 2020).

Evropský parlament (2006): Rusko-ukrajinská plynová krize jako „varovný signál" pro energetiku EU: available at https://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20060109STO04118+0+DOC+XML+V0//CS (1 April 2020)

Hooge, L. – Marks, G. (2003): Unraveling the Central State, but How? Types of Multi-Level Governance. In. *The American Political Science Review.* Vol 97, No. 2, s. 233–243.

Komise Evropských společenství (2006): Zelená kniha. Evropská strategie pro udržitelnou, konkurenceschopnou a bezpečnou energii: available at https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2006:0105:FIN:CS:PDF (23 December 2019).

Maksak, H. (2018): V4+Ukrajina, nebo V5? Kyjev se dívá s nadějemi na slovenské visegrádské předsednictví: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/politika/opinion/v4ukrajina-nebo-v5-kyjev-se-diva-s-nadejemi-na-slovenske-visegradske-predsednictvi/ (20 February 2020).

Ministerstvo Aktywów Państwowych (2019): Zaktaulizowany projekt Polityki energetycznej Polski do 2040 r: available at https://www.gov.pl/web/aktywa-panstwowe/zaktualizowany-projekt--polityki-energetycznej-polski-do-2040-r (5 March 2020).

Ministerstvo zahraničních věcí (2019): Slovensko se bude spoléhat na jadernou energii: available at https://www.mzv.cz/bratislava/cz/obchod_a_ekonomika/strategicke_zasoby_primarni_zdroju.html (1 April 2020)

Moravec, J. (2019): Polsko se připravuje na výstavbu první jaderné elektrárny, u veřejnosti má podporu: available at https://oenergetice.cz/zahranicni/polsko-se-pripravuje-vystavbu-prvni--jaderne-elektrarny-u-verejnosti-ma-podporu (1 April 2020)

Ministerstsvo hospodárstva Slovenskej republiky (2019): Integrovaný národný energetický a klimatický plán na roky 2021 – 2030: available at https://www.mhsr.sk/uploads/files/zsrwR58V.pdf (1 April 2020)

Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2020): Vnitrostátní plán ČR v oblasti energetiky a klimatu: available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/energetika/strategicke-a-koncepcni-dokumenty/vnitrostatni-plan-ceske-republiky-v-oblasti-energetiky-a-klimatu--252016/ (1 April 2020)

Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2019): Česká republika a Maďarsko iniciují platformu V4 pro energetický výzkum: available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/rozcestnik/pro-media/tiskove--zpravy/ceska-republika-a-madarsko-iniciuji-platformu-v4-pro-energeticky-vyzkum--247655/ (1 April 2020)

Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2019a): Vnitrostátní plán České republiky v oblasti energetiky a klimatu. : available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/energetika/strategicke-a-koncepcni--dokumenty/vnitrostatni-plan-ceske-republiky-v-oblasti-energetiky-a-klimatu--252016/ (1 April 2020)

Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu (2014): Státní energetická koncepce České republiky: available at https://www.mpo.cz/assets/cz/energetika/statni-energeticka-politika/2016/12/Statni--energeticka-koncepce-_2015_.pdf (5 March 2020).

Osička, J. – Lehotský, L. – Zapletalová, V. – Černoch, F. (2016): Natural gas market integration in the V4 countries. Praha, MZV: available at https://munispace.muni.cz/library/catalog/view/986/3069/736-1/#preview (25 February 2020).

Patricolo, C. (2019): Hungary to phase out coal by 2030: available at https://emerging--europe.com/news/hungary-to-phase-out-coal-by-2030/ (5 March 2020).

Program českého předsednictví ve Visegrádské skupině v letech 2015-2016: available at https://www.mzv.cz/public/93/bd/c9/1534795_1336641_program_V4_e_brozura_A4_CZ.pdf (24 February 2020).

Simon, F. (2019): Summit leak reveals EU rift on climate change: available at https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-strategy-2050/news/summit-leak-reveals-eu-rift-on-climate-change/ (6 March 2020).

Slobodian N. (2016): *Energy security in V4*: available at https://visegradinsight.eu/energy--security-in-v4/ (1 April 2020).

Starý, M. (2006): Spolupráce zemí Visegrádské čtyřky v oblasti energetiky. In. Ministerstvo průmyslu a obchodu: available at https://www.mpo.cz/cz/energetika/mezinarodni-spoluprace/mezinarodni-organizace/spoluprace-zemi-visegradske-ctyrky-v-oblasti-energetiky--16478/ (20 November 2019).

Stein, M. – Turkewitsch, L. (2008): The Concept of Multi-level Governance in Studies of Federalism. Paper presented at the 2008 International Political Science Association International Conference. Canada, Montreal. : available at https://www.google.com/url?sa=t & rct=j & q=&esrc=s & source=web & cd=1 & ved=2ahUKEwjUgerCgfjkAhXjXRUIHUQrBZ0QFjAAegQIABAC & url=http%3 A%2F%2Fciteseerx.ist.psu.edu%2Fviewdoc%2Fdownload%3Fdoi%3D10. 1. 1.454.5861%26rep%3Drep1%26type%3Dpdf & usg=AOvVaw1wte6K3Mqhk77i_znW5eIg (30 August 2019).

Stephenson, P. (2013): Twenty Years of multi-level governance: 'What Does It Comes From? What Is It? Where Is It Going?' In. *Journal of European Public Policy,* Taylor & Francis (Routledge), 20 (6): 817–837. : available at https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13501763.2013.781818 (30 August 2019).

Společné prohlášení předsedů vlád zemí V4 z roku 2017: available at https://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/spolecne-prohlaseni-predsedu-vlad-zemi-v4-_silna-evropa-_-duveryhodna-a-akceschopna-unie_--153994/ (24 February 2020).

Summit předsedů vlád červen 2016: available at https://www.cssd.cz/data/files/summit--predsedu-vlad-zemi-visegradske-skupiny-8-cervna-2016.pdf (24 February 2020).

Szalaj, P. (2019): Uhlíková neutralita v roku 2050? Slovensko hovorí (zatiaľ) nie: available at https://euractiv.sk/section/klima/news/uhlikova-neutralita-v-roku-2050-slovensko-hovori--zatial-nie/ (6 March 2020).

Věda a výzkum (2019): Česká republika a Maďarsko iniciují platformu V4 pro energetický výzkum: available at https://vedavyzkum.cz/z-domova/z-domova/ceska-republika-a-madarsko-iniciuji--platformu-v4-pro-energeticky-vyzkum (1 April 2020)

Visegrad Group (2019): *Declaration of V4 Energy Ministers*: available at http://www.visegradgroup.eu/2011/declaration-of-v4-energy (1 April 2020)

Zachová, A. – Hosnedlová, P. (2020): Novým klimatický zákon přinutí země EU splnit své sliby. Z uhlíkové neutrality se stává závazek: available at https://euractiv.cz/section/klima-a-zivotni--prostredi/news/novy-klimaticky-zakon-prinuti-zeme-eu-splnit-sve-sliby-z-uhlikove-neutrality--se-stava-zavazek/ (29 March 2020).

Zürn, E. H. – Wälti, S. (2010): *Handbook on multi-level governance*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Helena Bauerová, Ph.D. *studied Political Science at the Department of Politics and International Relations, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen and University of Salford/UK. She is working assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations and European Studies, Metropolitan University Prague/Czech Republic. Her research is concentrated on comparative politics of East and Central Europe, and EU's internal and external security. E-mail: helena.bauerova@mup.cz.*

Assoc. Prof. PaedDr. Milan Vošta, Ph.D. *is currently head of the Department of International Relations and European Studies at Metropolitan University in Prague and senior lecturer and researcher at the Department of World Economy at The University of Economics Prague. His research agenda focuses mainly on Spatial Changes in the World Economy. He has cooperated as a researcher and coresearcher in projects: Energy Intensity: Determinant of the Changes in Fossil Fuels Flows and its Implication in the EU and the Czech Republic and Governance in the Context of a Globalised Economy and Society last time. He is a member of the Editorial Boards of several scientific Journals (Acta Œconomica Pragensia, Political Sciences, Studia Policicæ Universitatis Silenciensis and Revue Social and Human Sciences).* He is a member of the Institute for National and International Security (INIS). *E-mail: milan.vosta@mup.cz*

The disintegration of KDU-ČSL in 2009: The network analysis of co-voting strategies of the KDU-ČSL deputies[1]

DUŠAN BRABEC

Politics in Central Europe (ISSN: 1801-3422)
Vol. 16, No. 2
DOI: 10.2478/pce-2020-0023

Abstract: *The main objective of this study is to capture and analyse the dynamics of co-voting ties among the members of the KDU-ČSL political party group in the 5th parliamentary term between 2006 and 2010 when some members of KDU-ČSL left this party and founded new political party TOP 09. For the analysis of the data, network approach and methods were used, with emphasis on the detection of possible rivalling communities in the constructed network of co-voting ties between deputies belonging to the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group in the analysed time period. The co-voting was treated as a proxy indicator of a possible relationship indicating co-operation or rivalry between the deputies. The main outcome of the study was the identification of the co-voting strategies and dynamics of the co-voting between deputies who left KDU-ČSL in 2009 and formed a new political party with their former party colleagues. The study is of a quantitative nature, but the main findings are connected to qualitative insights as well.*

Keywords: ***political parties; unity, party discipline, party factionalism, co-voting, legislative networks***

1 This study was supported by the Charles University Research Programme 'Progres' Q18 – Social Sciences: From Multidisciplinarity to Interdisciplinarity. The author would like to thank Lukáš Hájek for the initial data preparation.

Introduction

It has been more than ten years since the new political party TOP 09 was established in 2009. That year was very turbulent as, from the political perspective, the government lost the vote of confidence, which negatively influenced the stability of the Czech political environment. One of the oldest Czech political parties KDU-ČSL suffered from a long-lasting internal crisis, which escalated in early 2009. Right after the party congress in May 2009, which was supposed to resolve the party instability, many of its core members left the KDU-ČSL and joined the new political party TOP 09.

The main goal of the study is to uncover the voting strategies of those members of KDU-ČSL who left their party in 2009 and joined the newly established political party TOP 09. To be more specific, I will focus on the co-voting of these MPs (renegades) with their former colleagues from KDU-ČSL, as I'm interested in what their co-voting looked like during the fifth parliamentary term between 2006 and 2010. Because of the relational nature of the co-voting, I will make use of network analysis tools when investigating the co-voting strategies among the deputies of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group.

It can be expected that the MPs who left KDU-ČSL and joined TOP 09 afterwards voted differently than their former party colleagues. It would be interesting to investigate if the renegades voted differently even before they left KDU-ČSL, or if they were disciplined members until they decided to form a new political party.

This brings several possible outcomes of the analysis that I will try to confirm or reject in the study.

Outcome 1: *Deputies that left KDU-ČSL and joined TOP 09 voted differently than their KDU-ČSL colleagues before the TOP 09 was founded (before Miroslav Kalousek, former leader of KDU-ČSL, declared his departure from the party).*

Outcome 2: *MPs who left the KDU-ČSL started to vote differently than their former party colleagues after they left the party.*

Outcome 3: *Deputies who left KDU-ČSL voted similarly to (or differently than) their former colleagues during whole fifth parliamentary term.*

The resulting outcome will be put together with qualitative insights to better understand the dynamics of the co-voting between the two 'rivalling' blocks inside the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group.

The aim of the article is not to contribute to the theoretical framework of party factionalism but rather to investigate specific co-voting strategies of the MPs who left their original political party group and founded a new political party with the formation of TOP 09 in 2009, and to capture the moment when and if the legislative (co-voting) behaviour of these MPs changed.

Theoretical background:

In the introduction section, I presented three outcomes that would be the most probable results of the final analysis of roll-call data of KDU-ČSL deputies between 2006 – 2010. At this stage, I will explain the main logic and theoretical background behind these expectations.

First, all of the possible outcomes could be divided into two general categories.

The first category reflects the outcomes in which any community or sub-community of deputies who would vote in a similar fashion could not be identified. These outcomes would be possible if the deputies of the KDU-ČSL voted randomly with no co-operation. This category would present the outcomes with no or very weak intraparty unity.

The second category reflects these outcomes in which I will be able to identify cohesive groups of the deputies (and possible subcommunities in its parliamentary party group if the party is suffering from an internal crisis) thanks to the fact that the deputies of the specific political party should be voting unanimously to a large extent (or co-ordinating their political actions). The concept of party unity stems from two specific sources, namely from the ideological cohesion of a party and party discipline. Ideological cohesion is based on the shared opinions and views of the deputies, who consequently tend to vote together or sit in the same political party because of their shared preferences. Party discipline, on the other hand, could be understood as a pressure that the party imposes on its members to secure their obedience (Ozbundun 1970). According to the concept of party unity, political parties should consist of members that have similar preferences and opinions and the party management should endorse this cohesion so the political party can survive in the long run. I assume that the results of the analysis of KDU-ČSL members' co-voting behaviour between 2006–2010 will fall into this (second) category. Apart from the theoretical perspective, this assumption could even be supported by empirical studies that investigated the internal unity and cohesion of Czech political parties (Linek – Lacina 2011). Specifically, Dvořák (2017: 113) identifies the rates of internal party cohesion of Czech parliamentary parties in 2006–2010. According to his study, KDU-ČSL was an internally cohesive parliamentary party, with an exception that occurred during the fifth parliamentary term, when KDU-ČSL suffered from an internal crisis.

Based on this evidence, I will focus more specifically on the rationale behind the individual outcomes that fall into the second category (as the possible outcomes belonging to the first category could not be obtained, based on theoretical assumptions as well as empirical evidence) where the party unity affects the votes of deputies. As was already presented in the introductory part of the text, I expect that the final analysis should result in one of these outcomes:

Outcome 1: *Deputies that left KDU-ČSL and joined TOP 09 voted differently than their KDU-ČSL colleagues before the TOP 09 was founded (before Miroslav Kalousek, former leader of KDU-ČSL, declared his departure from the party).*

Outcome 2: *MPs who left the KDU-ČSL, started to vote differently than their former party colleagues after they left the party.*
Outcome 3: *Deputies who left KDU-ČSL voted similarly to their former colleagues during whole fifth parliamentary term.*

The main difference between these outcomes is directly linked to the concepts of exit, voice and loyalty introduced by Albert O. Hirschman (1970). As related to the content of this study: exit could be labelled as a strategy where the members of the political party choose to leave when they are dissatisfied with the internal or external situation of the party. The voice, on the other hand, could be perceived as a strategy where the political party members attempt to improve the situation they are displeased with. Both exit and voice could be legitimate strategies taken by the members of a party which is on the decline (suffers from an internal or external crisis, etc.). The concept of loyalty has a decisive effect on whether the individual inclines more towards the strategy of exit or voice. Where there is present loyalty to the organisation (political party), the inclination of its members to use the exit strategy should be mitigated, as they should most likely accept voice strategy first.

It is therefore interesting to investigate what strategy the deputies who left KDU-ČSL and joined TOP 09 incorporated. It has to be stated here that "Since the TOP 09 formed practically in Parliament, before its official establishment it had its people in both chambers, from the ranks of independent, mayors (such as Jaromír Štětina), representatives of smaller parties and former members of the KDU-ČSL, which the KDU-ČSL labelled for their affection for ODS as "bluish" (Mach 2010). We can assume that this group of new TOP 09 members would have a slightly different voting preference than their former party colleagues.

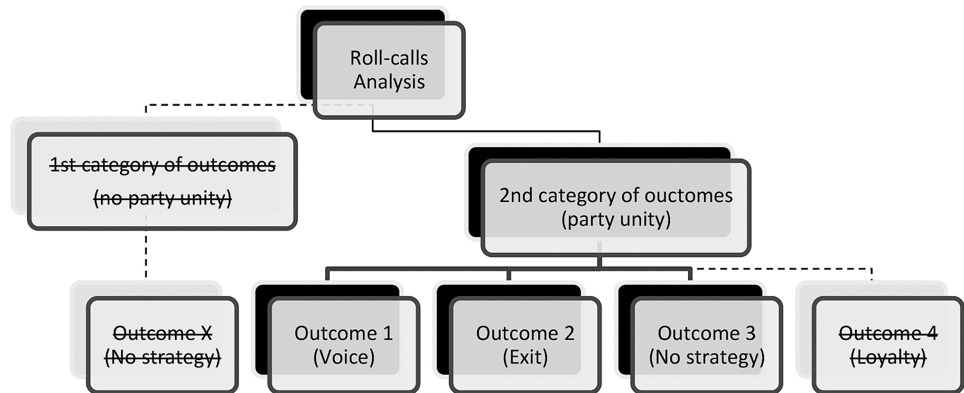
The first introduced outcome (Outcome 1) of the analysis would indicate that the renegades did use the strategy of voice first and then they incorporated the strategy of exit. As they were voting differently than their party colleagues, indicating they have different preferences and were not compatible with the party politics even before they eventually left KDU-ČSL. The second outcome (Outcome 2) would suggest that the renegades followed a strategy of an exit rather than indicating their dissatisfaction via voting (voice) first. They left the party as soon as a reasonable and promising opportunity occurred. The third possible outcome (Outcome 3) is quite hard to interpret and while it is possible to acquire it, it would not make much sense.[2] It could suggest that the renegades incorporated an exit strategy, but it didn't have any effect on their voting behaviour once they left their former party, which would be in direct

2 This outcome would indicate a different underlying strategy of the renegades, such as artificial establishment of a formal rival party with the aim to address a different spectre of voters. So, the exit strategy would serve only as a concealment manoeuvre.

contradiction with the new political profile TOP 09 tried to establish. The last possible outcome (Outcome 4) was not introduced earlier as it can't be the result of the analysis (simply based on the fact that KDU-ČSL split in 2009). This outcome wouldn't incorporate the successful effect of loyalty on the behaviour of the MPs who would probably use the voice strategy first, but wouldn't leave KDU-ČSL (incorporation of exit strategy) consequently.

All eventual analysis outcomes (obtainable as well as unattainable) are presented in the diagram below.

Figure 1: Diagram of obtainable and unattainable analysis outcomes.



Source: Author.

Methodology

The main aim of the study is to investigate the co-voting strategy (or behaviour) of the MPs who were originally members of the KDU-ČSL political party group between 2006 and 2010. The focus of this analysis will be put mainly on the change of the co-voting behaviour of these MPs, if it is present and observed in the analysed data (roll calls).

To uncover co-voting behaviour of the MPs, I will make use of tools of network analysis – more specifically, bipartite network projection analysis.[3] This set of methods was chosen because it emphasises the relational nature of politics and political behaviour. But in the first place, I have to raise a question: to what extent is co-voting necessarily a relationship?

3 As the main object of Network analysis research is to uncover the patterns of relationships between different kinds of actors (Zech – Gabbay 2016: 216).

It has to be stressed that co-voting as such could potentially represent a relationship between MPs who co-ordinate their votes according to their mutual interests. On the other hand, co-voting could also be just a coincidental phenomenon with no previous co-operation between MPs. Because of this dual nature of co-voting, I will treat it rather as a proxy indicating whether a certain kind of relationship (such as co-operation in cases, where the values of co-voting are high between MPs or rivalry in the cases where co-voting rates between MPs are low) could exist between analysed pairs of MPs (Brabec 2019: 149–150).

To overcome this theoretical obstacle, scholars dealing with legislative networks often make use of the fact that an undoubtable relationship exists between each MP and the draft on which MPs vote.[4] It does not really matter what preference during voting an MP expresses. The relationship is present even if the MP supports the draft, votes against or even abstains from the vote (the only exception is when the MP is not present during voting on draft). Using these relationships for network construction would result in the so-called bipartite network (or affiliation network). Bipartite networks capture the ties between two different kinds of entities (in this case MPs and legislative drafts), but it does not capture ties among the entities of the same kind (Borgatti et al. 2013). To be more specific – bipartite network depicts the relationship (preference expressed by the vote) between MPs and legal drafts, but not between MPs themselves or drafts themselves, as the MPs and the drafts didn't vote about each other.

As the main goal of this study is to analyse the co-voting of MPs, the bipartite network (or affiliation network) has to be converted into the network that would represent the rate of votes, where the MPs expressed the same preference when voting on individual legislative drafts. This could be achieved by a so-called one-mode projection of bipartite (affiliation) network.[5] The projected network would capture only MPs and ties between them, where the strength of these ties will represent the number of legislative drafts where MPs voted the same.

It is necessary to note that for the rigidity of the outcome in the process of the network creation, I will constitute several bipartite (affiliation) networks. One for those MPs and legislative drafts where the MPs voted yes, the second network for the negative votes of MPs towards the drafts and finally I will create the third network to reflect the cases where MPs abstained from the voting. Every single bipartite network will then be projected into one-mode co-voting network. The main benefit of this procedure is that it captures the co-voting rates between all the pairs of MPs and at the same time it stops them from establishing high rates of co-voting just because they voted on the same legislative draft but with different preferences (Leifeld 2017: 10). On the other hand, a normalisation

4 Many studies (Cohen – Malloy 2014; Ringe et al. 2013) used roll-call data as a primary source for the legislative network analysis. Also, Ringe et al. (2017: 14) summarises the dynamics of legislative network analysis development with its future challenges.

5 These networks are also called congruence networks (Leifeld 2017: 10).

method for adjusting the strength of the ties between MPs (rates of co-voting obtained this way) has to be implemented here. This is because of the different levels of activity of individual MPs, as the MPs' presence during voting could differ a lot and therefore neither the individual networks nor the co-voting rates of the different pairs of MPs could be compared (Leifeld 2017: 12).

For this reason, I will make use of the Jaccard index of similarity. This index is counted as the intersection of the votes of a pair of MPs (the votes, the MPs have in common) divided by the union of their total votes (number of votes each of the MPs from the pair casted) (Leifeld 2017: 15).[6] The value of the index represents the rate of co-voting of a pair of deputies – the higher the value of the index, the more similar the behaviour of MPs during the voting. Usually, the values of the index lie in interval 0–1, but because I am working with specific software, which is not capable of dealing with decimal numbers, I'm going to calculate the index in whole numbers (interval 0–100).

After this step, all the one-mode co-voting networks (representing co-voting of the MPs in the cases when they voted yes; no; or abstained) will be re-created, so the strength of a tie between each pair of MPs will correspond to the value of the Jaccard index of similarity for every single pair of MPs present in the network. Then all the one-mode co-voting networks will be aggregated into one final co-voting network.

As the main goal of the study is to analyse the dynamics of co-voting between MPs of a specific political party group (KDU-ČSL) present in the Chamber of Deputies, with emphasis on identifying the presence of party fission, I will make use of community detection tools (namely modularity) of network analysis. These techniques help to identify subgroups in the whole network using the ties (eventually their strength) between the nodes (actors present in the network). Modularity specifically measures the number of ties in the analysed subgroup in the network and compares them with the expected number of ties that would be part of the network, if these ties were added to the network randomly (Newman 2006). For the identification of the possible subgroups in the network, I will use the Louvain method for community detection designed by Blondel, Guillaume, Lambiotte, and Lefebvre (2008). This algorithm will divide the network into communities based on the number of the ties between the actors (it will also take into account the strength of these ties) – as the specific community should have more ties between its members than the number of the ties between members of different communities.

Why is this important? I'm trying to understand the dynamics of co-voting strategies of MPs who were members of a political party group that split during the analysed time period (one election period of the Czech House of Commons). For this reason, I will divide the dataset into two separate subsets. The first one

6 For mathematical explanation see Leydesdorff (2008: 3).

will cover all the roll-calls that happened before the KDU-ČSL congress on the 30th – 31st of May 2009, as only one day before, Miroslav Kalousek, former leader of KDU-ČSL, declared that he would leave this party. The second subset will cover all the roll-calls that happened after this date until the end of the fifth parliamentary election period in 2010. I made this choice because it is needed to identify if the members of KDU-ČSL and future members of TOP 09 (former members of KDU-ČSL) had similar voting preferences during the whole parliamentary term or if their preferences changed during this period. The main outcome of this procedure will be the identification of possible rivalling subgroups inside the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group in the two analysed time periods.

Data

As the study reflects legislative behaviour of the MP pairs, it is necessary to introduce the data used for the analysis. Voting records of individual deputies provided by the Chamber of Deputies database for the fifth parliamentary term between 2006 and 2010 served as the basic dataset.

This dataset contained information about 8468 roll calls for all of the 224 MPs who voted in the Chamber of Deputies during the fifth election period of Czech House of Commons. But not all of these roll calls were included in the analysis. Those votes where more than 95 % of present MPs voted for, against a draft, or abstained during voting were excluded from the analysis. In total, 5694 roll calls were included in the final analysis (3936 roll calls for the first analysed time period, 1758 roll calls for the second analysed time period). I excluded 2774 very high consensus roll calls from the final analysis. The first analysed time period starts with the first voting in the newly elected House of Commons after the elections in June 2006 and ends with the last voting before the KDU-ČSL congress on the 30th of May 2009. The second analysed period starts with the first voting on the floor of lower house after the KDU-ČSL congress and ends with the last voting in the fifth parliamentary election period of Chamber of Deputies in 2010.

As the main objective of the analysis was to construct a co-voting network of the Chamber of Deputies in its fifth election period and subsequently to isolate a specific political party group (original members of former KDU-ČSL political party group) present in the lower house, I had to compare how the MPs voted in every single vote in the analysed time period. I differentiated whether an MP voted for a draft; against it; if he/she abstained from the vote; was not present during voting or could not vote, because he/she had not been appointed to the office yet.

Contextual background

The analysis relies heavily on the roll-calls data, based on which, the co-voting between MPs will be derived and consequently deputies' co-voting strategies

will be deduced. But it is also necessary to introduce the internal situation in KDU-ČSL in an analysed time period, so it can be understood why and if the MPs who left the party changed their co-voting behaviour between 2006 – 2010.

Right after the elections in 2006, everything suggested that the KDU-ČSL with its leader Miroslav Kalousek would try to establish a government coalition with ODS (Civic Democrats) and SZ (Green Party) (Bureš et al. 2012: 334). That changed after the information about negotiations between the two biggest parties ODS and ČSSD (Social Democrats) went public. ODS and ČSSD, based on this information, should have tried to form a government coalition with the intent to change the rules for the elections to the Chamber of Deputies (installing majority-forming elements in the parliamentary electoral system) that would be beneficial for the bigger political parties (Bureš et al. 2012: 335). In response to these negotiations between ODS and ČSSD Kalousek tried to form the government coalition of KDU-ČSL and ČSSD supported by the Communist party. This endeavour of his didn't get the support of his party colleagues, so Kalousek resigned as chairman of KDU-ČSL (Buchert 2006). After Kalousek's resignation, KDU-ČSL suffered from many internal party conflicts (especially between former party leader Kalousek and new KDU-ČSL leader Jiří Čunek) and corruption scandals (accusations of J. Čunek) (Bureš et al. 2012: 335). This tension in KDU-ČSL escalated in January 2009 when the party leadership suggested the removal of M. Kalousek from the office of Minister of Finance (as KDU-ČSL was part of the government coalition with ODS and SZ supported by two former deputies from ČSSD). But Kalousek was supported by Prime Minister M. Topolánek (ODS), who proposed removal of J. Čunek from the office of Minister of Regional Development instead. In the end, J. Čunek resigned as Minister, but he managed to endure as leader of KDU-ČSL until its congress on the 30th of May 2009 (Bureš et al. 2012: 336).

This congress was an earth-shaking moment for KDU-ČSL, as only one day before it happened, M. Kalousek declared that he was leaving KDU-ČSL and that he wanted to found a new conservatively[7] oriented political party.[8] Most interestingly, other KDU-ČSL colleagues of M. Kalousek started leaving the party and joining his newly founded TOP 09 (TOP 09 was formally registered on 26th of June 2009 at the Ministry of Interior). We should mention at least those members of KDU-ČSL who left the parliamentary party group of KDU--ČSL and became members of TOP 09. The KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group originally consisted of 13 deputies, but its numbers diminished after several of its deputies left. Starting with Kalousek, another four deputies, namely Vlasta

7 According to Hanley (2012), TOP 09 presented itself as a "purifier" of centre-right liberal politics in the Czech Republic.

8 Kalousek and a few of his party colleagues from the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group also supported establishing the caretaker government of J. Fischer, although the KDU-ČSL leadership headed to an opposition (Mach 2010).

Parkanová (former Minister of Defense), Pavel Severa (former President of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group), Jan Husák and Ladislav Šustr left KDU--ČSL in June 2009 (Mach 2010).

Moreover, many other influential KDU-ČSL members started leaving the party after the 2009 congress and consequently joined TOP 09. Besides the above-mentioned deputies, KDU-ČSL's senators Václav Jehlička, Adolf Jílek and Ludmila Müllerová also left the party. KDU-ČSL's deputies ministers Martin Plíšek (Ministry of Health), Jiří Kubínek (Ministry of Finances), Karel Tureček (Ministry of Agriculture), Marek Ženíšek (Ministry of Education) and Jan Vitula (Ministry of Justice) abandoned the KDU-ČSL. These influential party members were also followed by many regular ones and other KDU-ČSL's employees such as Jaroslav Poláček, who was election manager of the Christian Democrats since 2002 (Eliášová 2009).

After this turbulent development, KDU-ČSL didn't succeed in the 2010 parliamentary elections and lost its representation in the Chamber of Deputies (but only for one election period, as in the 2013 preliminary elections, KDU-ČSL was able to recover and get back into the lower house).[9] On the other hand, the newly founded TOP 09 achieved great election success in the 2010 parliamentary elections, as it was third strongest party with 16,7 % of votes (Bureš et al. 2012: 337). But since that time, TOP 09 has been losing support from voters, as during each consequential parliamentary election, it got fewer votes.[10]

According to some sources (Plesl 2010), since 2003 TOP 09 was a political project discussed between M. Topolánek (ODS) and M. Kalousek (KDU-ČSL, TOP 09 later) as a political party that should be a partner to ODS, targeting those voters for whom the ODS was not an option. It is therefore interesting to ask whether the voting behaviour of those deputies who left KDU-ČSL and joined TOP afterwards, reflected a long-term strategy or not. In other words – I will analyse whether those MPs voted differently than their former KDU-ČSL colleagues and when possibly, they started to do so.

Empirical analysis

Several two-mode affiliation networks based on the roll-calls were created for both analysed time periods. These networks captured three possible sets of ties between MPs and legislative drafts: those where deputies voted 'yes' or 'no' towards the draft, or where the MPs abstained from the vote. The two-mode affiliation networks were consequently projected into one-mode networks. The ties of these networks then represented the number of mutual preferences towards

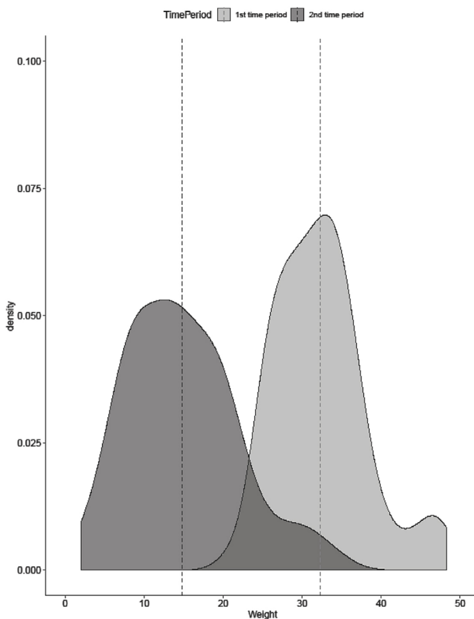
9 Even though the support KDU-ČSL got from voters was quite low – 6,78 % in the 2013 preliminary elections and only 5,8 in the parliamentary elections in 2017 (CZSO 2013; 2017).

10 In 2013, TOP 09 got 11,99 % of votes, in other parliamentary elections in 2017 it was only 5,31 % (CZSO 2013; 2017).

legislative drafts that each of the MP pairs shared. For the comparability of the deputy pairs' tied values, a similarity measure with normalizing properties (Jaccard index of similarity) was applied. After this step, projected one-mode networks were aggregated into the one-mode network for both analysed time periods. These networks express overall congruence between each deputies' pairs'.

The first interesting trend was observed when comparing the values of the Jaccard index of similarity of pairs of MPs between the two analysed time periods.

Figure 2: Probability density functions of MP pairs values of Jaccard index of similarity for both analysed time periods. Light grey area visualises the probability of MP pairs having specific values of Jaccard index of similarity in the first analysed time period. The dark grey area depicts the same for the second analysed time period.



Source: Author, based on own calculation.

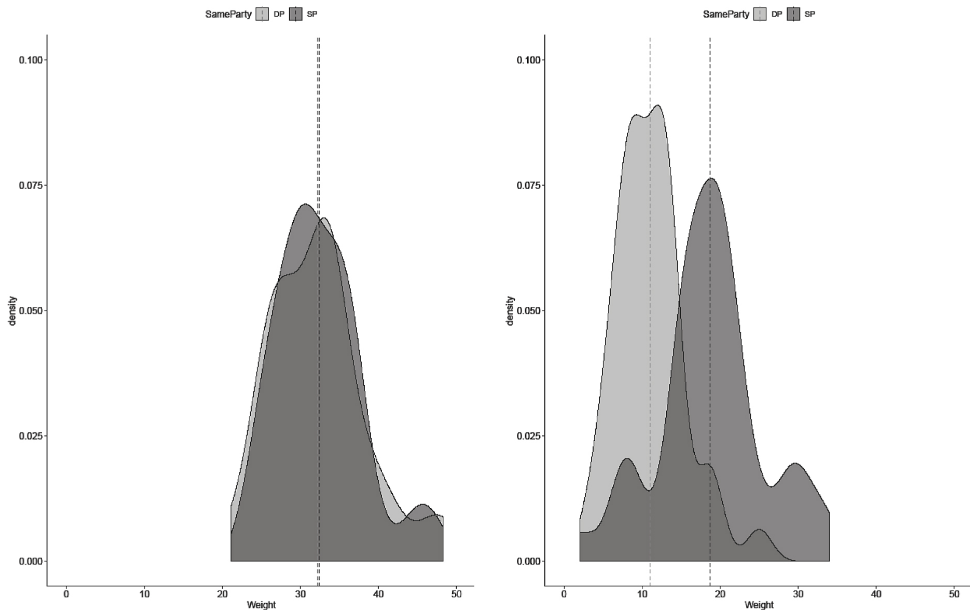
The graph shows that in the first analysed time period (covers all votes between the newly formed Chamber of deputies which started to function in 2006 and the congress of KDU-ČSL in 2009) the similarity of voting amongst KDU-ČSL deputies was higher than in the second analysed time period (all the votes after the KDU-ČSL congress until the end of the fifth parliamentary term). The average value of the Jaccard index of similarity for the first time period was 32.3, whereas it was only 14.8 for the second analysed time periods. That indicates that after the KDU-ČSL congress held on 30th of May 2019, the co-voting between all

deputies that were members of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group since the start of the election period dropped significantly.

To illustrate it better, let's point out the rate of co-voting between two former KDU-ČSL leaders: Miroslav Kalousek and Cyril Svoboda in both examined time periods. Before the congress of KDU-ČSL in May 2009, the similarity of voting between these two deputies was 47 points of Jaccard index of similarity. In the second time period, the rate of co-voting between Kalousek and Svoboda was very low (only 13 points of Jaccard index of similarity). That indicates a deep difference between the Kalousek's and Svoboda's voting after the congress in 2009.

Let's take a closer look at both analysed time periods. It is interesting to emphasise that in the second period, five former members of KDU-ČSL switched parties and joined the newly founded TOP 09.

Figure 3: Probability density functions of MP pairs values of Jaccard index of similarity for both analysed time periods; same party (SP) and different party (DP) pairs differentiated. The left part of the graph visualises the first analysed time period. The right side of the graph represents the second analysed time period. In both graphs, the probability of MP pairs having specific values of Jaccard index of similarity is distinguished by the belonging of the MPs pair into the same party pairs (dark grey) or different party pairs (light grey).



Source: Author, based on own calculation.

This graph represents the values of Jaccard index of similarity for those pairs of MPs who were either members of the same party (SP) – both deputies were members of KDU-ČSL or TOP 09 respectively, or members of a different party (DP) – when an MP pair was formed from one member of KDU-ČSL and one member of TOP 09. Eventually, TOP 09 was established in the second analysed time period (right side of the graph), but for the sake of comparability, I distinguished the MP pairs according to the same logic (the MPs who joined TOP 09 were recognised as members of this party, even though they were still members of the KDU-ČSL during the first analysed period) in the first analysed period (left side of the graph).

It is obvious that in the first analysed time period, the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group was not split into two rivalling blocks (as the density graphs overlap almost perfectly). The graph for the second analysed time period suggests different outcome as it is evident, that it matters, whether the MPs pairs are constituted by party colleagues or not. It is not surprising that the values of the similarity index are higher for the same party (SP) pairs. This indicates that the voting behaviour of the MPs reflected their party affiliation. And also that the voting behaviour of the two parliamentary party groups (KDU-ČSL and TOP 09) differed to some extent. Therefore, TOP 09 had a different political vision than KDU-ČSL.

To confirm these findings, I applied a modularity metric to two aggregated one-mode networks that represented the network of co-voting relationships between former members of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group. Each of the two networks represented one of the two analysed time periods. I used the Louvain algorithm (Blonder et al. 2008) for community detection in the networks.

In the first analysed period, the algorithm identified only one community consisting of all the members of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group. While In the second network, representing the co-voting of deputies in the second analysed time period, it identified two distinct communities – one consisting precisely of those MPs who left the KDU-ČSL and joined TOP 09, the other consisting of those KDU-ČSL members who stayed in the KDU-ČSL.

This leads to the conclusion that in terms of co-voting, KDU-ČSL was quite internally coherent until its congress in May 2009, where M. Kalousek (former leader of KDU-ČSL) declared his departure from the party.[11] After this point, a newly formed group of KDU-ČSL renegades, which was formed by 5 former members of KDU-ČSL, founded TOP 09 and started to vote differently than their former colleagues. The co-voting behaviour of KDU-ČSL renegades changed drastically once they left their former parliamentary party group. As it was

11 Although the party cohesion was not that high during the fifth parliamentary term because KDU-ČSL suffered from the internal crisis (Dvořák 2017: 113).

investigated in the analysis of the first analysed time period – the renegades didn't incorporate a different voting strategy than their colleagues until they left the party.

According to the sources (Plesl 2010) that TOP 09 was a project prepared long before the events of 2009 took place, one would suggest that the deputies who would join this new party would indicate in their voting behaviour an inclination to the change either towards a different political perspective they had or dissatisfaction with the politics of their former political party. As it turned out, the analysis of their co-voting behaviour didn't capture any of these changes.

Through the perspective of Hirschman's (1970) concepts of exit voice and loyalty, it seems that the KDU-ČSL renegades acted according to the exit strategy. These deputies left the party, when the opportunity of founding (or joining) a new political party seemed most promising, with no previous indication in their public behaviour towards their former party. Except for the former KDU-ČSL leader and founder of TOP 09, Miroslav Kalousek, no other politician that left KDU-ČSL had not manifested publicly their dissatisfaction with the KDU-ČSL intra-party situation until a few weeks before the KDU-ČSL congress in May 2009. That was contrary to the fact that since for the KDU-ČSL, not very successful parliamentary election in 2006 and the upcoming election of the new KDU-ČSL chairmen (Jiří Čunek) in the same year, KDU-ČSL suffered from internal tension (Bartoníček 2006). This tension finally escalated a few weeks before the frequently mentioned congress of KDU-ČSL in May 2009, when some of the members (Kalousek, Ambrozek, Parkanová) of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group announced their intentions to leave politics (Pařízková – Zlatohlávek 2009). In the end, most of these politicians who were considering the end of their political careers (at least as Members of KDU-ČSL) joined TOP 09 (Pařízková 2009; Černý 2009).

But as the quantitative analysis proved – until that time (party congress in May 2009), the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group voted cohesively about proposed legislative drafts.

Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to capture and analyse the dynamics of co-voting ties among the KDU-ČSL political party group members in the fifth parliamentary term between 2006 and 2010 when some of them left this party and founded or joined new political party TOP 09.

This paper focused specifically on the co-voting strategy incorporated by the KDU-ČSL renegades to uncover whether their decision to leave KDU-ČSL could be predicted. This study was based on analysis of roll call data provided by the Chamber of Deputies database for the fifth parliamentary term between 2006 and 2010 with further application of network analysis tools. With this approach,

I was able to identify the rates of the co-voting of all members of the KDU-ČSL parliamentary party group in different analysed time periods. These time periods were set up in order to obtain the information about a possible change of the co-voting behaviour of those MPs who left KDU-ČSL. As the analysis proved, these renegades started to vote differently than their former colleagues after they decided to leave the party. This result corresponds with the hypothetical outcome 2: '*MPs who left the KDU-ČSL started to vote differently than their former party colleagues after they left the party*' that was presented in the introduction and elaborated on in the theoretical parts of the text. The other hypothetical outcomes (Outcomes 1 and 3) were falsified by the analysis.

Even though KDU-ČSL had been facing internal tensions since the rather unsuccessful parliamentary elections in 2006, its deputies voted cohesively until the KDU-ČSL congress in 2009. This long-lasting internal tension and small clashes inside KDU-ČSL leadership escalated a few weeks before this congress with the declaration of KDU-ČSL former leader Miroslav Kalousek, who announced his departure from the party. Kalousek consequently founded new political party TOP 09, which was joined by other deputies who were leaving KDU-ČSL. With the establishment of this new conservative political party, the rates of mutual co-voting between all former KDU-ČSL deputies dropped significantly, as the members of TOP 09 started to vote differently than their former colleagues from KDU-ČSL.

This study focused specifically on the co-voting ties between members of the political party group that disintegrated. It would be interesting to conduct similar research focusing on another case of the same phenomena – for example in the Czech environment it could be the internal tensions and ruptures inside ODS (Civic Democrats) in 1997 leading to the emergence of new political party US-DEU (Freedom Union-Democratic Union) or the disintegration of the parliamentary party group of VV (Public Affairs) and the constitution of LIDEM (Liberal Democrats party). The comparison of these cases could help with the understanding of the co-voting behaviour of the deputies and the strategies they pursue when their home party is suffering from internal tensions and crisis.

References

Bartoníček, Radek (2006): Kasal mluvil o lidovcích-vlcích, kandidáti o změnách, iDnes.cz (9 December): available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/kasal-mluvil-o-lidovcich-vlcich--kandidati-o-zmenach.A061208_213405_domaci_rb (17 January 2020).

Blondel, Vincent D. – Guillaume, Jean-Loup – Lambiotte, Renaud – Lefebvre, Etienne (2008): *Fast unfolding of communities in large networks*. Journal of Statistical Mechanics: Theory and Experiment, 10.

Borgatti, Stephen P. – Everett, Martin G. – Johnson, Jeffrey C. (2013): *Analyzing social networks*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Brabec, Dušan (2019): Who Votes with Whom: Co-voting Network of the Lower House of Czech Parliament after the 2017 Elections. *Czech Journal of Political Science* XXVI (3): 18.

Buchert, Viliam (2006): Kalousek: Byla to šílená, ale jediná varianta. iDnes.cz (29 August): available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/kalousek-byla-to-silena-ale-jedina-varianta.A060829_183740_domaci_cen (17 January 2020).

Bureš, Jan – Charvát, Jakub – Just, Petr – Štefek, Martin (2012): *Česká demokracie po roce 1989: institucionální základy českého politického systému*. Praha: Grada.

Cohen, Lauren – Malloy, Christopher, J. (2014): Friends in High Places. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy* 6 (3): 63–91.

Czech Statistical Office. (CZSO). (2017): Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České republiky konané ve dnech 20. 10.–21. 10. 2017. available at https://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2017nss/ps?xjazyk=CZ. (17 January 2020).

Czech Statistical Office. (CZSO). (2013): Volby do Poslanecké sněmovny Parlamentu České republiky konané ve dnech 25. 10.–26. 10. 2013. available at https://www.volby.cz/pls/ps2013/ps (17 January 2020).

Černý, Jan (2009): Kalouskova TOP09 už přetáhla sedm top lidovců. Svoboda se snaží udržet moc. Hospodářské noviny (9 June): available at https://domaci.ihned.cz/c1-37387730-kalouskova-top09-uz-pretahla-sedm-top-lidovcu-svoboda-se-snazi-udrzet-moc (17 January 2020).

Dvořák, Petr (2017): *Jako jeden muž? Jednota hlasování poslanců v parlamentních demokraciích*. Brno: CDK.

Eliášová, Kateřina (2009): KDU-ČSL se drobí, vlivní lidovci odcházejí za Kalouskem Aktuálně.cz (9 June): available at https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/politika/kdu-csl-se-drobi-vlivni--lidovci-odchazeji-za-kalouskem/r~i:article:639483/ (1 April 2020).

Hanley, Sean (2012): Dynamics of new party formation in the Czech Republic 1996–2010: looking for the origins of a 'political earthquake'. *East European Politics* 28 (2): 119–143.

Hirschman, Albert (1970): *Exit, voice, and loyalty: responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Leifeld, Philip (2017): Discourse network analysis: policy debates as dynamic networks, in Victor, Jennifer N. – Montgomery, Alexander H. – Lubell, Mark, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Networks.* Oxford University Press, 301–326, New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Leydesdorff, Loet (2008): On the Normalization and Visualization of Author Co-Citation Data: Salton's Cosine versus the Jaccard Index. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 59 (1): 77–85.

Linek, Lukáš – Lacina, Tomáš (2011): Co ovlivňuje jednotnost hlasování českých poslaneckých klubů? *Politologický časopis* 18 (2): 91–110.

Mach, Jiří. (2010): TOP 09 (2 February): available at https://www.novinky.cz/tema/clanek/top-09-40095603 (17 January 2020).

Newman, Mark E. J. (2006): Modularity and community structure in networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 103 (23): 8577–8582.

Ozbundun, Ergun (1970): *Party Cohesion in Western Democracies: A Causal Analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Pařízková, Lucie – Zlatohlávek, Robert (2009): Polovinu poslanců z KDU-ČSL uvidíte naposledy. Končí. Týden.cz (24 April): available at https://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/politika/polovinu-poslancu-z-kdu-csl-uvidite-naposledy-konci_116244.html (17 January 2020).

Pařízková, Lucie (2009): Parkanová a Severa opustili lidovce, jdou za Kalouskem. Týden.cz (9 June): available at https://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/politika/parkanova-a-severa-opustili--lidovce-jdou-za-kalouskem_123692.html (17 January 2020).

Plesl, Jaroslav (2010): Vynikající referát z hotelu Hilton. Lidové noviny (13 March): available at https://www.lidovky.cz/noviny/vynikajici-referat-z-hotelu-hilton.A100313_000054_ln_noviny_sko (17 January 2020).

Ringe, Nils – Victor, Jennifer N. – Cho, Wendy (2017): Legislative Networks, in Victor, Jennifer N. – Montgomery, Alexander H. – Lubell, Mark, *The Oxford Handbook of Political Networks*, 471–490, New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Ringe, Nils – Victor, Jennifer N. – Gross, Justin H. (2013): Keeping Your Friends Close and Your Enemies Closer? Information Networks in Legislative Politics. *British Journal of Political Science* 43 (3): 601–628.

Zech, S.teven T. – Gabbay, Michael (2016): Social network analysis in the study of terrorism and insurgency: From organization to politics. *International Studies Review* 18 (2): 214–243.

Dušan Brabec *is a PhD student at the Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, U Kříže 8, 158 00, Praha 5 – Jinonice, Czech Republic, e-mail: dusan.brabec@fsv.cuni.cz. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6604-9726*

BOOK REVIEW

Kemalism as a Fixed Variable in the Republic of Turkey

LUCIE TUNGUL[1]

The publication offers a fresh and complex look at Kemalism, the official ideology of the Turkish Republic that continues to have a significant impact on contemporary Turkish society, politics, and economy. The authors take a critical stance, providing a counter-narrative to the hegemonic interpretation, which understands Kemalism along the modernization and westernization path and in opposition to Islamism. While the current Turkish regime is often criticized for its anti-Western and anti-European stance, which many believe diverges from the decades long Turkish-Western orientation, the authors do a good job at explaining that the ideology of Kemalism itself was often anti-Western and just like the current Islamist movements in Turkey, carries many conflicting views and contradictory perceptions about both the domestic and foreign policy options. Its vague definition provided it with flexibility to react to changing domestic political discourses, while also shaping them. The publication highlights the complexity of the ideology and brings to light many of its weaknesses, often overlooked in the older publications.

The individual chapters cover various topics from the early Republican era to the concept of "New Turkey." In the first chapter, Kahraman Solmaz deals with the Kemalist revolution within Arendt's concept of violence. It provides a detailed account of the democratic regional activities that came to existence when the Empire was falling and how Atatürk and his loyal elites violently supressed these alternative centres of power including parties, associations, and newspapers. Taking into account the complexity of the time, it shows strong relevance to contemporary Turkey including the suppression of Kurdish demands. Some of the claims are not well referenced or explained, which might

1 Lucie Tungul, Ph.D., MA, Department of Politics and Social Sciences, Faculty of Law, Palacký University in Olomouc/Czech Republic, E-mail: lucie.tungul@upol.cz

be confusing to the reader not familiar with the history of the Turkish Republic. While the author unveils many of the neglected dark sides of the Kemalist revolution, which are vital for our understanding of Turkey today, it subsides the more positive features. This leaves a feeling of unbalanced criticism, potentially more so for readers not familiar with the homogenic Kemalist discourse about the rise of the Republic.

Sara-Marie Demiriz presents an insightful perspective on the image of Atatürk in the national celebrations of the early Republican era, which still carries much relevance as most Turkish national holidays celebrated today are related to this period. The holidays themselves became part of the current political discourse in Turkey, where their celebration (or lack of it) is used to publicly declare political affiliations. Demiriz successfully shows how the Republican elite used the holidays to create myths about the birth of a nation according to their own interpretation of history and which the Turkish people could understand.

Benjamin Flöhr analyzes the works of Ahmet Hamdi Akseki and the link between Islam and nationalism in the Turkish military explaining the emergence of the so-called Kemalo-Islamists. He investigates the very complex relationship between secularism and Islam in the Turkish military, the "guardian of the kemalist Republic," and. thus also between Islam and Kemalism/Turkish nationalism. Seen by many as binary oppositions, his chapter explains how their synthesis was justified through the works of Akseki (and incorporated into the official state policy by the junta after the 1980 coup).

The chapter by Başar Şirin would be a useful read for those who wish to use the so-called Sèvres syndrome when analyzing current Turkish politics. While it is in itself a very important aspect for understanding Turkey and Kemalism, Şirin presents some less well-known observations about its emergence as a national myth and its application in Turkish political discourses, including the Kemalist perceptions of the AKP and the de-Kemalisation during the AKP era. The analysis focuses not only on the political actors but also on the cultural production in Turkey. It does not serve the often valid arguments well that the author sometimes presents strong claims that lack supporting evidence and become too aggressive in their tone, which questions the objectivity of the analysis. The author also ignores the fact that some of the Sèvres syndrome narratives that he assigns to neo-Kemalists are used by other political actors in Turkey as well, including president Erdoğan and the AKP politicians. I would also question the author's conclusion that today the "ability or power of the Kemalists to affect Turkish politics is quite limited." It is a pity that given some of the latest developments in the country, the works cited seem dated, they do not pass 2016, and thus are not taking into account the post-coup developments.

The inner divisions of Kemalism are addressed by Berna Pekesen, who looks at how the ideas of the Kemalist left linked to Turkish revolutionary youth have

been incorporated into mainstream Kemalism since the 1960s. It provides an educated and detailed account of the origins of ideological diversity of Kemalism.

Lutz Berger returns to the notion of Mustafa Kemal's personality cult during early Republican times, its link to the revolutionary objectives, and their legitimization and institutionalization. Berger follows the changes in the aftermath of Atatürk's death and during the introduction of multi-party politics, and its role in the 1970s and 1980s. The chapter offers valuable insights into the link between the cult of Atatürk, his image, and the regime but also highlights the emptiness of the cult figure, which makes it readily available for anyone to associate with it and as such can be used by various forces and actors in the contemporary Turkish political scene. Berger relates it to Turkey's similarity with the neo-patrimonial systems rather than Western democracies and argues that the former and present Turkish political leadership is characterized by strong features of authoritarianism and personalization. This makes it a political landscape "full of figures and cults of his kind," which is a crucial observation for understanding Turkish politics.

Kemalism in the party system is addressed in the chapter by Tamer Düzyol, who investigates three Kemalism frames (Kemalism Mask, Paradigm 1923, and Forged Kemalism) in the party system. He shows the weaknesses of the efforts that try to place the Turkish political parties on a left-right scale because he argues that the fundamental Turkish cleavages are nationalism, religion, and Atatürk. While the analysis is very relevant to the topic as the "Kemalist" party landscape deserves an in-depth analysis, the methodology would deserve more attention in the text.

The final chapter by Burak Gümüş relates Kemalism to the so-called "New Turkey" paradigm as promoted by the Turkish government since 2010. Gümüş argues that it was achieved by de-Kemalization as brought by the AKP and the Gülen movement in the staged trials against the Kemalists that held powerful positions in the state. He defines the concept of de-Kemalization, discusses the position of Kemalists in the Turkish military, and provides a detailed account of the controversial trials that targeted them together with other Kemalists and the opposition in general, including political parties and the media. Gümüş also links the process to the Kurdish issue, the failed 2016 coup, the situation in Syria, and the introduction of the presidential system, which puts the entire concept in a broad perspective, including the feud between the AKP and the Gülen movement and the resulting temporary re-Kemalization. Gümüş convincingly shows how Erdoğan has tried to use the coup as the new founding myth that would legitimise his "New Turkey" and make him the new founding father replacing Atatürk. The chapter provides closure to the entire publication but seems to ignore some of the other forces at play other than the interaction of the AKP-Gülen-Kemalist forces.

Even though the publication seems in several instances somewhat unbalanced in its perspective on Kemalism and does not address in more detail some of the very interesting topics relevant to the ideology of Kemalism such as women's rights or the media, it offers a comprehensive analysis enriching our understanding of Kemalism, and thus also the past and current political scene in Turkey. It provides some very valuable insights for both students of Turkish politics and scholars interested in the history and the contemporary developments in Turkey.

Kemalism as a Fixed Variable in the Republic of Turkey. Edited by Lutz Berger and Tamer Düzyol. Baden-Baden: Ergon, 2020, 176 pages, ISBN 978-3-95650-632-1.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Politics in Central Europe publishes original, peer-reviewed manuscripts that provide scientific essays focusing on issues in comparative politics, policy analysis, international relations and other sub-disciplines of political science, as well as original theoretical or conceptual analyses. All essays must contribute to a broad understanding of the region of Central Europe.

Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic version via e-mail to ladislav.cabada@mup.cz, preferably in Word format. Tables and schemas should be sent in separate document while in text you sign where to put it

Presentation of the paper

Each issue the *Politics in Central Europe* focuses on one main topic or theme. This theme is indicated in advance, at the latest in the previous issue. Besides essays focused on the current issue, essays with other themes are welcomed too.

Essays should be written in English (preferably British English).
Essays should not normally exceed 12,000 words in length.

When submitting the essay, please also attach:

- an abstract of 150–200 words, in English, stating precisely the topic under consideration, the method of argument used in addressing the topic, and the conclusions reached
- a list of up to six keywords suitable for indexing and abstracting purposes
- a brief biographical note about each author, including previous and current institutional affiliation
- a full postal and e-mail address, as well as telephone and fax numbers of the author. If the manuscript is co-authored, then please provide the requested information about the second author.

All essays are checked by a referee; they undergo a double-blind peer review. At least two external referees review manuscripts. *Politics in Central Europe* reserves the right to reject any manuscript as being unsuitable in topic, style or form, without requesting an external review.

In order to ensure anonymity during the peer-review process, the name(s), title(s), and full affiliation(s) of the author(s) should only appear on a separate cover sheet, together with her/his preferred mailing address, e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers.

POLITICS IN CENTRAL EUROPE reserves the right to edit or otherwise alter all contributions, but authors will receive proofs for approval before publication.

Style Guidelines

Below are some guidelines for in-text citations, notes, and references, which authors may find useful when preparing manuscripts for submission.

Manuscript style guidelines

Authors are urged to write as concisely as possible, but not at the expense of clarity. Descriptive or explanatory passages, necessary for information but which tend to break up the flow of text, should appear in footnotes. For footnotes please use Arabic numbers. Footnotes should be placed on the same page as the text reference, with the same number in the essay.

Dates should be in the form of 1 November 2005; 1994–1998; or the 1990s.

References in the text

In the text, refer to the author(s) name(s) (without initials, unless there are two authors with the same name) and year of publication. Unpublished data and personal communications (interviews etc.) should include initials and year. Publications which have not yet appeared are given a probable year of publication and should be checked at the proofing stage on an author query sheet. For example:

Since Bull (1977) has shown that. This is in results attained later (Buzan – Jones – Little 1993: 117). As contemporary research shows (Wendt 1992), are states the.

Publications by the same author(s) in the same year should be identified with a, b, c (2005a, 2005 b) closed up to the year and separated by commas. Publications in references that include different authors should be separated by a semicolon: (Miller 1994a: 32, 1994 b; Gordon 1976). If the year of first publication by a particular author is important, use the form: (e.g. Bull 1977/2002: 34). If there are two authors of a publication, separate the names by '–' (not 'and' or '&'). If there are more than two authors, put the name of the first author followed by '*et al.*', or write all names separated with '–' (four authors maximum).

References to unauthorized data from periodicals may be given in brackets in the text together with the exact page(s). For example: '(quoted in *International Security* (Summer 1990: 5).' If such a reference is included in the reference list, the title of the contribution referred to must be provided, and a short title without inverted commas and a year of publication is used for in-text-referencing (e.g. short title year). As a general rule, an exact web address of a particular article can be substituted for its exact page(s).

List of References

References are placed in alphabetical order of authors. Examples of correct forms of references for alphabetical style:

BOOKS:

Single author books:

Diehl, Paul F. (1994): *International Peacekeeping. With a new epilogue on Somalia, Bosnia, and Cambodia,* The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Two or more authors:

Degnbol-Martinussen, John – Engberg-Pedersen, Poul (1999): *Aid. Understanding International Development Cooperation,* Zed Books, Mellemfolkelight Samvirke, Danish Association for International Cooperation, Copenhagen.

EDITED VOLUMES:

Rittberger, Volker, ed. (1993): *Regime Theory and International Relations*, Clarendon Press.

CHAPTERS FROM MONOGRAPHS:

George, Alexander L. (2004): Coercive Diplomacy, in Art, Robert J. – Waltz, Kenneth N., eds., *The Use of Force. Military Power and International Politics.* Sixth Edition, 70–76, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

JOURNAL ARTICLES:

Printed journals:

Haas, Ernst B. (1961): International Integration. The European and the Universal Process. *International Organization* 15 (4): 5–54.

Online editions of journals:

Judt, Tony (2002c): Its Own Worst enemy, *The New York Review of Books*: available at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/15632 (15 August 2002).

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:

Printed editions:

Excerpts From the Pentagon's Plan: Prevent the Re-Emergence of a New Rival (1992) *The New York Times* (9 March).

Online editions:

Cooper, Robert (2002): Why We Still Need Empires, *The Guardian Unlimited* (7 April): available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/Archive/Article/0,4273,4388915,00.html (2 November 2003).

RESEARCH REPORTS AND PAPERS FROM CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS:

Waisová, Šárka (2005): Czech Security Policy – Between Atlanticism and Europeanization, Bratislava: Ministry of Defence, Working Paper No. 05/2.

Illustrations and tables

Supply tables, figures and plates on separate sheets at the end of the article, with their position within the text clearly indicated on the page where they are introduced. Provide typed captions for figures and plates (including sources and acknowledgements) on a separate sheet. Electronic versions should be saved in separate files with the main body of text and should be saved preferably in Jpeg format.

Authors are asked to present tables with the minimum use of horizontal rules (usually three are sufficient) and to avoid vertical rules except in matrices. It is important to provide clear copies of figures (not photocopies or faxes) which can be reproduced by the printer and do not require redrawing. Photographs should be preferably black and white gloss prints with a wide tonal range.

Book Reviews and Review Essays – Guidelines for Contributing Authors

Politics in Central Europe welcomes reviews of recently published books (i.e. those published in the year in which the current issue of *Politics in Central Europe* was published or in the previous year). Authors should submit reviews of works relating to political science and other social sciences with the themes focused on (East) Central European issues.

Politics in Central Europe encourages authors to submit either of two types of reviews: a book review or a review essay.

When submitting a book review, authors should abide by the following requirements:

- A book review should not exceed 1,500 words
- State clearly the name of the author(s), the title of the book (the subtitle, if any, should also be included), the place of publication, the publishing house, the year of publication and the number of pages.
- If the reviewed book is the result of a particular event (a conference, workshop, etc.), then this should be mentioned in the introductory part of the review
- Review authors should describe the topic of the book under consideration, but not at the expense of providing an evaluation of the book and its potential contribution to the relevant field of research. In other words, the review should provide a balance between description and critical evaluation. The potential audience of the reviewed work should also be identified
- An exact page reference should be provided for all direct quotations used in reviewing the book.

Contributors of review essays should meet the following requirements:

- A review essay should not exceed 6,000 words. It should also comply with all of the above requirements for book reviews
- Authors may either review several books related to a common topic, or provide a review essay of a single book considered to provide an exceptional contribution to the knowledge in a given field of research
- While a review essay should primarily deal with the contents of the book(s) under review, *Politics in Central Europe* encourages authors to use the reviewed material as a springboard for their own ideas and thoughts on the subject.